ANNUAL REPORT 2023

YMCA
BATTICALOA

No: 26/4A, Boundary Road South,
BATTICALOA
SRI LANKA
Telephone: 065 2222710, 065 2222495
E-Mail: ceo@ymcabatticaloa.org

Contents

1. Executive summery
2. Board of Directors – 2023
3. General Programs
   - I. Annual General Meeting
   - II. Special General Meeting (SGM)
   - III. 52nd Anniversary of Batticaloa YMCA
4. Staff Capacity Building and Training
   - I. TOT – Hospitality Industry Trainer
   - II. ICRDCE Soft Skills Training (India)
   - III. Training of Potential Faculty Members – Chennai
   - IV. LGBTQ+ Staff Awareness Program
   - V. Staff Changes in 2023
5. Faith and Spiritual Life
   - I. Monthly Devotions
   - II. YWCA-YMCA Week of Prayer and Fellowship
6. Youth Affairs and Children's Club Activities
   - I. Social Media Campaign Participation
   - II. National Youth Gathering
   - III. Children's Club Programs and Weekend Training
7. VAALVOSAI School for Hearing-Impaired Children
   - I. Academic Calendar and Curriculum
   - II. Health, Nutrition, and Recreational Activities
   - III. Strategic Plan and Collaborations
   - IV. Training & Events Photographs
8. Micro Credit Program
   - I. Loan Recovery and Financial Summary
9. Guest House Operations
   - I. Renovations and Upgrades
   - II. Guest and Hall Booking Summary
   - III. Meals, Meetings, and Staff Training
   - IV. Fundraising and Business Plan Initiatives
10. Community Development Programs
    - I. Disability Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction (DiDRR)
    - II. Community-Based Inclusive Development (CBID)
    - III. "No to Gender Violence" Project Overview

1. Executive summery

In 2023, the Batticaloa YMCA continued its vital role in community service, youth development, and inclusive education, despite prevailing economic and social challenges. The organization conducted its Annual General Meeting in January and celebrated its 52nd anniversary in July with a staff devotion.

Staff development was prioritized through international and local training sessions, including a 3-month TOT Hospitality Trainer program and specialized sessions on LGBTQ+ awareness, child rights, and sign language.

The Vaalvosai School for hearing-impaired children maintained consistent academic progress with 34 students enrolled and multiple teaching innovations, including digital aids, herbal gardening, and vocational skills development. Hostel facilities supported underprivileged students, ensuring nutrition, hygiene, and personal growth through extracurricular activities.

The Guest House, despite financial constraints, welcomed nearly 4,000 guests and underwent essential renovations. The Micro Credit Program recovered over Rs. 1.2 million in loans, assisting economically vulnerable women.

Three key community-based projects—Disability Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction (DiDRR) and Community-Based Inclusive Development (CBID)—empowered persons with disabilities and promoted environmental sustainability through waste management, alternative livelihoods, and inclusive governance. Success stories highlighted transformation through entrepreneurship and community engagement. Additionally, the “No to Gender Violence” project further extended YMCA’s commitment to social justice by building the capacity of government officials on gender-based violence.

Overall, the Batticaloa YMCA in 2023 demonstrated resilience, inclusivity, and impactful community transformation.

2. **Board of Directors for the Year 2023** (January to December)

No	Name	Position
1.	Mr.Ebenezer Dharshan Vejeyaretnam.	President
2.	Mr.Jeevaratnam Chryshanthan	Vice president
3.	Mr.Antonypillai Raveendran.	Hon. Treasurer
4.	Mr.Soosainathan Patrick	Acting General Secretary
5.	Mr. Dixon Ragel	Joint Treasurer
6.	Mr.Pius Saseetharan Anandarajah.	Board Director
7.	Mr.Sinnathurai Princly Premachandran.	Board Director
8.	Mr.Thambiayah Karunakaran	Board Director
9.	Mr. John Thiviyanayagam Pio Jude Navinthan	Board Director
10.	Dr. Mrs. Florence Bharathy Kennedy	Board Director
11.	Mr.Pathmanathan Rajeevan	Board Director
12.	Mr.Boney Justin	Board Director (Auditor)
13.	Mr.Edwin Ranil	Board Director
14.	Miss.Shiyani Douglas	Board Director
15.	Mr.Suthan Selvaretnam	Board Director
16.	Mr.V.D.Segarasasingam	Advisory Director

3. General Programs

I. Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting was held on 14th January 2023 presided by Mr.S.Jesudas Presentations were done by the Acting General Secretary Mrs. Namal Chrishanthini.

II. Spigel General Meeting

A special General meeting was held 16th December 2023.

III. Anniversary of Batticaloa YMCA.

To mark the 52 Anniversary of the Batticaloa YMCA, devotion was held at the YMCA Hall on 22.07. 2023. Only the Staff of YMCA participated.

4. Staff Capacity Building and Training

I. TOT – Hospitality Industry Trainer

TOT - HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY TRAINER this training was jointly conducted by NAITA with S4IG. This was a 3 months training program for 150 Hours 2 days Class Room training class (Wednesday & Saturday 3.00-5.00 PM) and ZOOM Classes (Sunday & Monday 8.00 to10.00PM Mrs. Namal Chrishanthini of YMCA followed this training and obtained the certificate in 'TOT - HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY TRAINER'

II. ICRDCE Soft Skills Training (India)

Indian Centre for Research and Development of Community Education (ICRDCE) Conducted an interview for 9 staff members for selection for the skills development training for the staff members of institutions engaged in providing soft skill training in this Mrs.Namal Chrishanthini of Batticaloa YMCA was selected and participated in ten days training in India.

III. Training of Potential Faculty Members – Chennai

St. Christopher's College of Education, Chennai of India conducted a training on the theme "Training of Potential Faculty Members for the Community Colleges in Sri Lanka" from 28th September to 10th October, 2023 our Mrs.J.Santhanamary participated in this training program. Following this training Mrs. Santhanamary conducted further training to our VTC students and teachers.

IV. LGBTQ+ Staff Awareness Program

A Gender and LGBTQ+ Training program was conducted on 09.08.2023, with the full participation of all YMCA staff members. The session aimed to raise awareness, promote inclusivity, and build understanding around gender diversity and LGBTQ+ rights, fostering a more respectful and supportive work environmen

V. Staff Changes in 2023

List of Newly Recruited staff members

1. J.T. Tharcila — Finance & Admin Officer - SLCDF
2. K. Yathukuleswary — Multy Duty Caretaker
3. S. Kausihan — Programme Coordinator - CBM

List of retired or resigned staff members

1. C. Ajanee — Admin & Finance Manager
2. T. Ethayarani — Community Mobilizer
3. E. Noeline Tharshini — Pre-School Teacher
4. B. Mahinthan — Project Officer
5. S. Shamanthan — Project Coordinator
6. K. Yathukuleswary — Multy Duty Caretaker
7. T. Priyatharshini — Community Mobilizer
8. S. Thamilini — Community Mobilizer
9. Y. Malarvily — Community Mobilizer
10. A.D.R.L Aarala Shekinah — Academy Coordinator
11. R. Joel Priyanth — Field Officer- SLCDF
12. T. Jayaranjini — Field Officer- SLCDF

5. Faith and Spiritual Life

I. Monthly Devotions

Devotion and thanksgiving prayer sessions on the first day of every month were conducted during the first three months of the year.

II. World YWCA and World YMCA Week of Prayer & World Fellowship

The annual YWCA-YMCA World Week of Prayer, will be held on 12–18 November 2023. Its theme **is "From seed to blossom': Cultivating hope and love".** Pastors and Priests shared the message of the Lord during this period. Devotees from various churches have participated in the prayer service.

6. Youth Affairs and Children Club

I. National Youth Gathering

Youth Gathering organized by the National council of YMCA Two of our youths took part in the youth Gathering organized by the NCYSL

II. Children's Club Programs

The Children's Club actively engages children aged 10 to 18 in a variety of skill-building and recreational activities aimed at promoting their personal development. Training programs offered include Chess, Table Tennis, Karate, Handicraft, and Drawing, all designed to enhance creativity, discipline, and physical coordination. Among these, Chess and Karate sessions are held on Saturdays and Sundays to encourage greater participation and accommodate school schedules. These activities have been well-received, with children showing enthusiasm and noticeable improvement in their skills over time.

7. 'Vaalvosai' School

Building the future for hearing impaired children of our society titled 'Vaalvosai' School was started by former General Secretary Dr.D.D.David in 1999 still stands as one of the most important missions of YMCA nurturing hearing impaired children and giving them the real value of life.

I. Academy Calander 2023

The examination of the 3rd term started on 20th February 2023 and ended in March 2023.The first term for the new grades started on 27th March 2023 (Year 2023) and students were given the progress report of their performance after this examination. 1st term examinations started on 10th of July 2023 and completed on 20th of July. The 2nd term -July to October 2023 the 3rd term from in 3rd of Nov 2023.

2nd Term exam started on 23rd October and completed on 1st of Nov. The 3rd term from in 3rd of Nov 2023. The students performed well in their term examinations

The school started on 20th February 2023 and ended in March 2023 for Third term of year 2022 activities. The first term for the new grades were started on 27th March 2023.
The academic activities of the 1st term for the year 2023 started in the month of March 2023.

Classes were organized as follows, according to the number of available teachers

Class	No of Students	Teachers in charge
Pre class + Grade 1	13	Mrs,G. Shanthanamary
Grade 2+3	4	Mrs.S. Diyan Selvamalar
Grade 4+5	07	Mrs.J. Thanuja
Grade 6+7	08	Mrs.H.V.Ramya Rekha
VTC	02	Mrs.C.A.Thayamathy

There were 34 students in the school from the beginning of the year. 21 Males and,13 Females. 04 students joined the school in mid of the year. Further 8 staff including 05 academic staff and 03 non-academic staff were involved in the school activities.

Curriculum:

It's a requirement of the curriculum of the department of Education for the teachers to have the ability to develop students' academic skills; Special curriculums were prepared by the teachers as per the requirements, learning and teaching activities were carried out regularly on a weekly basis.

Easy handling teaching aids such as using smart board, tablets, flash cards, games, exposure visits for students were used in the academic period.

An herbal gardening was started by students which is related to the syllabus.

Students' details – As at 31st December 2023

No	Description	Male	Female	No of Students
1.	Presently studying	15	8	23
2.	New admission	-	06	06
3.	Joined in Kaithady Nuffield school for secondary education	02	01	03
4.	Drop outs	02	07	09
5.	Joined VTI Department of Social service	03	02	05

Hostel and student welfare

No	Description	Male	Female	No of Students
1.	Hostellers	7	6	13

Hostel opened with 13 hostellers on 20th February 2023.The hostel facility was provided for students who were coming from far distance from Polonnaruwa district and a few students who were coming from about 20Km Distance in Batticaloa district.

II. Health, Nutrition and Recreational Activities

Health and Hygiene

All the student's Body Mass Index was measured and was found to be well below the standard. Hence action was initiated to increase the BMI to the expected standard level. The hostel inmates were served with nutritionally appropriate meals for development and growth.

Meals

Having standard meals at home for them was a challenging task while having one meal a day was difficult for them due to the financial crisis of the country. Some of the students did not have the privilege to have three meals a day, on admission to the hostel they got the opportunity to eat 03 meals a day through this program.

Recreational methods

To spend the free time of the hostelers in a useful way, the students are practicing the methods of setting up and maintaining a home garden, learning and practicing handicrafts, practice painting, practice sewing skills, musical band and children club activities in the hostel.

Extra-curricular activities in school.

Collaborative activities implemented with Government Departments, Local authorities, Private institutes and NGOs

Activities	Date	Details
Cricket	02.03.2023	Under the Sports for Development project of the CERI, a sports club was formed. And its main focus is to form a Girls' cricket team in the Manmunai North DS Division.
Cricket Uniforms	08.09.2023	Cricket Uniforms were donated by CERI to Selected Students for MN divisional Level.
Cricket Coaching Camp	10.09.2023	Our students were participated to the Cricket Coaching Camp, which was organized by CERI in Kattankudy.
Cricket tournament – Divisional (MN)	16.09.2023	Our students were Participated and won Second place in the cricket Tournament, which was Organized by CERI.
Cultural Games	03.05.2023	Cultural games were held among the children club members at weber stadium, which was organized by CERI
Ifthar	18.04.2023	Participated in the festival with Islam community Children, Organized by CERI
First aid Training	29.10.2023	Four of our students participated in First Aid Training which was Organized By CERI.
Model fair	19.05.2023	This event was sponsored by CERI. Parents, children club members, staff from CERI and YMCA participated in this program
Tree planting	04.05.2023	Trees were donated by "Pasumai Illam" to plant at the school compound.
Tamil New year Cultural events	07.05.2023	School children participated in the Tamil New-year cultural games which was organized by the Deaf Society of Batticaloa.
Deaf Day parade	27.09.2023	Our school Students and teachers participated in the parade for DEAF DAY, which was organized by DEAF SOCIETY
Children day Celebration	10.10.2023	Children planted trees which were donated by Leo club of Batticaloa.
Handicraft and creation	25.10.2023	This event was conducted by members of Ocean stars. Children made crafts and enjoyed the day.

Training and Workshop

Name of training/ workshop	Location/place	If any data/ information is collected please write briefly or attach the document
Speech training	zoom	Dr.Soba in Australia conducts this speech training course to train "Vaalvosai" school teachers. Techniques to be practiced during speech practice were discussed in the classes held
Arts practice for inclusion training	Sarvodhaya training center	One of the teacher Mrs. George Santhanamary participated for the Arts practice for inclusion training, which was organized by Snekadriara foundation of India. She improved her knowledge skills and frame of mind to develop the capacity of the special need children through arts.
Seminar on Child Rights	YMCA hall	Awareness programme was conducted for children by CERI
First aid Training	YMCA hall & Sarvodaya	Training program was conducted by the CERI and the TOT Trainer Mrs.L.Prashanniya.
Sign language Training	Deaf Society	This training was conducted for the family members of children with hearing impairments by the Deaf Society of Batticaloa

III. Strategic Plan and Collaborations

We are in the process to form a strategy for the development of the school for the next 5 years.

IV. Training & Events Photographs

Deaf Day 2023

First aid Training

Child Rights Program by CERI

Ocean star Program

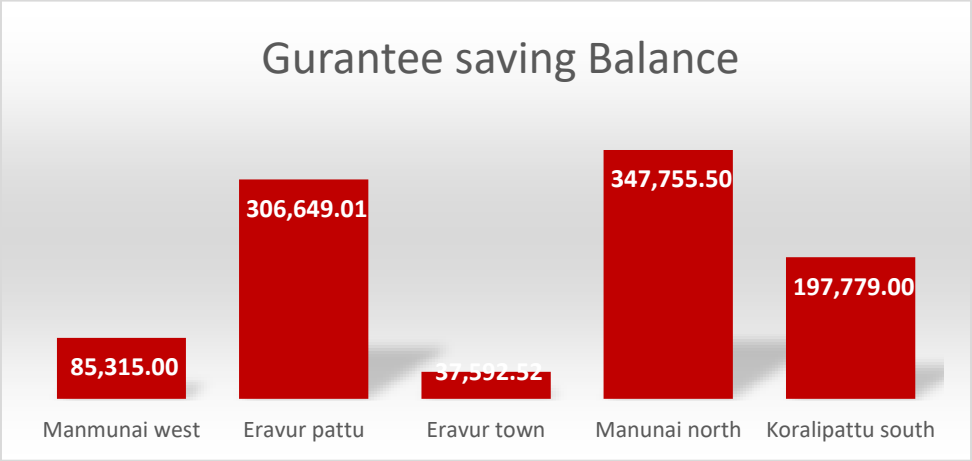
Educational Trip - Polonnaruwa

8. Micro Credit program

Economically Empowering Women for poverty Alleviation.
The Micro credit project which was started in 1988 by the YMCA continued in lending Micro credit loans for Self -employment projects until 2019. From 2020 onwards lending was stopped and only recoveries are being done.

I. Loan Recovery and Financial Summary

As at 31.12.2023 the total outstanding loans amount to Rs4,283,562.03 and the security fund for beneficiaries is 975,091.03



During this year we have recovered Rs 1,232,463.00

Guarantee money refunded to beneficiaries Rs 1,21,529.00

Monthly visits are done to meet the beneficiaries to recover the loans, the beneficiaries have agreed to repay the loans in very small amounts

9. Guest House Operations

LET US FACE THE CHALLENGE AND RAISE THE INCOME, GOD'S HAND WILL SUSTAIN

I. Renovations and Upgrades

We began the journey with this motto at the dawn of this year and worked to uplift the standards of the Guest House.

A midst the economic crisis we were able to facelift our main hall in January to provide a better service to our customers (The renovation work started on 25th January 2023 and was completed on 30th January2023)

With the changes in the internal administration and the financial need was rising the face lift work could not be completed as quickly as we planned, However the Doors and windows of our rooms were renewed with Aluminum fittings and new set of ceramic tea sets and bed linens were purchased.

With the workforce concerned, only two permanent Guest house attendants and with a secretary we managed to keep the business moving, though we recruited new workers they did not stay long with us, hence we had to hire temporary workers to meet the needs.

II. Guest and Hall Booking Summary

Guests Details

Total No of Guests for the year - 3891

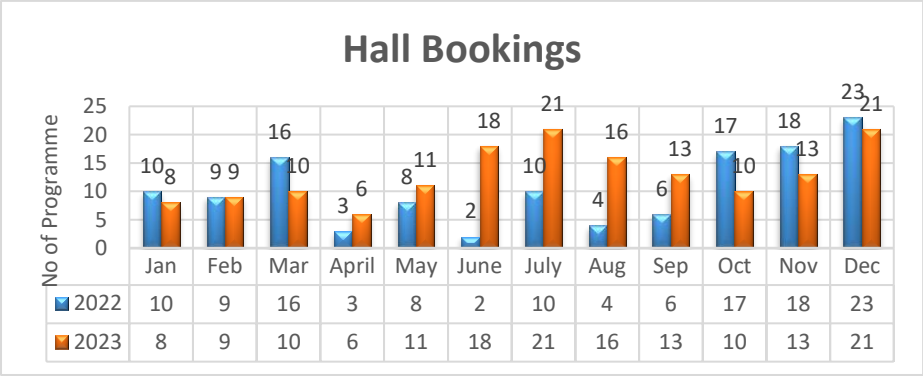
- Staff of institution
- Doctors
- Medical Students
- Nursing Students
- Govt Officers
- University Lecturers
- Pastors
- Church Members
- Lawyers;
- Medical Reps
- Businessmen/Landlords
- Visitors from Government Departments;
- Sick persons
- Persons coming for medical treatment in Batticaloa and their relatives

Hall Booking

The following groups/ institutions used our hall for their special events and functions

Cultural Association, SLCDF, BOC Pensioners Association, WERC, Circle, CPA, Women in Need, Action Unity Lanka, Vision Lanka, Mother's Care Montessori, RDPO, Auto Welfare committee, Minor Matters, Photograph Owners Association, Disable Person's Origination, District Women authority, Voice of Rights, Center for Handicap , Gethsemane Prayer Tower (for Sunday Worships), Save the children, Asia Foundation, Aruna company, Three wheel Society, Suriya Women Development, Alliance Development Truest, Alarix Lanka Ltd. Pvt, Vanguard Survey Ltd, CERI, BDBD, Prafferal, Sanasa Bank, Ocean Star , Excise Dept., Street

Child, NELET, Healthy Lanka, Vimbam, FOCUSE – University, Monalar , Travel Wins, Shining Star Pre-school, Kids Garden, Wealth COOP, EDF, Deaf Society, Kachcheri, University Students.



	Jan	Feb	Mar	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2022	10	9	16	3	8	2	10	4	6	17	18	23
2023	8	9	10	6	11	18	21	16	13	10	13	21

We also gave our hall free of charge for social services Department, Bt/Vincent Girls High school for chess practice, School indoor sports activities, CBID Training programs, Meeting with NCY & YMCA Japan, Inayam meeting, Dr. Jude's meeting, Sign language classes, Manmunai North Disable Person's Origination monthly meetings.

III. Meals, Meetings, and Staff Training

Meals

As per the requirements of the customer we have provided Lunch and Refreshment for those who wanted us to serve food and beverages for their programs

Meetings

Guest House staff: Programs were conducted to staff on awareness on how to handle guest and Customer satisfaction, wages boards rules, Finance handling by the Guest house secretary, General Secretary, Admin Officer and Finance Manager

ICII Committee meeting:

3 meetings were held by the ICII Committee. Guest house operations, Documentation, and the documents for year 2019/ 2020 were handed over to the ICII.

A discussion was held on the handing over and taking over of documents by Ms.N.Chrishanthini when she took over the position as the Acting General Secretary in January 2022 to march 2022.

IV. Fundraising and Business Plan Initiatives

Fund-raising Sub Committee:

A meeting was held on 01.09.2023 at this meeting matters were taken up concerning the plans for development of the operations of the Guest house.

Guest House Registration

Guest house registration with the Municipal Council and the Divisional secretariat was taken up and the required taxes for this purpose to be paid was released. Further Survey plan of YMCA is required to go forward with this

Business plan:

A Plan was drawn by Mr.Logeswaran to provide catering services the required details for this was provided by Ms.N.Chrishanthini The first draft has been handed over to the fund -raising committee.

10.Community Development Programs

I. Disability Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction (DiDRR)

Project Title : Promotion of Disability Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction (DiDRR) practices, to protect the eco-systems and secure the livelihood of Batticaloa District.

Project Duration: 1st of January 2021 to 31st of December 2024 (4 Years)

> "In 2020, We collected all the wastage together and separated at the yard by the Pradeshiya Sabha minor staff. At that time, the collection of non-gradable items per trip was nearly 5 tons but nowadays, it has been reduced to 3-4 tons, and the practices of separating the waste properly are in place at the community level in the Division," said Mr. Iyas, Development Officer, Koralai pattu west, Pradeshiya Sabha.

The organizations for persons with disabilities such as "Vaalvaham "in the Manmunai West Divisional Secretariat and "Sigaram" in the Koralaipattu West Divisional Secretariat to facilitate the respective working committee meetings and collaborate with the relevant government officials to get consultation and approvals for the project activities. Those initiatives have promoted inclusive decision-making processes and contributed to diversifying environmentally healthy practices and concerns such as utilizing organic manures, separating degradable and non-degradable waste, and using fabric carry bags instead of polythene and plastic in the community. It led to subsidizing sustainable development goals such as "climate action" and "zero hunger" through the project interventions.

A proper system of waste management has been established in Koralaipattu West Divisional Secretariat along with the Pradeshiya Sabha. The system led to segregating and managing the wastages appropriately. That division has a significant change in cleanliness compared with the status before the project. Further, the usage of clothes bags instead of polythene carry bags has increased among the traders and general public in the Batticaloa district due to the contribution of this project.

Another milestone of this project, 40 families including 15 people with disabilities (M-7, F-8) are getting income-generation opportunities (IGA) in several project interventions during this reporting period. It enabled them to learn new skills and generate income to cater to their basic

needs without struggles. All the above positive changes have contributed towards building resilient communities to promote inclusive practices towards SDGs and mitigating adverse effects of Climate Change among the target area.

Total number of Project Participants			
Category	**Male**	**Female**	**Total**
Persons with Disability	298	235	533
School children	175	150	325
Community	4334	4897	9231
Stakeholders	36	31	67
Total	**4843**	**5313**	**10156**

Good Practices:

Project Planning and design

- Regular village and divisional level working committee meetings enabled good rapport with government officials and the OPDs, it has paved the way to provide quality services on time. Further, the requests made by the OPD members were considered and granted approvals by the heads of the departments quickly. Transparency and coordination of the OPD led to a good relationship with the government.

- The project has enabled a good rapport with government officials and the OPD; they have been recognized well and included village and divisional-level working committee meetings. Even if the government head of department grants the approvals most of the concerns are brought from the OPD members, what they are accepted and considered.

- The maintenance Handbook is prepared for the first time in the District, The tank maintenance manual, which was prepared in 2021, has been contextualized and updated with the collaboration of the Agrarian department and the participation of the working committee including farmer organization members. At this point, technical inputs and valuable experience are merged and a user-friendly manual has been prepared for the tank maintenance. It enabled the working committee members to operate and maintain the tank based on the requirement.

Stories of Change

"Now my depression and stress vanished. And I released from the debt and living confidently and peacefully"

Navaratnam Shanthi, 44 years old lives in Navatkadu, Manmunai West Divisional secretariat. She was married at the age of 16, to avoid being recruited by the militant group as a child soldier during the civil war period in Sri Lanka.

Shanthi is in the "Vaalvaham "outlet

When she was 16, she got married due to the child force selection fear during the war period. She has 2 children. She experienced domestic violence from her alcoholic husband and decided to separate from him in 2005.

Then she went abroad and settled her husband's debt. Her mother was looking after her two sons. She has gone through several problems and carried the family and financial burdens as a single person. In 2012 she came back to her native place and did some ad-hoc work to earn some money for her day-to-day life. That was not stable and it intended to stop his son's higher studies further.

At this juncture, One of the OPD members Ms. Thavamalar, the cousin sister of Shanthi requested her join the "Vaalvaham" outlet (which was recently built under the 4056 project) to do the value addition for fish catch at the "Pachchaikaddakaran" Tank. So, she accepted the request joined Thavamalar, and started her work at the outlet.

2 months later, she thought that she needed to increase her income and got training from the Divisional Secretariat On food preparation and hygienic measures and started the canteen with some short eats like Vadai, Manioc yam, and Pastry. The business was going well; thus, she expanded her business with breakfast and tea. Not only that, from time to time she gets some event orders to provide lunch packets and short eats. For all the income generation activities she could earn nearly Rs, 25,000/- per month as a profit during the last 5 months. In addition to that, she pays Rs. 5000/- monthly as rent for the outlet. That is a mutual benefit for the OPD and her. From the income she gets, she is managing the household expenses and she has started a savings too. At the same time, she is managing the value additions of fish (fry/cut) based on the requests and requirements of the customers and utilizing the freezer for multiple purposes like keeping fish, producing ice cubes, and cooling water.

Now she is planning to expand her business with more value-added products and provide income-generation opportunities for disabled women. She says, "Now I have settled the loan which I obtained to start this business and I got more interaction with the people and see the smiling faces around me; they are encouraging my business too."

Photos

Current status of Pachchaikadakkaran Tank

Maize cultivation around the Pachchaikadakaran tank

II. Community-Based Inclusive Development (CBID)

Project Name: Community-Based Inclusive Development (CBID) practices to protect the Eco-systems and Secure Livelihoods

Project Duration: 1st November 2021 to 31st March 2024.

The project "Community Based Inclusive Development (CBID) Practices to Protect the Eco-systems and Secure Livelihoods" has contributed towards building the resilience of the targeted communities in Batticaloa District through the project interventions. The formation of 12 inclusive working committees is operating well and contributed to achieving the objective of the project through inclusive practices and a governance system. It has enabled civil society organizations and government stakeholders to improve the lives of people with disabilities by including them in the decision-making process. It enabled the participation and voice of people with disabilities in local decision-making processes via their engagement. Moreover, a significant improvement in coordination and collaboration has been shown between the government duty bearers and the community through field engagement and close monitoring.

To protect the ecosystem, a development plan has been created and identified issues were addressed through awareness programs, tank renovation, and the production of alternative products. The community was made aware of protecting the ecosystem by using organic products avoiding chemical applications, and using alternative products instead of polythene and plastics through the **3R** system. (Reduce, Recycle, and Reuse) Those eye-opening sessions led the targeted community to behavioral changes.

- Now avoid plastic products and **try** to use alternative products.

Ex. Using cane string hopper trays instead of plastic trays. Using banana leaves for wrapping hot food items instead of lunch tissue.

- Rather than purchasing new plastic and polythene products now reusing the existing products.
- Producing and applying organic fertilizers (compost) instead of inorganic fertilizers.
- Banded plastic and polythene products at the school premises.
- Now use silver containers for collecting "Fasting porridge "from the mosque instead of tissue bags.

Another remarkable achievement of this project, four abounded and unusable tanks are currently available for usage. Due to the desilting, the surrounding communities have experienced year-round drinking water in the last year, not only humans but most of the animals (cattle and birds) fulfilled their thirst during the dry season. Further, nearly 150 acres of land have been used to cultivate. 20 farmers (17 men and 3 female) who have farming lands close to the tanks have cultivated crops like manioc, watermelon, ground nuts, long beans, bananas, and paddy.

The project has provided income generation opportunities through several interventions (Home gardening, inland fishing, small and medium enterprises) for 1951 vulnerable people including 1576 people with are disabled and 375 women-headed households. It enabled them to learn new skills and generate income to cater to their basic needs without struggles.

The above diagram illustrates how the project interventions have contributed towards building resilience in the targeted community. In this way the project has been subsidized to achieve the following Sustainable development Goal such as Goal 6 - Ensure access to water and sanitation for all; Goal 8 - Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all; Goal 11 – Make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable; Goal 13 - Take urgent action to combat climate and its impacts, and Goal 16 - Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.

Even though the project strategy has been well planned and implemented well with the technical experts, the Inland fishing activities did not attain the expected level.

Working committee members from Eravur town Division involving the coastal area cleaning activity under the OPD led initiatives

The following technical reasons were realized after the project intervention.

- 15,000 fingerlings are a very small amount based on the capacity of the tank and only 2/3 will be survived after the stocking.
- Due to the desilting work the ecosystem in the tank has been disturbed, and it will take some time to reform the suitable ecological condition for fish stocking.
- Most of the small fish might be run through the water flow.
- The existence of plants (lotus/salvinia) caused difficulties in fish catching.
- The nutrition level in the tank was not sufficient for growing fish.

6 SMEs are in the process to producing alternative products for polyethylene and plastics, due to the early project termination, the project team is unable to address the identified gaps and follow up on the SME's operation.

Good practice:

- YMCA faced difficulties in completing the activities on time, due to many reasons such as insufficient budget and the country's situation imposed to increase in the prices of goods and shortage of fuel affected to get machinery on time. However, with the contribution and participation of the working committee, the work has been completed with some delays. The optimum level of the desilted work has been implemented with the technical support of the working committee members. Further, A culture of collaboration and open communication was fostered within working committees to facilitate idea-sharing, problem-solving, and decision-making. Active participation from all members was encouraged, and opportunities for feedback and discussion were created.

"I am happy to work as a team to contribute to protecting the environment and getting income through my handwork"

Pavalarani making hats at her home before the project intervention.

"I did not think, I would multiply my income through this new venture, which was specified by YMCA". Said, Pavalarani Uthayakumaran Age 48, living in Thalankudha in the Manmunai pattu Divisional Secretariat area in Batticaloa District.

When she started her story, her face was shriveled, and her eyes were without light.

"When I was 9 years old, I was affected with polio and went through several treatments and finally cured a little better with my walking difficulties. I have studied up to an Advanced level with financial and physical difficulties even though I am unable to get a job due to walking difficulties and issues in getting on public transportation.

When I was young, there was a class for Palmyrah production conducted close to my house, since I was young, I was not allowed to participate in the class but I learned by observing and hearing the teacher's guidance through the window. It gave me the idea to make hats. So, I tried to practice and doing as self-employment at my home premises. That hands-on experience supported me to produce 60 hats per month and earn Rs.9000-Rs.10000 per month. Since I got married and had children, I was supposed to support my husband to carry the financial burden of our family.

At this juncture, YMCA, CBID project was started in 2022, and the "Samugauravugal" Organization of Persons with Disabilities (OPD) is targeted for this project. Meanwhile, I have a membership from 2012, I was included as a member of one of the working committees and representing the OPD. During that time, I was capacitated on time and resource management and included the "Environmental Protection Task Force" among OPDs and Local stakeholders to provide training on preventing polythene waste and its negative impact. It gave me an opening to work closely with the government officers who have been included in the "Environmental task force". Jointly I have provided awareness to more than 200 OPD and community members at my village. Further, I was involved in the process of home gardening beneficiary selection and their follow-up along with the working committee. My active participation and contribution led to be election as a president of "Samuga uravugal OPD" in 2023 said proudly with sparkling eyes.

Following the feasibility study, I was included in the small-medium enterprise (SME) as a member and I was involved in identifying the potential beneficiary selection for setting up the SMEs along with the working committee members. At the start, I did not like to work as a group in a common place with the selected members due to the many practical issues like thinking distance, the behavior of other members, and concern regarding income. But with the continuous mobilization of the project team, I agreed to work as a team and got training in Business planning, operational Management, Skill, and Marketing, the series of training molded me as a growing entrepreneur

The shelter provided for the SME activities by the project.

of “Rani Palmyrah Products”, and earn more than Rs. 25,000 per month said the smiling face.

The shelter displayed handicraft products

Now, I am applying many techniques from those training like profit calculation, innovative ideas to attract customers, producing attractive, different variety and quality products, and managing a group with 9 women (4 OPD members and their families and 5 women headed households). The provided materials, tools, bicycle, and shelter equipped us to do more and more with the collaboration of each member. The series of business promotional events made us get many (2-5) business contacts and enhanced our production. Now our group is very busy with production and some women are asking to join our team said Pavalarani with a smiling face.

The project officer of the YMCA said, now she has realized the strength of teamwork. She feels more confident and safer working as a team in the place where the YMCA has provided shelter for the production. It is more flexible for her to manage her domestic work with the enterprise. This provision provided an opportunity to join 2-3 new members in the group. She can provide the labor charges who do the production and manage the SME operation smoothly.

III. “No to Gender Violence in Sri Lanka”

The “No to Gender Violence in Sri Lanka” project commenced in October 2022 with funding from the Sri Lanka Centre for Development and Facilitation (SLCDF). This project is designed with two key components, focusing on enhancing the knowledge, skills, and commitment of government officials and administrators who are in positions to take decisions regarding issues affecting women and child victims. The primary goal is to empower these decision-makers to respond effectively Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV). and promote Gender Equality through targeted training interventions.From January to December 2023, the project successfully conducted 34 awareness programs across the Manmunai South & Eruvil Pattu and Eravur Pattu Divisions. These programs reached a total of 749 participants—410 male and 339 female. The training sessions were structured to provide a foundational understanding of gender equality and strategies to prevent Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV).

The program had a particularly strong impact on the youth. Young participants expressed enthusiasm and a deepened sense of responsibility after receiving awareness on gender identity and SGBV prevention methods. The sessions fostered self-awareness and motivated them to share their learning with peers. Their active engagement and commitment to promoting a culture of

respect and equality among fellow students were remarkable. This youth-focused approach was well-received and proved to be an effective strategy in creating long-term community change.

Street Drama Performances for Gender Awareness

Initiative was carried out from January to December 2023 in the Manmunai South & Eruvil Pattu and Eravur Pattu Divisions. Street drama performances and drama script writing training sessions were facilitated by expert consultant Mr. Stanly Prapa, who conducted 24 training sessions with two dedicated drama groups.

Over the course of the year, a total of 46 street drama awareness programs were successfully conducted, reaching a broad audience of 6,252 participants—3,172 male and 3,080 female. These dramas were staged in public spaces to ensure accessibility and maximum reach within local communities.

The street dramas were met with overwhelming enthusiasm and participation. Rooted in local culture through the use of familiar forms such as koothu and traditional storytelling, these performances deeply resonated with the audience. The characters depicted in the dramas reflected real-life situations that people encounter daily, making the messages about gender roles, equality, and violence highly relatable and impactful.

For many community members, these performances provided their first clear understanding of gender dynamics and the seriousness of gender-based violence. Audiences were not passive observers; they actively engaged with the content, shared their opinions, and reflected on their own roles in creating change. The dramas sparked critical discussions around family violence and emphasized the idea that community members themselves have the power to drive societal transformation. The impact of these performances is expected to influence not only current attitudes but also future generations, fostering a culture of respect, equality, and non-violence.

Training Program for Government Officers and Stakeholders

As part of the broader initiative to address Gender-Based Violence and promote gender equality, a targeted Training of Trainers (ToT) program was conducted for government officers and key stakeholders. This program aimed to build capacity among frontline service providers who play a crucial role in supporting women and child victims of violence, particularly those involved in decision-making and direct service delivery.

During the reporting period, 264 government officers actively participated in the training sessions. These participants were primarily officers working closely with women and children—such as social service officers, child protection officers, and women's development officers. The training was designed to enhance their understanding of gender concepts, gender-based violence (GBV), and effective response strategies, while also equipping them to act as trainers and advocates within their own institutions and communities.

Feedback from participants highlighted the practical value of the training. Many expressed that the sessions significantly increased their awareness of gender issues and provided new tools for managing the complex challenges they face in their professional roles. In particular, the training helped them reflect on their own responsibilities and the impact of their interventions in preventing and responding to GBV.

Participants also emphasized the importance of their contribution to social change. They recognized that as government officers, their involvement is essential in creating a safer, more equitable environment for all, especially vulnerable women and children. The program reaffirmed the need for their continued collaboration and commitment to long-term systemic change. It is our firm belief that this enhanced capacity and renewed dedication among government stakeholders will serve as a strong foundation for reducing gender-based violence and fostering positive transformation in society.

S/Nos.	Name of training/ workshop	Location/place	Date	Total number of participants		
				Total	M	F
1	Dealing with women and children development officers and child rights protection officers training	YMCA Hall Batticaloa	January 10,11,&12	28	5	23
2	Training for Teachers from College of Education	National College of education Thalankudah	March 2,3,4,5&11,12	82	40	42
3	Training for police staffs	YMCA Hall Batticaloa	June 9,10&11	22	6	16
4	Training for School Teachers from Zonal Education Paddiruppu	Zonal Education Department Hall ,Paddiruppu ,Kaluwanchikudy	14,15July&11,12 August 2023	52	23	29
5	Training for School Teachers from Zonal Education Kalkudah	Miani Hall , Thannamunai Batticaloa	21,22&28,29July 2023	42	12	30
6	Training for School Principal from Zonal Education Paddiruppu	Zonal Education Department Hall ,Paddiruppu ,Kaluwanchikudy	18,19 September 2023	24	21	3
7	Training for School Principal from Zonal Education Kalkudah	Miani Hall , Thannamunai Batticaloa	20 ,21 September 2023	22	5	17
8	Training for Police, Legal &Health sector from Kaluwanchikudy &Chenkalady Division	YMCA Hall, Batticaloa.	25,26 &27 September 2023	20	0	20
	TOTAL			264	112	180

" Thank you for being part of our journey."