



Janathakshan

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Water for Life: Mobilizing Partnerships for Better Water Management

“Clean Water and Sanitation”, the Goal 6 of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of United Nations has a clear vision to ensure water safety and better opportunities for improved sanitation for everyone by 2030. One of the must have resources in the world is “Water”. Evidently, the “World Water Day” (WWD) is celebrated every year on 22nd of March. This year, in 2023, the theme of the WWD is “accelerating change” to solve water and sanitation crisis.

According to United Nations, currently the world is faced with a water crisis which will be intense in the coming years. United Nations have indicated that billions of people and countless schools, businesses, healthcare centres, farms and factories don't have the safe water and toilets they need.

Efforts in water management should be accelerated in relation to agriculture, environment, human settlements, industry, health and climate change. In the process of development water resources in the world, the SDGs need to establish linkages between its goals and cross sector partnerships. It is vital to bring change through capacity development, data and information, innovation, financing, and governance. This change should be at the international, regional, national and local levels reflecting the commitment of the stakeholders. Brining different parties and stakeholders to improve water resources and sanitation is a way forward in solving the anticipated water crisis. The United Nations World Water Development Report 2023 highlights the urgent need to establish partnerships and commitment for coordination among stakeholders who are working towards water resource development in the world.

Considering the importance of strengthening the local communities to manage water in their respective localities, Janathakshan introduced water management schemes in Trincomalee district and provide facilities to maintain water tanks and streams in different cascades in the respective project areas in Anuradhapura. Janathakshan not only supports the farmers, but address the issue of water mismanagement and increase the availability of water through water harvesting using innovative techniques which enable better irrigation systems for farming.

Considering every day is a Water Day, Janathakshan has facilitated to ensure to get the technical know-how, knowledge, skills and infrastructure to manage water in both Anuradhapura and Trincomalee districts for farming and everyday use.



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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- Celebrating Five Years of Sri Lanka Preparedness Partnership (SLPP), the country chapter of Asia Preparedness Partnership (APP).
- CRIWMP Strengthening Farmer Organizations in selected GN Divisions of Anuradhapura District to revolve funds via aquaculture in seasonal tanks under the technical guidance of National Aquaculture Development Authority.

Water for Life: Mobilizing Partnerships for Better Water Management

Rehabilitation of tanks in partnership with United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and Department of Irrigation has contributed to mobilizing partnerships to better manage water resources in farming. A source of conflict, water should be integrated to governance and management at the local administrative level.

It is Janathakshan's goal to provide technical know-how, management plans, motivation and sensitization preventing conflict and promoting mediation to share water resources with all in the local communities and empower each person to work towards a positive change in water management.

Janathakshan Mediating Resource-based Conflicts in Local Communities

Natural resources are becoming scarce as the population grows and communities are expanding. Land and water are two very important resources which will become subjects of future resource-based conflicts. Being an island, Sri Lanka will also face land and water stress in the immediate future, as the communities are expanding and population is increasing.

In Trincomalee district Gomarankadawala and Nuwarawewa Grama Niladari (GN) divisions are examples of potential resource-based community conflict areas in Sri Lanka. Considering the potential outbreaks of conflict in these two GN divisions, Janathakshan introduced dairy production as a livelihood opportunity for Gomarankadawala GN division and water resource management for Nuwarawewa GN division.

In Gomarankadawala, after the war, the Forest Department has created reserve areas demarcating the land restricting most of the cattle farmers to stay restricted to their own farmlands and other neighboring areas. This has caused many farmers to let their cattle stray in the neighborhood creating unexpected conflict in the community. Janathakshan identified that if grassing land can be provided to these farmers and introduce a management plan, the community conflict can be reduced and dairy industry can be uplifted.

Since the time of war, Sinhala and Muslim communities in Ethabediwewa GN division lived in two demarcated areas. In the aftermath of the war, the Muslim population in the area started to increase rapidly and their use of land and water resources in the area began to increase. They encroached in to land areas near lakes as this left the Sinhala community and the Muslim community in the area to compete for water and land resources.

Janathakshan facilitated a process where the two communities established a committee to discuss water management issues and to use the resources in equitable terms. Janathakshan facilitated a solution where they understand each other's needs as separate communities, and mitigate conflict through dialogue.



*A conflict between the two communities developed since a longtime as the Muslim settlements began to expand. Considering the long term impact this conflict could have and the need of a solutions for equitable resource distribution, **Janathakshan** introduced a water management plan for the area empowering communities to resolve their natural resource-based conflict with solutions stemming from their own locality.*

Janathakshan Champions Public Awareness to Manage PET Plastic in Sri Lanka



The impact of micro plastics as well as larger plastics create nutrient-deficiency and starvation of animals, birds and marine species and impact overall eco-systems, food chains while plastic production and mismanagement even cause climate change. The economies are also impacted by plastic waste mismanagement as nutrition losses in marine environment reduce commercial fisheries and decrease fish stocks which leads to livelihood losses. Studies suggest that [microplastic pollution is one of the main causes of rapidly declining fishing stocks along the Sri Lankan coast.](#)

If managed and streamlined the plastic waste collection by introducing 3R process and also focus more on recycling of plastics, especially PET plastic, it can generate livelihood opportunities specifically for informal waste collectors. The Coca-Cola Foundation as a producer of PET plastic found the importance of increasing the capacity of the general public as well as the waste collectors to add value to plastic waste. Together with Janathakshan and Eco-Spindles, The Coca-Cola Foundation intervened to mobilize the communities to recycle plastic providing a sustainable solution to reduce the carbon footprint.

Apart from developing systems and mechanisms to manage plastic waste, Janathakshan focuses on behaviour-change communication. Janathakshan implement carefully designed awareness and sensitization programmes for the general public in the respective areas of the project. Many public awareness and sensitization programmes have been organized in Negambo, Galle, Matara and Kandy to ensure that the general public as well as the school children and youth are aware of the best practices in plastic waste management. In Galle and Matara alone more than 14 community awareness, school awareness, and Clean Ups have been organized to share ideas, best practices and behaviour-change awareness about waste management. More than 1,400 children, men, women and youth were made aware and sensitized about plastic waste management and how they can add value to waste.

Marine Environment Protection Authority, Coast Conservation & Coastal Resource Management Department, Central Environmental Authority, Municipal Councils, Youth Associations in the respective areas have been instrumental in supporting Janathakshan in the awareness programmes as they provided resource persons and facilitated to gather participants to the plastic waste management campaigns.

The Project “**Strengthening Informal Sector Waste Collection System for Improved Waste Management and Increased Collection and Recycling of PET Plastic in Sri Lanka**” implemented by Janathakshan GTE Ltd. in collaboration with Eco-Spindles, and funded by the Coca-Cola Foundation, thrives with the objective of having a sustainable, viable, and functional waste recycling mechanism targeting informal waste collectors and recyclers ensuring Public-Private-People Participation (PPPP) in selected geographical

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Adapting with Innovation: Waste Management through Sharing Technical Know-how

The consortium meeting “Waste Management and Circular Economy, Waste Treatment & Valorization Technologies” was held by the NOVA University Lisbon, Portugal (NOVA School of Science and Technology) from the 9th to 13th January, 2023, as part of the project “Techno-Economic-Societal Sustainable Development Training in Sri Lanka” (TESS). The meeting was attended by four universities from the programme countries (USN-Norway, DTU – Denmark, NOVA – Portugal, and Essex – UK) and five Sri Lankan partner universities (University of Jaffna, Moratuwa, Ruhuna, Sri Jayewardenepura and Vocational Technology) with Janathakshan GTE Ltd. Along with other representatives from the five universities in Sri Lanka, Ms. Gothami Chandraratne, Director – Operations of Janathakshan took part in the meeting.



TESS project is an innovative partnership which is instrumental in developing the higher education sector in Sri Lanka and familiarize and introduce technologies on waste management to Sri Lanka counterparts.

The focus of the project implemented by Janathakshan is to bring innovation to waste management education in Sri Lanka by identifying the need to introduce new courses at Bachelor and Master level as well as redesigning the existing curricular in the higher education institutes. By developing new interdisciplinary programmes and redesigning existing programmes, the Sri Lankan Higher Education Institutes (HEIs) will offer up-to-date, student-centred programmes with increased focus on employability. The project has been instrumental in establishing and revamping courses, arranging training workshops for teachers, digital learning, giving close attention to increased recruitment of female students, establishing cooperation with industry, promoting inclusion of local municipalities as associated partners and intensive dissemination information-related activities.



Janathakshan has been working with 5 Sri Lankan Universities and 4 European Universities in this project providing its expertise in working with government and private actors in the waste management sector thus bringing in a vital aspect of industrial relations to the development of the Higher Education sector in Sri Lanka. The Project is funded by the Erasmus+ Capacity Building in Higher Education (European Union scholarship programme) in partnership with University of South Eastern Norway. TESS website link: <http://techcsk.com/tess/>





Developing a Strategic Roadmap for Sri Lanka Civil Society Action Network For Community Resilience (SLNCR)

Janathakshan GTE Ltd. organized a 3-day residential programme from 23rd – 25th February 2023, for identification of strategic priority areas for the Sri Lanka Civil Society Action Network for Community Resilience (SLNCR). SLNCR is a network established by Janathakshan under Sri Lanka Preparedness Partnership (SLPP), the national chapter of Asian Preparedness Partnership (APP) of Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre (ADPC), funded by Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. The members of SLNCR includes Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in Sri Lanka who are working at the national, sub-national and local levels.

The representatives from ADPC, Disaster Management Centre, Janathakshan discussed about Sri Lanka National Disaster Management Landscape and the expected/potential contribution from Local CSOs to prepare for, respond to and recover from disasters in Sri Lanka; Role CSOs/CSO Networks in Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR): Emerging Dynamics, Opportunities and Challenges in the Global and Regional Context.

The main objectives of this workshop were to develop a robust strategic roadmap for SLNCR to transform the network to play the key role in supporting local CSO’s engagement in DRR and Climate Resilience (CR) in the country; bring together key actors related to DRR and CR; and CSOs to determine key objectives and strategic priorities in the arena of DRR and CR; and to come up with specific actions that SLNCR should undertake in next 2 years to achieve above objectives.

Janathakshan is the leading CSO that will be heading SLNCR in the next two years providing leadership to CSOs at all levels in the country to mobilize their resources to benefit affected communities at times of socio-economic, political and environmental crisis and disasters. SLNCR is yet to be developed as a hub of research, knowledge management and networking entity that will also include academia, practitioners, researchers, etc. who are leading in DRR and CR.

Creating the SLNCR is one of the high impact interventions of Janathakshan under SLPP which already has activated the positive participation of the CSOs in Sri Lanka not only in networking for social progress, but also actively promoting leadership of CSOs in disaster management in the country.

Sri Lanka Preparedness Partnership (SLPP)

Sri Lanka Preparedness Partnership (SLPP) was formed under the flagship of Asian Preparedness Partnership (APP) in September 2017 with the collaboration of group of interested Public and Private sector representatives and Local Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) to reduce the impact of disasters on at risk people through locally led disaster risk reduction initiatives through **building capacities** of the respective stakeholders, providing networking opportunities, sharing knowledge and resource mobilization.

Funded by Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and with the secretarial support of the Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre (ADPC) SLPP is currently co-chaired by the Disaster Management Centre (DMC), The Ceylon Chamber of Commerce and Janathakshan GTE Ltd with a partnership base of 20 public, private sector and Local CSOs in Sri Lanka.



Janathakshan is implementing the project “Strengthening Disability Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation Process through Empowerment of Marginalized Communities in Sri Lanka” in selected locations in Anuradhapura and Kurunegala districts.

A Participatory Risk Assessment was conducted in selected GN Divisions in Polpithigama and Nochchiyagama. It is expected to develop the Participatory Risk Assessment Framework which covers the overall risk management life cycle including risk identification, risk analysis, risk evaluation and risk treatment to conduct a comprehensive risk assessment for the assigned inclusive DiDRR and climate change adaptive actions at the local level.

This Project is implemented by Janathakshan GTE Ltd. and is funded by Christian Blind Mission (CBM), Sri Lanka.

Upskilling Government Officers to Better Their Services to People with Disabilities

A Sign Language course for the government officers in Anuradhapura and Kurunegala districts was commenced on the 16th March 2023, under the project “Strengthening Disability Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation Process through Empowerment of Marginalized Communities in Sri Lanka” which is implemented by Janathakshan GTE Ltd. Mr. Asitha Weweldeniya, Senior Manager, Janathakshan GTE Ltd, elaborated on the need to expand the disability awareness among government as well as other entities and strengthen their skills to communicate with the respective people with disabilities.

Ms. Vanees Surendranathan, Sri Lanka Country Director, Christian Blind Mission (CBM) also grazed the occasion online and presented information about CBM, explaining its interventions, mission and vision. She also commented on the importance of this sign language course as it is vital to communicate with marginalized communities who have hearing impairment.

Mr. D.M. Shantha Dasanayaka, Divisional Secretary – Polpithigama also discussed the importance of empowering marginalized communities by increasing their participation in community activities. He noted that the government officers to be upskilled in an area like Sign Language is a timely intervention as there is a need to develop useful skills of the government administration.

Janathakshan is well aware about the importance of inclusive development and promotes inclusivity in management and governance of the organization. Now, Janathakshan steer its strategic direction to implement its projects with a focus on disability inclusion while promoting Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in partnership building at the local level.



The Sign Language Course is conducted by Janathakshan in partnership with Inclusive Disability Resource Centre, encouraging government officers to diversify their services to the people. As of now Polpithigama course has been completed with the participation of 49 Government officers (M- 15/ F- 34), and 42 (M-13/F-29) Nochchiyagama Government officers started the course with much hope and enthusiasm. Representing the Divisional Secretariate, the Grama Niladhari Officers, Development Officers, and Social Services section Officers are taking part in the Course at Nochchiyagama, while all administrative sections of the Polpithigama Divisional Secretariate took part in the course.



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