
Search for Common Ground | Sri Lanka (SFCG | SL)

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## Abbreviations

<table>
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<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CSO</td>
<td>Civil Society Organizations</td>
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<tr>
<td>EPF</td>
<td>Employee’s Provident Fund</td>
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<td>ETF</td>
<td>Employee’s Trust Fund</td>
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<td>FGD</td>
<td>Focus Group Discussion</td>
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<td>GA</td>
<td>Government Agent</td>
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<tr>
<td>GBV</td>
<td>Gender-Based Violence</td>
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<tr>
<td>GoSL</td>
<td>Government of Sri Lanka</td>
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<td>LGA</td>
<td>Local Government Authorities</td>
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<tr>
<td>M&amp;E</td>
<td>Monitoring and Evaluation</td>
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<tr>
<td>MTR</td>
<td>Midterm Review</td>
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<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-governmental Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>OECD DAC</td>
<td>Organization for Economic Corporation and Development, Development Assistance Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>PO</td>
<td>Partner Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>SFCG</td>
<td>Search for Common Ground</td>
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<td>VT</td>
<td>Vocational Training</td>
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Executive Summary

The Promoting Active Citizenship in the Hill Country Program (PAC) sought to (i) empower Indian origin Tamil minority youth in Sri Lanka’s plantation economy to participate fully in civic life, and (ii) make a positive contribution to a historically marginalized minority community. The program’s strategic results were envisaged to (i) increase awareness among the Tamil people in the Hill Country—particularly youth—regarding their rights and responsibilities; (ii) strengthen the skills of young leaders to actively and constructively engage their communities and decision-makers; and (iii) expand dialogue between community members—specifically youth—and key decision-makers around participation in decision-making and access to justice. The program was conceptualized in the wider context of the vulnerability of minority youth in the country’s post-war transition.

For the purpose of this evaluation, PAC activities—which ran from June 2011 to December 2012 were grouped into three activity streams: (i) partner capacity building of partners and training in SFCG approaches; (ii) youth leadership training and seed grant activities; and (c) community radio and media outreach. These program components were assessed on the basis of OECD DAC criteria for evaluation of development assistance on the select dimensions like Effectiveness, Relevance, Coherence & Coordination, and Sustainability.1 Highlights of the findings are as follows:

Effectiveness: The project generated new knowledge, information, social networks, and synergies among beneficiary communities, partners, local government authorities (LGAs), service providers, and CSOs. It opened new spaces for dialogue in service of community empowerment and the development of the Hill Country Tamil community in the selected estates. This in turn has facilitated youth empowerment and trust building, while the rights-focused seed grant activities and radio talk shows helped create awareness of rights and entitlements, including for women and children facing high levels of gender-based violence (GBV) and school attrition.

The evaluation team found that the project had a positive reputation, and was well regarded among beneficiaries and stakeholders (GoSL and CSO) interviewed in November 2012. During the evaluation field visit, an estate manager and a Kachcheri (LGA) officials requested that the project be extended to other estate divisions and areas. Participants of the youth leadership training reported changes in awareness due to acquisition of problem-solving skills and new knowledge on effectively accessing LGA services. Community members reported changes in knowledge on key topics and, in a few cases, got direct assistance from youth group activities funded by SFCG seed grants.

The program achieved most output indicators. The current program—which may be considered a pilot as it is SFCG’s first in Sri Lanka—establishes a good base for SFCG as a development partner in the country’s plantation areas.

Relevance: Young people are a vulnerable demographic in Sri Lanka’s current post-war transition period. Before SFCG, there were few youth-focused development activities in the Hill plantation area. The PAC program aimed to help historically marginalized Indian

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origin Tamil minority youth and their communities secure rights and access to local government authorities (LGA) services. This objective was pursued by focusing on youth capacity building, collective action through seed grant activities and community radio programming that could widely spread information about linguistic and other rights.

The PAC program had effectively “localized” the notion of access to justice, tailoring it to the needs, capacities and circumstances of communities with low social indicators (maternal and child health, education), low social capital (networks, information), and reduced access to LGA services. It addressed social, governance, and rights issues in a constructive way. The two components of the program were well designed and complemented one another, comprising (i) youth leadership training, capacity building and mobilization; and (ii) public radio and media outreach for the empowerment, awareness, and networking of a linguistically marginalized community.

The program fell in line with the baseline study findings that highlighted process and policy considerations. The project needed to ensure the inclusion of youth from other communities and tailor leadership training for young women and girls. The program could have been more relevant in terms of policy advocacy by expanding the focus to include power brokers and political leadership (i.e. Estate Management and Trade Unions). Participants found PAC to be relevant to the local context.

**Coherence & Coordination:** Coordination between partners was done well enough to meet the program’s needs. Despite the high turnover rate and mobile nature of youth, the program was able to identify and strategically select participants, effectively engaging them in its activities. Participants in the Youth leadership training held the different activity streams together.

SFCG implemented the program with established national and local level civil society organizations (CSOs), Seva Lanka in Hatton, and Power Foundation in Badulla. While SFCG benefitted from the social mobilization experience and local knowledge of these partners, it sought to build partner capacity for program substance, project design, monitoring, and evaluation.

**Sustainability:** The bulk of PAC program activities was implemented and was effective in enabling collective action by youth for community empowerment. The project has been only partially successful in ensuring the sustainability of initiatives that address ongoing needs, such as GBV and youth livelihood issues. Certain initiatives, such as Youth Club Activities, were time-bound activities designed to address specific needs like lack of ID papers: new initiatives will be necessary in the future. The Hatton Division Group holds the promise of becoming an ongoing platform.

Going forward, there is a need for deeper analysis of the socio-cultural, political, and economic contexts of the Hill plantations. Also required is the development of a well-articulated policy advocacy strategy and district–level platform for youth empowerment that systematically engages key stakeholders and policy makers on needed structural transformations. In short, the current bottom-up approach may be complemented with a top-down approach since PAC was very relevant to the current context in the plantation sector.
Introduction

In May 2009, the 30-year armed conflict that had frayed the socio-economic fabric of Sri Lankan communities and governance structures ended with the Government of Sri Lanka’s (GoSL) defeat of the secessionist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). The end of the violence marked a critical turning point in the country’s history and necessitated a period of peacebuilding, reconciliation, and empowerment of minority communities directly and indirectly impacted by war. Sri Lanka’s Indian Origin Hill Country Tamil communities have historically been marginalized due to the structure of the plantation economy once braced by indentured labour. They have also suffered from linguistic discrimination and a lack of access to services available from many State institutions.

Search for Common Ground (SFCG), in partnership with the Power Foundation and Seva Lanka, has executed an 18-month project entitled “Promoting Active Citizenship in the Hill Country” (PAC) to address challenges faced by the minority estate population in the Nuwara Eliya and Badulla Districts, specifically among marginalized and geographically isolated communities. The project sought to promote and nurture youth as catalysts for change via citizen’s participation, community empowerment, and bridge-building initiatives. PAC’s overarching goal was to empower the Hill Tamil population, prompting them to participate fully in community affairs and exercise their rights with regard to the growth and development of the area.

SFCG’s approach involved two complementary interventions: (1) empowering Hill Country youth and providing them with effective leadership tools to exercise their rights; and (2) using community media (radio) to educate the regional population about citizenship and legal rights, including access to resources and services. The program was implemented among the Hill Tamil population in Sri Lanka’s Central and Uva Provinces (with specific reference to the Nuwara Eliya and Badulla Districts). It sought to create awareness about citizenship and other legal rights, while also empowering plantation youth to become agents of positive social change within their communities.

By adopting a youth-centric approach, the program’s activities aimed at social cohesion building and attitudinal change, with particular regard to rights and access to both local institutions and services for community empowerment. SFCG sought to increase knowledge, change attitudes and perceptions, and promote shifts in youth behavior. These changes were expected to serve the Hill Country community even after project completion through applications of newly gained practical knowledge. This includes via direct application of information from media outputs (radio), adoption of new and/or improved skills (training), use of new methods and/or improved technologies (radio), and adoption of practical knowledge on policy and decision-making (youth, citizenship).

Scope and Objectives of the Final Evaluation

Pursuant to OECD DAC and SFCG evaluation criteria, the final evaluation of the Promoting Active Citizenship in the Hill Country in Sri Lanka (PAC) project assessed its performance from October 2010 to June 2012—including outputs and impacts.

The current review takes into account social, political, economic, demographic, and institutional factors that have bearing on the project’s results. The review examines how and
why such results were generated, as well as the sustainability of the project’s impacts. It seeks to identify achievements, constraints, best practices, and lessons learned, providing forward-looking recommendations for how efficiency, relevance, and effectiveness can be strengthened for the final year. In particular, the review focuses on the following questions:

GENERAL
- To what extent was the project’s approach able to empower Hill Country citizens (youth in particular) with respect to their rights and responsibilities? Did it enhance their ability to access essential services? Was the set of activities sufficient to meet the overall goal and objectives? To what extent did the different categories of activities complement each other? Were the selected implementing partners the most relevant to the problem being addressed?
- Did the project target the right group of beneficiaries? Who received support and why? Was there an inclusion/exclusion bias in selection of stakeholders and bias in selecting the participants among the youth that were involved in the project?
- To what extent did the project achieve its intended results? What major factors contributed to or hindered the achievement of its objectives (factors of success and challenges)?
- Were there any unexpected outcomes (positive and negative)?

YOUTH
- Did the participants’ knowledge and skills in youth leadership, peacebuilding, and conflict transformation improve? To what extent did youth participants use the learned skills to address issues in their communities?
- How successful have the trained youth leaders been in serving as positive leaders among their peers? What successes and challenges did they experience in this regard? What were the degree and quality of SFCG and partner assistance to youth leaders in helping them fulfill that role?
- Did the project foster dialogue between youth groups or between youth and other stakeholders (directly through follow-up exchange or indirectly through other activities and youth’s own initiatives)?

MEDIA
- Did the talk shows and radio drama effectively address the issues identified during the curriculum summit?
- Have there been any changes in knowledge, skills, and attitudes of the media team involved in the production?
- What changes in the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of the target audience can be attributed to the media programs?

The evaluation team comprised a Senior Consultant, Dr. Darini Rajasingham and a media specialist, Mr. Nadrajah Manivanan, with the assistance of Ms. Natasha Hillary for data collection during field visits. The team sought to identify achievements, constraints, best practices, and lessons learned, as well as provide forward-looking recommendations for how efficiency, relevance, and effectiveness can be strengthened in future SFCG program interventions in Sri Lanka’s plantation sector communities.

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2 See Annex 1, Terms of Reference (ToR)
Evaluation Methodology

The evaluation was conducted in three phases from November to December 2012 in line with the ToRs. Although both quantitative and qualitative data were used, the evaluation was largely qualitative in nature since the project’s goals were primarily qualitative and outputs were determined in the relatively short duration of the intervention.

The evaluation consisted of:

1. A document review, interviews with four SFCG (Colombo) program staff, preparation for fieldwork, and an inception report.
2. Fieldwork, including interviews with staff from the two partner organizations and relevant stakeholders who participated in the final meeting in Badulla to assess project output and impacts; focus group discussions (FGDs) with eight of the ten youth groups with an average attendance of 15 participants; and FGDs with secondary beneficiaries from the community who participated in the awareness raising activities conducted through seed grants.
3. Presentation of findings, report preparation, and finalization.

The output and impact analysis examined the program concept and logical frame. It pulled from field visits to the project areas in Hatton and Badulla for interviews with beneficiary communities, program staff, and other stakeholders. Interviews and FGDs were conducted with 12 partner staff (from both the Power Foundation and Seva Lanka) who were involved in community radio production and youth training activities.  

FGDs were held with primary and secondary beneficiaries, relevant local authorities, and civil society organizations doing similar work. Interviews and FGDs with program beneficiaries were held onsite in eight of ten participating estates. The team also interviewed stakeholders who participated in the final Dialogue Forum that brought together beneficiaries, stakeholders, and program partners in Hatton.

The two main prongs of the intervention consisted of:

1. Capacity building in youth leadership and peacebuilding
   a. Peacebuilding training for youth leaders (Dialogue to Cooperative Action)
   b. Provision of seed grants to implement activities
   c. Dialogue forums with stakeholders

2. Media
   a. Common ground media training for youth
   b. Curriculum summit for story and script development
   c. Production of radio drama and talk shows
   d. Listener group establishment

Fieldwork consisted of:

   (1) Semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders, including program beneficiaries, local civil society groups, local government partners, and other INGO partner organizations conducting similar projects.

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3 See Annex 2, Fieldwork Schedule
4 See Annex 3, Open-ended Questionnaire
(2) FGDs with stakeholders on topics like legal aid services, documentation mobile clinics, community awareness, and GBV.
(3) Cooperation with partner organizations (NGOs) and local level government officers.

Limitations

For the purposes of this evaluation, assessment of project impacts beyond testimonies of primary beneficiary groups was limited due to the short time frame; even more so as attitudinal change is a long-term impact. Attitudinal changes in the wider community or secondary target group were difficult to measure due to insufficient availability of baseline data, absence of control group, and little specification of precise and differentiated indicators for project outcome and outputs in the logical framework.

At the time of the evaluation, both local partner organizations experienced setbacks. Seva Lanka’s local office in Hatton burned down a few weeks before the evaluation team visited, making unavailable some documentation. Power Foundation in Badulla was faced with a funding crisis and staff moving out of the organization for various reasons.

Program Analysis

The long-term goal of the SFCG plantation program was “to empower the Tamil people in Sri Lanka’s Hill Country in order to identify and work toward addressing gaps in the exercise of their rights as equal citizens of the state.”

The project’s objectives were to:

- Create awareness among the Tamil plantation people, key stakeholders, and decision-makers regarding the rights and responsibilities of the plantation community;
- Strengthen the skills of young leaders in actively and constructively engaging their communities and decision-makers to accomplish that change; and
- Create a space for dialogue that facilitates collaborative and non-exploitative engagement between all key stakeholders and decision-makers, primarily though community radio, discussion fora, and media outreach.

Outcomes, indicators, and estimated targets were revised during the course of project implementation to reflect the context of the project locations. Although the proposal log frame did not provide precise program implementation mechanisms, it is clear that SFCG’s approach involved two primary and complementary program components:

1. Youth Leadership training for co-operative action; and
2. Radio for Active Citizenship

These two primary program components were implemented in partnership with the Hill Country’s Seva Lanka and Power Foundation.

The expected intermediate results were:

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5 See Annex 4 for revised log frame and outcome indicators.
• Communication campaign messages are developed in a participative way
• Partner media’s capacity to produce radio programs geared towards access to justice and citizenship is increased
• Dialogue is fostered to facilitate collaborative efforts and civic engagement
• Radio campaign is carried out
• Youth are trained in leadership skills

According to the project proposal there were three key project outcomes listed with nine key outputs, as well as a number of project indicators and activities. While the first three outputs pertain to development of the SFCG project and capacity building for partners and beneficiaries, the other six outputs pertain to activities primarily implemented by partners. The output and impact analysis will thus be divided into three sections : (1) general evaluation of program implementation, (2) the leadership training and youth activities component; and (3) community radio for the benefit of wider community education.

Quantitative data collection and impact analysis beyond the narratives of primary beneficiary groups (youth groups, partner staff, and stakeholders in the community who had direct contact with the program), were limited due to the short period of the project. This is all the more relevant a limitation insofar as awareness and attitudinal changes in the wider community are difficult to measure beyond the primary beneficiary group. People do not always say what they mean or do what they say. Other factors constraining impact analysis included lack of adequate baseline data and specification of precise and differentiated quantitative indicators for project outcome and outputs in the log frame.

General Analysis on Project Implementation

“Promoting Citizen’s Participation in the Hill Country” (PAC) was SFCG’s first program in Sri Lanka. It targeted youth as catalysts for change in their communities and had high relevance to the socio-economic context of the selected Hill plantation communities. Young people are a vulnerable demographic in post-war Sri Lanka, particularly as there are few youth-focused development activities in hard-to-access plantation areas where youth are disaffected in large numbers. The PAC program therefore aimed to empower historically marginalized Indian Origin Tamil minority youth and their communities to enable them to secure rights and access to local government services. These goals were pursued by focusing on youth capacity building, registration of youth clubs, and community radio programming.

PAC may be viewed a pilot project for SFCG in Sri Lanka, as the organization was in the course of setting up an office in the country and recruiting staff during the project’s inception phase. It nonetheless showed significant results in terms of program implementation and outputs. Project impacts were less clear due to the short duration of the program, which would ideally be extended for another year to consolidate project achievements and ensure sustainability.

The program in the Hatton area was more advanced in terms of overall project outcomes and impacts than in Badulla, where target areas were poorer, more difficult to access, and had weak social indicators and civil society capacities. PAC’s target communities and estates all had high need, but since this was a new project, partner organizations had chosen to work in
estates where they had a well-established presence and were accepted among beneficiary communities. It will be henceforth important to focus on estate communities with great needs as determined through analysis of district-level poverty and vulnerability data.

The program had a positive reputation, as verified through interviews with a range of community members and stakeholders. The project generated new networks, knowledge and synergies among stakeholders. It also opened new spaces for information and knowledge sharing in both districts. This could be seen through the seed grant community project activities and community radio forums that brought youth, LGA officials, and resource persons together to address pressing issues in the community, such as school attrition, GBV issues, lack of ID documents, language discrimination, and rights. This process of public discussion and joint problem solving with stakeholders aids beneficiaries, empowers previously marginalized groups, expands public knowledge, and builds trust between communities, state officials, and partners. The program appears to have laid a strong foundation for SFCG’s continuing role as a development partner in the plantation areas of Sri Lanka.

While the youth leadership program implemented by Seva Lanka has generated visible impacts, the community radio component has had less impact due to partner organizations’ capacity issues and radio reception difficulties that limited the overall reach of the program. This program component will need to be re-conceptualized in the second phase of the SFCG project.

There appeared to be a good balance and distribution of stakeholders, with state and local governance agencies and service providers, as well as civil society groups (CSOs and NGOs). However, there is need for deeper analysis of the plantation communities’ socio-cultural and political contexts, and a well-articulated advocacy strategy that systematically engages key stakeholders and policy makers (estate management, trade unions, and LGA officials). In short, a top-down and bottom-up approach—perhaps through identification, selection and scaling up of some of the seed grant activities (e.g. job fair)—will be needed to ensure sustainability and empowerment of youth in Hill Country plantations.

Project Design, Relevance and Coherence

The program integrated rights issues with youth leadership training and individual and community empowerment in its program logic, activities, outputs and impacts. Despite apparent gaps in project design, implementation was effective with regard to the project’s goals, objectives, outputs and outcomes as they affected the primary beneficiary group of youth and immediate stakeholders.

A number of activities were specified, including training of youth leaders to facilitate community engagement with estate management, local government authorities (LGA) and service providers, training Grama Nilhadaris Estate Heads and Community Leaders on how to advise community members about accessing essential documentation and services for common grievances, training on GBV, and providing a range of semi-legal aid services at the village level.

The program design would have benefited from a longer gestation period, more context analysis, and greater fine-tuning of program implementation mechanisms. SFCG field staff and program partners’ social mobilization experience, local knowledge, and implementation strengths appeared to have reduced some gaps in the project design concerning
implementation mechanisms and impact indicators in the monitoring and evaluation framework. Going forward, it will be important to design separate outcome, output, and impact indicators for primary and secondary beneficiary groups (e.g. youth who received training and the wider community).

PAC had effectively “localized” the notion “of access to justice” and rights-based development in line with the needs, capacities, and circumstances of target communities with lower social indicators (maternal and child health, education), lower social capital (networks, information), and poorer access to LGA services relative to others, often due to language discrimination. SFCG seed grant-funded workshops led by each of the nine youth groups directly addressed the community’s problematic lack of access to LGA services, like difficulties in obtaining birth certificates and ID papers (required to enroll children in schools), or brokers appropriating EPF and ETF pensions of elderly and illiterate estate workers. Additionally, community level awareness raising workshops were organized among youth groups, which focused on alcoholism, domestic violence, and remedies for high school attrition. Radio programs had focused on the need for good money management to address alcoholism and domestic violence in an integrated manner. One of the youth groups focused on remedies for joblessness stemming from the socio-economic marginalization of Tamil plantation youth by hosting a job fair that gathered youth, potential employers, and other stakeholders.

The two main components of the program had good synergy, program concept, and logic. The two main implementation mechanisms-youth leadership and community media—were complementary and context-appropriate. Governance-related rights issues faced by the historically marginalized Hill plantation Tamil community were addressed in relevant, constructive and creative ways.

The Fordyce Youth Group provided Tamil-Sinhala translation and other assistance to elderly and illiterate estate workers found it difficult to collect their pension funds from state authorities because they were unable to read the forms and fill in the necessary documentation. A workshop was held on the issue. Often “brokers” or middlemen would “help” these elderly workers but would appropriate almost fifty percent of their accumulated pension fund as payment, causing grave losses to already poor and vulnerable elderly folk. One youth leader from Fordyce noted proudly during an FGD: “We youth club members helped elderly people who were vulnerable to exploitation from brokers by filing their EPF and ETF documents free of charge and “putting the brokers out of business”!

The project clearly educated youth groups in the selected estates on their rights and responsibilities, enhancing their knowledge and skills on matters such as networking and communication.

The Nuwara Eliya District Social Integration Officer who participated as a resource person in the Community Radio forum (broadcast to other areas on the subject of EPF payments) said, “the Fordyce Youth Club members did a great service both by helping vulnerable elderly community members secure their pensions and by making myself and other LGA service providers aware of this problem as well.”
Youth became aware of their language rights, realizing they could speak Tamil with LGA officials—often only spoke Sinhala but were legally required to also work in Tamil—in order to access identification cards and EPF/ETF payments. The Youth Club activities funded by SFCG seed grants contributed to awareness of language rights among the wider community and enabled greater access to essential services for vulnerable or disempowered community members.

At the same time, community radio programs and seed grant activities were used to raise awareness of local governance agencies and service providers. The project had thus generated an “awareness structure” on civic rights and needs in the selected estate communities, including on security issues faced by youth, women, and children.

The youth leadership-training program and seed grant activities enabled beneficiary trust building between youth who are seen as “troublesome,” and helped create awareness of entitlements, particularly for women and children facing high levels of GBV. This was particularly evident where coordination and partnership with Estate Management and GoSL local government service providers were considered strong by state officials and partners. There was a request for similar youth focused projects in other estates where similar needs were identified by an estate Manager and a Kachcheri official.

The SFCG program had effectively localized or indigenized the notions of rights and access to justice in line with the socio-political context of beneficiary communities in a post-war Sri Lanka. This resulted in increased awareness among the Tamil people in the Hill Country, particularly youth, regarding their civic rights and responsibilities. Tamil people in the target areas demonstrated increased knowledge regarding their rights and responsibilities as citizens (e.g. language, housing) and methods to address them. In future interventions, more attention may also be paid to the economic and social rights (e.g. land and housing) as well as political concerns (e.g. voter education and political accountability) of the Hill Country Tamil people, many of whom have only recently received citizenship and voting rights.

The project approach had very high relevance given the number of people who lack documents and/or were in need of assistance to deal with local authorities. However, other rights activities addressing the economic and social needs of the youth would prove to be necessary even after the documents had been procured.

Gender

Interventions on GBV and alcoholism (one of the key triggers of GBV) were highly relevant and appreciated in the estate communities where youth groups had conducted GBV awareness raising workshops with seed grant funds (Stockholm, Bearet and Hopton).

GBV is a significant issue in the plantation communities where domestic violence is fairly normalized and, as one youth club member explained during a FGD in Bearet Estate, “a man hitting his wife is like a tradition and will not stop easily.” Deeper and more sustained analysis and longer-term interventions are necessary to address the culturally sensitive problem through the youth leadership training program. A multi-pronged approach is necessary.

During field visits and FGDs, it was apparent that young women and girls in the youth clubs tended to take a back seat when male peers were present. More attention needs to be given to
encouraging young women’s civic engagement, political participation, and leadership in these communities.

Partner organizations may need capacity building in order to analyze and develop an integrated plan that promotes women’s leadership in the community and draws from a well-articulated gender strategy that also addresses GBV.

**Project Partners and Implementation**

SFCG’s PAC project was implemented through local partners that have solid experience working with social mobilization and community radio in the targeted communities. These organizations, as is the case with many others, had both strengths and weaknesses in areas relevant to the SFCG project. For instance, Seva Lanka’s experience in social mobilization for income generation and microfinance in the project areas counter-balanced its lack of experience working on youth and rights-based interventions.

The experience, local knowledge, and implementation strengths of SFCG field staff and program partners helped ensure efficient delivery of project outputs. However, inadequate subject expertise and human resources may have constrained project impacts, as will be evident in the output review.

The partnership with Seva Lanka is sustainable and may be deepened, while the partnership with the Power Foundation would need to be reassessed to account for its recent financial crisis.\(^6\)

While the Power Foundation ensured that the delivery and quality of SFCG project outputs (the radio drama, and talk shows) were quite high, the community radio component’s impact was affected by reception problems and the Power Foundation’s internal struggles. Seva Lanka’s youth leadership training and empowerment program would have benefited from social mobilizers that have subject expertise in rights-based work with young people. Seva Lanka was initially nervous about engaging in work of this nature due to the adverse environment for rights-based interventions in Sri Lanka.

**Recommendation:** When collaborating with organizations, a politico-economic risk assessment should first be conducted to determine the sustainability of the partner and the value of partner capacity building. This is particularly important as organizational learning and knowledge retention is important for sustainable project interventions.

An initial survey and study of the use of media (radio, TV, magazines) in the target communities is the optimal preliminary step for the media intervention. An expert in media analysis should conduct the initial study.

**Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) and Knowledge Management**

Baseline studies are recommended, preferably with a control group for M&E and a midterm review for course correction in an on-going program. The log frame can best specify program implementation mechanisms; it can also be used to develop clear output and impact levels.

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6The Power Foundation had effectively shut down at the time of the final evaluation due to political and economic reasons, as well as the post-war withdrawal of funders. Its program staff had also found other jobs and moved out of the organization.
indicators by distinguishing measurable, short-term and direct program outputs from long-term, indirect project impacts.

Gender disaggregated data on beneficiaries was available, but greater attention to gender analysis and girls’ participation in the youth leadership program will be necessary going forward. This is particularly true for the development and mainstreaming of a GBV module in the training program.

A midterm review of the program would have been beneficial, as this is a pilot program. Staff could have gained valuable perspectives from a comprehensive review in the midst of their program delivery.

It is advised that SFCG-SL instil a culture of institutional learning and strategic project documentation, as well as consolidate resource materials into training manuals that could be used in future training. These measures would be particularly pertinent to the data generated through monitoring to improve program implementation in the future and build the capacity of partners in conflict sensitive media skills and “Common Ground” approaches.

While qualitative program monitoring was strong, a more systematic integration of baseline data, along with both qualitative and quantitative indicators, would be useful. Qualitative program monitoring enabled identification of needs and the addition of new training components (book-keeping and language rights) based on observation and feedback from monitoring visits. Quantitative monitoring could be strengthened. For instance, it would have been useful to know the numbers of youth who actually received all the trainings to identify other youth training and capacity building needs and design future interventions.

Challenges, Constraints, and Opportunities:

Youth are a highly mobile and restless group that tends to be in a transitional stage in life. Some youth who participated in training programs (in some instances, almost 30%) did not continue because they either relocated for a new job or got married and left the community. The mobility of the primary target group has proven to be a challenge to the program effectiveness and sustainability.

SFCG program and partner staff have also encountered some difficulties in reaching some of the more remote target areas due to poor road conditions and hilly terrain.

One of the apparent constraints to joint programming at the district-level was the weak transport facilities and infrastructure of the partner organizations, Power Foundation and Seva Lanka. SFCG may wish to contribute to strengthening partners’ infrastructure and review its options on district-level programming. SFCG could also consider compiling an integrated beneficiary database, moving forward with integrated program designs in consultation with partners, and develop an integrated beneficiary identification and M&E framework so as to build a district-level program platform and network.

Project partners and stakeholders mentioned that activities were sometimes rushed through without sufficient time for organization, at times generating tensions between stakeholders and project partners. This matter would require attention in future programs.

Unexpected Outcomes (Positive and Negative)
The program’s emphasis on “civic rights” though access to LGA services (as evident in the majority of youth club seed grant activities) was widened to explicitly address social and economic rights issues faced by the youth and beneficiary communities, including domestic violence and GBV, land rights, and livelihood concerns.

Project partner Seva Lanka may have constrained initial social mobilizing due to its lack of experience in working with youth or rights-based approaches, but engagement in the project has kindled its continuing interest in such work.

The youth federation set up in Hatton by program participants was not a planned outcome. This federation comprises representatives from four different youth groups who meet regularly, having first supported each other in their project implementation. These youth have also coordinated other events, including the exposure/exchange program to Colombo.

**Sustainability**

The two partner organizations have implemented many projects in the two districts for the last few years. Power Foundation celebrated its 25th anniversary in 2012. Seva Lanka has a well-established program with multiple donors, improving its prospects of becoming the lead partner. These commitments were best conveyed in the words of the Seva Lanka district program director, Ms. Siva, who noted, “At first we were nervous about rights-based work due to its sensitive nature. However, we now feel confident and are able to continue the program after seeing the results. This is a first for us as we have not worked directly with youth in the past.”

Not all program components merit continuation. The program was in many ways simply a pilot; some of its components were designed to address pressing needs that, once addressed, would not recur. For example, youth groups could only facilitate procurement of EPF/ETF documentation for the elderly once per individual. Other components remain important with continued prospects for positive impact, such as capacity building or promoting national linkages to the Ministry of Sport for inclusion of estate youth in national programs.

Program results could have been consolidated, enhanced, and amplified if funding were committed for a longer period. This would also be the case had the youth who underwent training on community leadership been given more time to develop, scale-up, and extend the reach of their community services and rights-based work. 18 months is an inadequate amount of time for an organization and program that is just establishing itself and seeking acceptance among beneficiary communities, particularly since community level attitudinal change is the fruit of a long-term intervention. For instance, the GBV seed grant activities undertaken by two youth groups and the GBV-focused radio talk shows only touched the tip of the iceberg on the taboo subjects of domestic violence and women’s political participation. There should be more time and training for youth leaders to formulate an integrated and strategic intervention that mobilizes the community to change attitudes, end entrenched practices of GBV, and promote young women’s leadership and mobility.

**Recommendations**

1. In a future project cycle, SFCG may wish to focus on the Badulla District where target areas were poorer, more isolated, and harder to access. Social indicators and civil society
capacities are furthermore weaker in this area; it would be beneficial to identify a new or second partner to work explicitly on partner capacity building.

2. The program’s training course materials should be consolidated into training manuals for future use. This recommendation would be relevant to both the youth leadership training and the community radio and media training. An SFCG training manual tailored to the social context of plantation youth would be valuable for effective knowledge management, retention, and strengthening of the program for future SFCG work. The manual should be developed in consultation with human resources personnel and draw on feedback from student evaluations.

3. Regarding the community radio and media component, it would be useful to commission a media expert to identify the most appropriate type of media intervention—taking into account patterns and types of media (radio, TV, street theatre) used among the beneficiary communities—and formulate the best strategy for a Common Ground media intervention. Such a study could help determine further SFCG programming directions for media interventions that add great value for rights-based community awareness raising and education.

4. Future interventions would be enhanced by incorporating a district-level youth network that is linked to the relevant national and local government authorities (e.g. Ministry of Youth, Sports). The network could then be scaled up to address issues faced by plantation youth. This may also serve as a platform for dialogue with estate management on labor, youth employment, and livelihood concerns. It may be useful to institute an integrated beneficiary identification framework to pinpoint appropriate youth groups to form the network.

5. Advocacy and M&E capacity building of SFCG field staff and partners would strengthen program results and systematize the use of data for joint programming, knowledge retention, and management. To this end, project outcome and output indicators should be differentiated and clearly specified in the logical framework.

**Youth Leadership Component**

According to the Project Proposal, the primary outcome of the youth leadership component was to “strengthen the skills of young leaders for active and constructive engagement of their communities and decision-makers to improve the exercise of their rights.” This outcome was envisioned as being achieved through the following outputs:

1. Youth leadership building and civic engagement workshops
2. Structured youth-led initiatives to address key factors in community development and citizenship

The youth leadership program implemented by Seva Lanka focused on youth training and mobilization for community development. The program entailed identification and training of 50 youth leaders from ten estates. Those selected participated in two sets of leadership training designed to develop their leadership, civic engagement, analytic, and bookkeeping skills. These skills were thought to enable young men and women to run youth clubs and to design community action projects with citizenship and justice themes. This program component facilitated the collective action of young people through seed grants for youth groups/clubs to encourage the engagement of youth in community decision-making. It
facilitated youth networking with LGA stakeholders and inter-generational dialogue in formal forums by bringing together youth and relevant key power brokers from their communities.

**Youth Leadership Building and Civic Engagement Workshops**

The evaluation team interviewed young people selected for the leadership training from nine of ten youth groups in the two districts. The youth had clearly benefited from the program and exposure visits. Those who had undergone leadership training noted that their analytical and problem-solving skills had improved significantly, along with their general social awareness and ability to interact with others. The youth also reported being able to address problems in a constructive way.

As one young member of the Stockholm Youth Group said to the evaluation team: “Now we know how to handle the problem of missing identity cards and birth certificates because through our seed grant project, we learned which government office to visit and to whom we should talk in order to get the documents. Back in those days, we were scared to go to government officials because we did not speak the language (Sinhala), Now we know about language rights and understand that we can get help from the official languages desk officer.”

In most cases, the trained youth leaders were viewed as role models among their peers, as was clearly the case with Suresh who had also been very successful as a youth parliamentarian. Those who had undergone youth training were able to take the initiative in addressing community issues like domestic violence, something they had not known how to address before. Several young women who participated in the training and subsequent exposure visits noted that they now had the confidence to speak out in public forums, whereas they were previously too shy and afraid to do so. The positive impact of the program was also evident among secondary beneficiaries who benefited from the youth’s awareness raising activities regarding community problems like alcoholism or domestic violence.

**Youth-led Initiatives to Address Community Development and Citizenship**

Youth group activities funded by seed grants had a positive impact and impressed their communities due to their high relevance to pressing social problems and service-oriented assistance to vulnerable community members (the elderly, the illiterate, and victims of violence). Youth club facilitation of acquiring essential documentation was a highly valuable exercise that brought together the two project dimensions of awareness raising and concrete youth engagement. Over 200 applications for birth certificates and ID cards were submitted. At the time of project completion, 77 persons had received their documentation while several hundreds of people learned how to obtain these documents. There was a request for similar projects in other estates where such needs are apparent.

**Relevance and Coherence**

The selection of youth for leadership training and exposure visits followed objective and relevant criteria, such as age, residence in the community, and gender balance. The leadership training and exposure visits significantly broadened the knowledge, networks, collective action, and scope of rights-based youth activities, while empowering youth to take initiatives for the benefit of the community. Youth clubs were previously revolved around sports and cultural activities during festive seasons, with few forays into community empowerment.
Youth group seed grant activities addressed problems and issues faced by members of their communities, including lack of documentation, (ID cards, birth certificates) that impeded access to rights and public services, access to EPF and ETF funds, domestic and gender-based violence in the community, and youth unemployment.

The youth group focus on facilitating legal document acquisition and EPF/ETF payments for elders was determined based on needs identified in the baseline study. Community members and stakeholders alike valued this focus.

**Impact**

Program impact is evident at the individual level. The evaluation team has collected many personal stories young men and women who spoke of gaining greater self-confidence, making new friends and networks, heightening interest in helping advance the community, and participating in youth club activities.

Relationships between the youth, their communities, and key stakeholders, including some estate management and government authorities, had improved throughout the course of the project. This became evident in the increased levels of communication between youth group members and government officials. The latter even offered to help youth group members and their communities to access LGA services at the final stakeholders meeting in Hatton. Youth group seed grant activities improved the image of youth and provided opportunities to discuss a range of community concerns, particularly the lack of information on available government services/procedures for exercising their rights. These concerns were raised with the local officials through follow-up exchange as well as indirectly through other activities and youth-led initiatives.

**Lessons Learned:**

This project component may be contextualized in the plantation sector’s current state of socio-economic transition. A generation gap currently exists between youth and their elders in terms of aspirations, ambitions, and expectations, prompting significant levels of inter-generational conflict in plantation communities. Young people have higher economic aspirations than their parents have and tend to spurn both their elders’ way of life and the plantation economy that sustain their parents. This is mainly due to and the perceived social stigma of plantation (“coolie”) labor that stems from its association with indentured labor. However, plantation youth have low social capital (education and social networks) due to their geographic and linguistic isolation from mainstream Sri Lankan society. The SFCG youth leadership training consequently addressed the tension by promoting inter-generational and intra-community dialogue, helping to better channel the energies of this demographic segment.

As the need for official legal documents dissipates once the papers have been issued, it is important to move on to addressing social and economic rights that are critically linked with youth livelihoods. In this context, the Shanon Youth Group used their seed grant to hold a job fair that explicitly addressed economic concerns faced by youth. The faire convened private sector employers, recruitment agencies, and the plantation youth, resulting in a particularly rewarding model that may be replicated in other estates. The need for decent jobs and livelihoods emerged as one of the most pressing concerns of plantation youth in the course of
the evaluation. Future SFCG work could engage these concerns more explicitly from the economic rights perspective.

**Constraints**

However, due to the mobility of youth, a high dropout rate was recorded; many who attended the first set of leadership training did not attend the second set, resulting in a lack of continuity. In addition to objective criteria like age (19-30), residence, and gender balance, the participant selection process may be improved by requiring interviews of short-listed candidates regarding their future plans, motivation to join the program, and commitment to its aims and values.

One youth group in Hatton failed to achieve its objectives due to various conflicts among the members and the inability to handle seed grant funds in a transparent and effective manner.

Both SFCG and its partners have been responsive to the needs of youth groups, adding on training components like bookkeeping and record keeping to assist youth leaders in managing collective seed grant-funded activities and projects. Networking opportunities and advice were also offered to the youth.

The youth leadership training needs to be documented. Greater emphasis should also be placed on conflict analysis and resolution skills for peacebuilding. It may be appropriate to include a short psychosocial counseling module in the training program, particularly to address the problem of domestic and gender-based violence in the communities.

**Sustainability**

In Hatton, four youth groups formed a District organization for the political empowerment of youth. Some of the activities were one-off initiatives, such as getting birth certificates; it would be important to develop a strategy and road map for future group activities if the momentum is to be sustained.

It may be possible to build on this and scale up to district-level youth empowerment and advocacy programming by incorporating a formal district-level youth platform for dialogue with Estate Management and LGA authorities.

**Recommendations**

1. To address high turnover and youth mobility, SFCG should consider a more rigorous applicant screening process that includes qualitative criteria beyond the current framework (age, residence, gender balance). For instance, SFCG field staff and partner organizations may wish to conduct interviews with shortlisted applicants to assess their motivation, ability to stay with the program, and desire to contribute to their communities.

2. Funding for another year would allow the consolidation of the project and ensure sustainability in the current intervention locations. In this case, the program could also be widened to include new locations in the two districts based on analysis of district-wide poverty and vulnerability data available through the Provincial Government Agents office.
3. Additional modules could be introduced to the youth leadership training. Such modules include deeper analysis of gender issues—particularly GBV—and how to address it. The Care International project on Masculinities has developed a deeper analysis of gender issues and provided advanced training on the subject of gender. It may prove to be a useful on the subject. Another addition to the leadership training would be deeper conflict resolution skills and psychosocial counseling, which would also include a session on how to cope with GBV.

4. Also appropriate would be special leadership capacity building for young girls and women, who tend to take a back seat in the youth groups in the presence of young men.

5. Value additions would be investment in infrastructure to aid collective youth group action, such as providing a building or renovating an existing building where the youth group can meet (e.g. provision of meeting place or furniture for meeting place).

6. The Shannon Youth Group’s job fair was a particularly important activity that directly addressed the needs of community youth and families. It may be replicated in other estates.

7. More work could have been done to consolidate and scale up for project sustainability. Further work was also needed to establish a good exit strategy aside from the stakeholder meeting at district-level that brought together key stakeholders. Going forward, it will be important to strengthen the dialogue between youth and estate managers at the local level. At the district level, it is important to promote understanding, shift attitudes, and arrive at a win-win situation through dialogue to address both labor shortages and youth joblessness that stem from a mismatch in expectations in the changing structures of the plantation economy.

8. Finally, for peacebuilding among the youth of different communities, it would be useful to explore means to include youth from the adjacent villages of Sinhala and/or those who are of Muslim ethnic background in the leadership training. This would be one way to build bridges and trust between the different ethnic communities of the Hill Country.

**Community Radio and Media Outreach Component**

According to the Project Proposal, the primary outputs for this project component were:

1. Production and distribution of a 32-episode radio soap opera (drama)
2. Production and distribution of 32 interactive talk-shows, including “Know Your Rights” contests
3. Publicity and promotion campaign to promote listenership
4. Focus group discussions (FGDs) to compile and report feedback

The projected outcome of this component was the "creation of a space for collaborative and non-exploitative engagement between all key stakeholders and decision-makers through increased dialogue between community members-youth in particular-and key decision-makers." The community radio and media component of the SFCG program, implemented with Power Foundation, comprised a community radio talk show, soap opera, and media outreach program for public education and community awareness on rights issues. Power Foundation staff and selected youth leaders were trained to produce and broadcast a 32-episode radio soap opera and 32 interactive talk-shows.
episode radio drama aimed at reaching out to the greater Hill Country population. The training for community radio program-producers enabled local shows to be hosted by young people using Common Ground approaches. Meanwhile, youth group seed grant activities created roots for the media program themes, feeding the shows content and grounding them in the realities of their communities.

The radio drama included characters and rights-based storylines that conveyed key messages about citizenship and legal rights. After each week’s episode, community radio stations broadcast an interactive radio talk show with youth leaders, local government officials, plantation owners, and legal experts who provided pertinent knowledge, networks, and concrete action points for various citizenship and legal problems.

Production of Radio Soap Opera (Drama)

Power Foundation produced a 32-episode drama titled Panchavarnakkayiru (“five-colored thread”) that was aired on both Uva and Kandurata Community Radio. The program successfully produced the targeted amount of 32 episodes. The drama addressed in creative ways rights and social issues affecting the plantation community, including language rights and entitlements, alcoholism, money management, and domestic violence. The drama had a smooth and interesting run; listeners could identify their problems and find ways to solve them. The program themes focused on both civic and political rights issues along with economic and social issues.

Production of Interactive Talk Shows, Including “Know Your Rights” Contests

Power Foundation also produced the panel discussion show Netrikkan that aired on both Uva and Kandurata Community Radio and was enthusiastically received by youth who participated in the programs. The program had strong popularity because of the topics it addressed and its youthful production team. The talk show focused on issues pertaining to how estate workers could obtain legal documents. The program moreover has allowed direct communication between workers and relevant officials on issues such as EPF, ETF and labor laws. The show turned out to be a platform for estate workers to communicate their problems and have local authorities listen to their concerns and issues.

One of the significant aspects of the talk show was that the recording was done live in the ten project locations with many of the youth club and community members present in the audience. The talk shows were well received by the production unit and listeners alike.

Publicity and Promotion Campaign to Build Listenership

A quiz show and text-messaging program was organized to promote listenership. Additionally, given reception shortcomings in the program areas, the shows were copied and distributed on CDs to youth groups. SFCG also provided these groups with the appropriate sound systems to broadcast the program at community meeting locations like schools and temples.
Listeners Focus Discussions Group (FGDs) to Compile and Report Feedback

Listener FGDs proved to be an effective mechanism to obtain feedback. There was high interest in the programs but compiling and documenting the discussion (part of output 4) was not done after the first few sessions due to human resource constraints.

Relevance and Effectiveness

Both teams obtained required credentials and experience to produce the talk shows and radio drama, despite limited human resources in the Power Foundation production team. The talk show team functioned effectively and had correctly identified the aim of the program.

Both teams maintained a healthy level of confidence and had benefited from the production training. The confidence of the drama and talk show teams increased through the experiences and training they obtained while producing the shows. Most importantly, the student artists and voice actors had greater opportunities to showcase their talents and abilities, boosting their confidence levels.

Impacts

This media component is a valuable and creative aspect of the SFCG program. It has generated “buzz” among youth listeners who were drawn to the radio quiz and the prizes it offered. Young people who have heard the radio talk show say that it was empowering to hear their language, the Tamil regional dialect with South Indian influence, which has otherwise been considered too colloquial or inferior to be spoken on the airwaves.

The talk show also had direct impact with regard to LGA stakeholders and generated instant changes. The talk show improved communication levels between officials and estate communities as the program was recorded in the estates with the participation of LGA authorities and other civil society resource persons. This participation enabled youth to establish direct links and knowledge networking. This was particularly the case with the social integration LGA officers who provided information on problem solving and access to LGA services.

In one clear case of impact, the application forms to Badulla Technical College started being printed in Tamil as a result of the talk show. Other such cases of impact include sports club registration to raise funds for equipment, production of youth poetry collections, and local business leaders providing school supplies to needy children at high risk of dropping out.

Challenges and Constraints

The workload was high and difficult, given the need to manage several aspects of production simultaneously. These aspects included going on field visits, moderating the programs, editing content, and processing the final output. The production teams of the talk show and drama were overloaded with work, as each team comprised only three members. Only two of the members were directly involved in production while others were rotated in on a voluntary basis The drama team faced problems in time management and presentation as there were many tasks to handle, like determining content, script writing, recording and editing.
The effectiveness of the intervention was not maximized due to the lack of stakeholders or resource persons from the LGA or estate management in some of the shows. These officials were reluctant to speak about problems in public forums for fear of political retribution, while logistical delays would detract from production quality. The second talk show focused on women’s rights and the gender wage gap while the seventh show focused on job opportunities. Some covered job rights and the high numbers of school dropouts.

The talk show held in Madul Seema focused on alcoholism and liquor shops, but there were no local authority representatives or members of local government bodies to respond to queries about how to handle the problem. Likewise, the second program addressed women’s rights, but responders were all trade union leaders despite the need to have a government official or a representative of a women’s rights group on the show. The seventh program was held in Battawatta. It focused on government jobs and self-employment, but there was no resource person who could speak on vocational training (VT). Explaining the scope of the program clearly to such officials and then seeking their views on how best to handle the problem may be helpful.

Radio reception in many project target areas was inadequate. Uva Radio and the upcountry service were not clear in several places, sometimes due to authorities shifting broadcast frequencies. According to the production team, reception was not clear in places like Hatton, Hopton, Pasara, Lunugala, and a few places in Badulla. These technical difficulties constrained the expected project impacts.

**Unintended Consequence**

One unintended consequences of the project was that it encouraged young people to think of themselves as producers-not merely consumers or recipients of media programs-and thus agents of and for change in a community where a dependency syndrome is the heritage of the plantation management system. This was an indicator of attitudinal change.

The CDs of the radio programs were highly appreciated by audiences; they would be useful as tools for youth leadership trainings in the future.

**General Recommendations:**

1. Future media initiatives for SFCG would benefit from regular monitoring, audience testing, and feedback collection. These measures should include reflection on subjects that need more in-depth analysis, such as the sensitive topic of GBV. This may be done in consultation with and through other program partners to ensure the content serves the larger program.

2. It would be best to reassess and re-conceptualize the community radio/media component of the program in a second phase. The reassessment should be based on a media study that takes into account reception problems, the competing popularity and availability of televisions in target community homes, and youth access to advanced telephone and information communication technology. The evaluation team noted several requests during FGDs to reproduce the radio drama for television. It may be useful to undertake a research and feasibility study of doing a low budget TV program or partnering with stations.
Specific Recommendations

1. In addition to the current focus on civic and political rights, greater attention to economic issues in radio drama topics would be appropriate, particularly regarding issues like vocational training, labor rights, family planning, and housing rights. Highlighting these topics could allow the program to gain more listeners and expand the audience.

2. The production team should take on more members to attain higher quality outputs. Such outputs require comprehensive training on script writing, editing, and production, with particularly rigorous training for the talk show host to moderate the program on air more effectively. More voice training is necessary for all actors so that they may better express the feelings of their characters.

3. It was suggested that the talk shows be broadcast live so that the audience can call in with questions and get them answered in real time. In addition, talk show to one hour would provide the time for more views to be expressed. Breaking the show into two segments would not be effective.

4. Stakeholders should be sufficiently briefed on clearly specified talk show topics in order to hold more focused, productive discussions.

5. Inclusion of elders in the listeners group could result in helpful feedback.

6. Student and youth participation in the drama should be increased.

Conclusions and Future Programming

Final evaluation interviews with beneficiary communities and stakeholders reveal that the “Promoting Active Citizenship in the Hill country” (PAC) project built a positive reputation and discernible impact. Youth seed grant activities helped spread a collaboration-based work ethic, as well as empower youth to engage in collective action to improve their communities. By broadening the SFCG focus to include pressing social issues, the project also effectively localized the notion of access to justice in line with the needs, capacities, and socio-political circumstances of the community. For future projects, it may be appropriate to allocate greater attention to economic rights and labor concerns of the youth in estate communities.

In a second phase, youth groups may be encouraged to identify and work towards necessary long-term structural change in their communities through dialogue with key stakeholders, estate management in particular. SFCG and partners may also wish to scale up the program by encouraging key stakeholders and decision-makers (e.g. estate managers, trade unions, LGA officials) to promote understanding and shift attitudes. In this way, estates may perhaps arrive at a win-win situation that addresses both labor shortages and youth joblessness that stem from a mismatch in expectations in the changing structures of the plantation economy.

It would furthermore be helpful to build SFCG and partners’ capacity for advocacy and articulate a rights-based advocacy strategy for Hill Country youth that systematically addresses the necessary structural transformations from the top-down and bottom-up perspectives. In future programming, it may be appropriate to make a distinction between “strategy” and “tactics.” A strategic intervention is a long-term effort aimed at structural transformation, such as the empowerment of young women to participate in electoral politics, or transforming estate management and estate youth relationships. Tactical interventions are short-term, standalone endeavors like many of the seed grant activities.
Important rights concerns on access to LGA services have been identified and addressed through youth groups’ seed grant activities. A district-wide youth advocacy strategy will require deeper analysis of the socio-cultural, political, and economic structures that need to be transformed to empower estate youth. This may be done by discerning a hierarchy of youth needs to select priority areas for program intervention, with an appropriate road map for scaling up activities. Some of the seed grant activities (e.g. job fair) may be useful models for ensuring impact sustainability and youth empowerment in the plantation sector.

More attention should be paid to youth political education and voter education on good governance and anti-corruption campaigns, since many in the communities only recently received citizenship and voting rights. To empower women within their family and community, SFCG should prioritize an intervention on GBV designed as an explicit module in youth leadership training. A young women’s district-level youth platform could also be a tool for addressing systematic gender discrimination and lack of women’s political participation.

SFCG would benefit from greater emphasis on knowledge retention, and consolidation within the organization. Also valuable would be the promotion of a systematic M&E culture among partner organizations. Deepening and sharing knowledge is particularly important with regard to addressing GBV, a complex issue that demands both social analysis and integrated problem solving. The program has only touched the tip of the iceberg on this matter; it may also be useful to collaborate with Care International facilitators working on Masculinities in Hatton. In this context, it may be useful for youth training to include a psychosocial counseling module in addition to content on conflict transformation and resolution.
ANNEX 1: Terms of Reference for the Evaluation of Promoting Active Citizenship in the Hill Country

Search for Common Ground (SFCG) in Sri Lanka seeks an experienced evaluator/team to carry out a final evaluation of a project entitled, “Promoting Active Citizenship in the Hill Country” (PAC). The project is, funded by the US State Department Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor (DRL) and has been implemented over the last 18 months with an overall goal of empowering the Hill Tamil population to fully participate and exercise their rights with a focus on accessing essential services. The target areas include both the Central and Uva Provinces (with specific reference to the Nuwara Eliya and Badulla Districts).

This Terms of Reference (TOR) defines the work that must be carried out by the external evaluator. It provides a brief outline of the project; specifies the scope of the evaluation, and outlines the evaluation method.

1. Background
   1.1. Project Summary
   The plantation sector is a legacy of Sri Lanka’s colonial past that introduced tea and rubber cultivation to the country. Labor needed for the estates was brought into Sri Lanka from various regions in Southern India in the 18th and 19th centuries. Today, several hundreds of years later, these communities known as Indian Origin Tamils (IOTs) continue to live marginalized lives, isolated from the rest of the Sri Lankan community. Though these communities represent 5% of the national population, they account for 8% of the national poor, while 32% of the estate population lives under the poverty line – the highest number among the non-IDP populations of Sri Lanka. Despite improved access to employment and revised wages, overall development in this community is still hindered by a lack of access to nutrition, healthcare, education, water, and sanitation. In addition to poor quality of life, IOTs are still subject to the “plantation-structure” where they are dependent on plantation owners for basic services such as water, electricity, roads, and infrastructure development, as well as the issuing of records for identification documents. Although they have the right to vote, people from these communities rarely participate within the decision-making structures in their areas. This is due to a lack of knowledge and skills as well as the dearth of opportunities to interact and participate within these processes.

   In today’s context, very few young people work on the estates. They have instead chosen to work in the main cities, or in smaller towns closer to their estates, while a significant number also remain unemployed or mainly engage in casual labor. A commonly observed feature among youth is a general lack of interest or motivation to engage in community development activities. This can be partly attributed to lack of knowledge and skills, in addition to the lack of mechanisms through which they could collectively exercise their power to address the pressing needs of their communities.

   In this context, PAC entails two complementary approaches: (1) empowering Hill Country youth living and providing them with effective tools to exercise their rights, as well as (2) using media (radio) to educate the overall population in the region about citizenship and legal rights, including access to resources and services. The project was implemented in partnership with two local organizations, Seva Lanka and Power Foundation. The project targeted 10 estate divisions in the districts of Badulla and Nuwara Eliya.

   The overarching goal of the project is to empower the Tamil people in Sri Lanka’s Hill Country to identify and work toward addressing gaps in the exercise of their rights as equal citizens of the State.

   The specific objectives include:
   - Increased awareness among the Tamil people in the Hill Country—particularly youth—regarding their rights and responsibilities:
- Enhanced skills of young leaders in the active and constructive engagement of their communities and decision-makers to improve the exercise of their rights; and
- Expanded dialogue between community members—specifically youth—and key decision-makers on participation in decision-making and access to justice.

The target groups for this initiative are:
- Young men and women between 16 to 29 years of age who participated in the leadership training program and are members of youth groups
- Media (radio) professionals who were trained on the ‘Common Ground Approach’ (CGA) and develop radio drama and talk shows
- Community members in the ten project locations

The project activities include:
3. Capacity building in youth leadership and peace building
   a. Training to youth leaders on peacebuilding (Dialogue to Cooperative Action)
   b. Provision of seed grants to implement activities
   c. Dialogue forums with stakeholders

2. Media
   a. Training of youth on Common Ground Media
   b. Curriculum summit for story and script development
   c. Production of radio drama and talk shows
   d. Listener group establishment

This project was intended to have several direct results:
- Improving the skills and knowledge of 50 youth leaders in leadership and conflict analysis to address rights issues in their communities;
- Enabling youth to produce radio dramas and talk shows in the Common Ground framework that address rights and responsibilities in a solution-oriented manner; and
- Improving the relationship between plantation youth and key stakeholders in the plantation and state sector.

1.2 Organizational Background
Search for Common Ground (www.sfcd.org) has been working in Sri Lanka since June 2011. Its overarching mission is to transform the way the world deals with conflict: away from adversarial approaches and toward cooperative solutions. SFCG works in 30 countries in across five continents engaging in long-term processes of incremental transformation.

2. The Evaluation
2.1 Organizational Goal
SFCG has committed to conducting programmatic evaluations in order to maximize the effectiveness of its work and engage in continuous improvement and learning within programs and across the organization.

2.2 Evaluation Criteria
The primary objective of the requested evaluation is to determine the results of the project, specifically in reference to meeting the goal and objectives outlined in the proposal. The evaluation will look at both components of the project – youth and media.

It should also serve to measure the effectiveness of the overall project approach and include lessons learned and recommendations for project leadership, staff, and partners. The recommendations should include future programming ideas relevant to youth in the plantation community.
SFCG understands that it might not be possible to assess the impact of ‘peace writ large’ within the short duration of the project period. SFCG will thus focus on monitoring and evaluating the intermediate changes or outcomes in knowledge, attitudes, skills, and behaviors of its target groups.

The evaluation will not only consider the indicators outlined in the project logframe but will also use the following questions:

**GENERAL**
- To what extent was the project’s approach able to empower Hill Country citizens (youth in particular) regarding their rights and responsibilities? Did it enhance their ability to access essential services? Was the set of activities sufficient to meet the overall goal and objectives? To what extent did the different categories of activities complement each other? Were the selected implementing partners the most relevant to the problem being addressed?
- Did the project target the right group of beneficiaries? Who received support and why? Was there an inclusion/exclusion bias in selection of stakeholders and bias in selecting among youth participants involved in the project?
- To what extent did the project achieve its intended results? What major factors contributed to or hindered the achievement of its objectives (factors of success and challenges)?
- Have there been any unexpected outcomes (positive and/or negative)?

**YOUTH**
- Did participants’ knowledge and skills in youth leadership, peacebuilding, and conflict transformation improve, and to what extent did youth participants use the learned skills to address issues in their communities?
- How successful have the trained youth been in serving as positive leaders among their peers? What successes and challenges did they experience in this regard? What was the degree and quality of SFCG and partner assistance to youth leaders in helping them fulfill that role?
- Did the project foster dialogue between youth groups or between youth and other stakeholders (directly through follow-up exchange or indirectly through other activities and youth’s own initiatives)?

**MEDIA**
- Did the talk shows and radio drama effectively address the issues identified during the curriculum summit?
- Have there been any changes in knowledge, skills, and attitudes of the media team involved in the production?
- What changes in the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of the target audience can be attributed to the media programs?

**2.3 Audience**
The primary audience of this evaluation includes:
- The staff and members of SFCG Sri Lanka and partner organizations: this audience segment can draw out reflections and lessons from the project through the evaluations and to use recommendations for future project designs;
- The funding agency, the US State Department (DRL): the evaluation will allow DRL to assess project impact as it relates to the stated goal and objectives. Additionally, the evaluation will present a cost-benefit analysis that will help DRL determine if the project could be part of a larger initiative; and
- The greater development field: with specific reference to peacebuilding and good governance sectors.

The secondary audience includes SFCG headquarters, other SFCG country programs, external funders, and partner organizations who may be interested in the results and lessons from the project evaluation.
2.4 Evaluation Methodology:
The SFCG approach to evaluation is grounded in the guiding principles of our work: participation, cultural sensitivity, commitment to building capacity, honest and productive criticism, and within-context approaches. In addition, SFCG will adhere to the standards set by the American Joint Committee on Standards for Evaluation, including utility, feasibility, propriety, and accuracy.

The evaluation team will visit the two project districts and meet with the project participants, partners, SFCG staff, and relevant stakeholders. The methodology and tools of evaluation will be further developed and finalized in consultation with SFCG management and the DM&E Manager.

The evaluation team will use quantitative and qualitative methods of evaluation, including:
- Desk research on previous evaluations, quarterly reports, baseline surveys, success stories, training manuals, etc;
- Interviews with SFCG partner organizations, key target youth clubs and its members, seed grant beneficiaries, community members, and other relevant stakeholders; and
- A small survey aimed at the training participants to appraise the effectiveness of the training and coaching.

3. Scope of Work
3.1 Location:
This evaluation will take place in the Badulla and Nuwara Eliya districts and cover all 10 project locations.

3.2 Deliverables:
The final report should be written in English and not exceed 30 pages. It should be submitted electronically in a MS-Word document and include the following:
- Executive Summary of key findings and recommendations;
- Evaluation findings, analysis, and conclusions with associated evidence and data clearly illustrated. Use of tables, graphs, quotes, and anecdotes to illustrate the findings is encouraged;
- Recommendations for future action, which should be practical and linked directly to conclusions; and
- Appendices, including methodology and evaluation tools, list of interviewees, questionnaires, and brief biography of evaluator(s).

The evaluator will incorporate the comments furnished by SFCG and will submit an edited final report. The report will be credited to the evaluator and posted on SFCG’s website. It may also be placed in other public domains at the discretion of SFCG.

3.3 Duration and Key Deadlines
The duration of contract will be a total of 25 working days between November 10th, 2012 and December 15th, 2012. Specific dates and deadlines are as follows:
- The evaluation plan should be submitted by November 1st, 2012
- The field evaluation should take place between November 10th – 20th, 2012
- The first draft of the report, along with all financial receipts, should be submitted by November 30th, 2012
- The final report should be submitted by December 15th, 2012

3.4 Logistical Support
SFCG will provide preparatory and logistical assistance to the evaluator(s), including:
- Background materials (e.g. project proposal, quarterly reports, baseline assessment report, existing evaluations)
- Meetings, phone/e-mail communication with project staff
- Interviewee names and contact information
• Technical assistance(e.g. input for questionnaire development, background information)
• All logistical support for the field visit, including travel costs (land and air travel)
• Meetings and appointments with stakeholders and beneficiaries in the field (if necessary).

4. Evaluator's Role and Competencies

The final evaluation will be carried out by an evaluation team that will report to the Team Leader. The evaluator(s) will work closely with SFCG’s Senior Manager for DM&E.

The external evaluator(s) will:
- Identify and define evaluation priority areas, methodology, and indicators;
- Design and implement data collection;
- Analyze data and findings;
- Write and submit a final report; and
- Make a brief presentation of findings and recommendations to SFCG Sri Lanka and project partners.

Evaluator/team competencies:
- Demonstrated experience and technical skills in the evaluation of peacebuilding projects;
- Strong proficiency in English and Tamil (oral and written);
- Strong understanding of Sri Lanka, the plantation sector in particular; and
- Previous experience with youth programming and/or media for social transformation

The evaluator(s) will be expected to submit a proposal with following information:
1. Introduction to the evaluator/evaluation team or organization
2. Profile of relevant skills and previous experience
3. Proposed methodology for undertaking the evaluation
4. Activity schedule
5. Proposed price schedule that covers all expenses
### ANNEX 2: Field Visit Schedule and Interviews

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>November 16, 2012</strong></td>
<td>- Travel to Hatton and participate in stakeholder meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Discussion with NGO Coordinator</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>November 17, 2012</strong></td>
<td>- Discussion with partner organization and field visit to Stockholm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- 8.30am- 9.30am– Discussion with partner organization Seva Lanka</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- 10.00am-01.00pm – Stakeholders meeting (school principal, teachers, union leader, and crutch attendant)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- 1.00pm- 3.00pm – Youth focus group meeting(Stockholm)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- 4.00pm- 5.00pm– Meeting with Potree youth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>November 18, 2012</strong></td>
<td>- Field visit to Fordeys and Berat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- 9.00am- 10.00am – Meeting with health officer (Fordeys)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- 10.00am- 12.30pm–Youth group and listener group meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- 2.30pm – 3.30pm – Meet youth group members (Berat)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>November 19, 2012</strong></td>
<td>- Field visit to Shannon</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- 9.00am- 11.30pm– Meet Estate manager, welfare officer, Grama Sevaker</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- 12.30pm- 3.30pm – Visits to DS office to meet social welfare officer, Berandina officer and Pradeshiya Shaba Secretary (PS)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- 4.30pm- 6.30pm– Shannon youth group and listener group meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>November 20, 2012</strong></td>
<td>- 9.00pm- 12.30pm – Meet Farther Banny, Center for Social Concern(CSC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Meet with other NGOs (Karuna-PRIDO, Jayaraj &amp; Lalithambigai – Home for Human Rights)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>November 25, 2012</strong></td>
<td>Morning Travel from Colombo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- 11.30am – “Know Your Rights” quiz program, Passara TMV 4.00pm – Visit from Telbedda – Youth group meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5.00pm – Focus group meeting Participation: Listener group members, Samurdhi officer, Grama Niladharie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>07.00 PM -Meeting with Mr. S.P. Wijekumaran - Assistant Secretary of LJEWU, Regional Director (Uva) Rank - I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>November 26, 2012</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

32
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Morning</td>
<td>10.00am – Meeting with Uvakela Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12.30pm-5.00pm</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Mr. Chandramohan, social service development officer</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Principal, Vikneshwara Tamil Maha Vidiyalayam, Hopton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evening</td>
<td>5.00pm – Visit from Hopton Division, youth group meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5.30pm– Listener group meeting (Participation: union leaders, community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>members, Kovil committee leaders, and Listeners)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**November 27, 2012**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Full Day</td>
<td>9.30am- 3.30pm – Evaluation of Power Media Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>By: Mr. Manivannan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.30pm - 5.30pm – Field visit (listener group meeting– Thelbathe)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Morning</td>
<td>8.30am- Meeting with Mr. S.S. Manoharan</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Educational Department, Passara</td>
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<td></td>
<td>10.00am-11.00am - Field visit to Uvakelle, youth group meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11.00am- 12.00pm - Listener group meeting (Participation: union leaders,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>community members, Kovil committee leaders, and listeners)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evening</td>
<td>Field visit to Amunudowa</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.00pm-3.00pm - Youth group meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.00pm- 4.00pm - Listener group meeting (Participation: principal, union</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>leaders, community members, Kovil committee leaders, and listeners)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**November 28, 2012**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Morning</td>
<td>9.00am- 12.00pm – Stakeholder meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- District Secretariat (GA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Mr. K. Musharrm, Social Integration Promotion Assistant, the District</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Secretariat Office, Badhulla.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Mr. Navarathne– NGO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evening</td>
<td>2.00pm– TRUST director (couldn’t meet)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.30pm – Discussion with Power Foundation Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morning</td>
<td>: Mr. M. Selvaraj - Media Reporter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Telephone conversation with Priya(Power foundation media programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>coordinator)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ANNEX 3: Open-ended Questionnaire for Individual Interviews and FGD

1. Name: 2. Gender: 3. Age 4. Address/ Estate
5. Education (highest grade passed) 6. Languages Spoken: Tamil/ Sinhala/ both?

________________________________________________________________________

2. Engagement in SFCG Activities: Training Programs

Leadership training, media training, group member, general community member?

Please describe the activities done during the project. Were they helpful/useful?

Before/After Scenarios

How could the leadership or media training be improved – (ex. new topics etc.)?

3. Group Activities

Were group activities useful? How useful were they for long-term self-development?

Did the activities increase your social networks/social service/work with community?

Did you increase your interactions with external community service providers/local government authorities through the program?

Did the program help you gain new knowledge about rights and responsibilities/ dispute resolution skills/ Gender awareness & GBV/ higher self-confidence?

Has the project brought about improvements to the community?

How could the group’s activities be improved and made sustainable in the future?

4. For Wider Community Members:

What do you know/how do you know about the work of the program?

What do you think of it?

Was it and will it be useful to you? To the wider community? How?
# ANNEX 4: Revised Log Frame (Outcomes and Indicators)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal: To empower the Tamil people in SriLanka’s Hill Country to identify and work toward addressing gaps in the exercise of their rights as equal citizens of the state</th>
<th>Increased cooperation between plantation communities and key stakeholders (e.g. companies and state) to access essential services (education, health, legal) and livelihood opportunities.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% of targeted citizens who state that they have increased their use of formal mechanisms for accessing justice and essential services for their communities. Disaggregated by age and gender.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Outcomes

**Outcome A:** Increased awareness among the Tamil people in the Hill Country—youth in particular—regarding their rights and responsibilities

**A1.** % of Tamil people in target areas who demonstrate increased knowledge about their rights and responsibilities as citizens (e.g. language, housing) and awareness of methods to address them. Disaggregated by age and gender.

**A2.** % of radio listeners who can identify strategies to combat violence against women and children. Disaggregated by age, gender, and ethnicity.

**Outcome B:** Enhanced skills of young leaders for active and constructive engagement of their communities and decision-makers to improve the exercise of their rights

**B1.** # of programs initiated by youth leaders that increase rights awareness, improve access to essential services, or increase communication between stakeholders to resolve issues of concern.

**Outcome C:** Increased dialogue between community members, specifically youth, and key decision-makers around participation in decision-making and access to justice

**C1.** # of events held including youth, civil society organizations, local authorities, and plantation management, that address improving access to essential services and economic livelihood opportunities.

**C2.** % of radio listeners who report having increased confidence in local government and plantation managers in addressing access to essential services and livelihood opportunities. Disaggregated by gender, age, and ethnicity.
ANNEX 5: Evaluators’ Biographies

Dr. Darini Rajasingham Senanayake is a social anthropologist with an extensive list of research publications. She has over two decades of policy advising, monitoring, and evaluation experience in the fields of governance, state and civil society capacity building, rights-based development, gender and human security, poverty reduction and livelihood recovery in post-disaster contexts. Her expertise in these areas are particularly focused on work in South and South East Asia, more specifically, the Maldives, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Indonesia.

Mr. Nadaraja Manivanan is a lecturer at the Sri Lanka College of Journalism. He has many years of experience working with community radio in the Uva. He also works as a news anchor for the Independent Television Network (ITN) Tamil Service and has conducted research on media in ethnic politics for UNESCO in Sri Lanka.

Ms. Natasha Hilary is based at the Social Scientist’s Association in Sri Lanka and has worked as a monitoring and evaluation assistant for various projects, including the USAID- and ARD-funded initiative on inter-religious harmony.