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In this issue

▶ World Concern Sri Lanka's Dairy Farming Programme 1

▶ Strengthening the role of women in alcohol prevention..... 3

▶INTERVIEW: World Concern..... 4

CONNECTING THE MILK MARKET IN THE EAST

World Concern Sri Lanka's experience with eastern farming communities

World Concern Sri Lanka's Dairy Farming Programme links small dairy farmers in Sri Lanka's east to national milk markets in the west. The programme is funded by USAID, CIDA, Tear Fund NZ, and International Ministries of American Baptist Churches.

Across the Eastern Province, dairy farming communities, many newly resettled, struggle to sustain commercial milking as they lack essential infrastructure and a regular buyer for milk. World Concern and MILCO joined forces in March, 2007 to strengthen the operating capacity of farming cooperatives and to replace missing infrastructure, particularly Chilled Milk Collection Centres and a daily pick–up run for fresh milk.

So far, two Regional Milk Collection Centres have been built, one in Batticaloa and another in Trincomalee. In addition, three smaller chilled centres (mini–coolers) have been built within farming communities and two more are planned for December, 2008 and January, 2009.

In total, over 2,000 dairy farmers have been reconnected to the market. Most importantly this has

▶ Contd. on page 2

View the work of CHA during the month in our INFORMATION UPDATE by clicking on

http://www.humanitarian-srilanka.org/new/Publications/InformationUpdate/November2008.pdf

November 2008

(Contd. from pg. 01)
resulted in *double* the household income from milk sales for these families (in some places *triple*). This is enough to lift families out of poverty.

Future dairy work

World Concern is approaching donors to scale up this project to include six more community facilities and to concentrate on improvements in farm *inputs*. With milk volumes per farm 25 per cent lower in the east compared to elsewhere in the country, World Concern believes those supplying farm inputs may also require assistance. Farm inputs include such items as high breed cattle, artificial insemination, animal care and medication, high yield feed, and regular water sources for milking cows. It is the combination of market access and these essential productivity *inputs* that will see milk *output* reach its true potential.

Peacebuilding

In addition to technical support, World Concern offers farmers 'exposure visits' to up—country production facilities where their milk is processed prior to sale. Multi—ethnic groups of neighbouring farmers journey together to visit production facilities in Nuwara Eliya and Kandy, in addition to cultural sites. Civil military liaison officers play an active role in helping keep these visits safe. Participants also undertake experiential peacebuilding workshops, learn about their fundamental rights, and perhaps most importantly build relationships with their neighbours. These create memorable moments for many farmers. One Sinhala farmer from Echchilampattu summed up the purpose of these trips recently as he said to a neighbouring Tamil farmer, "We will visit you in hard times as well as in good times in future."

Other programmes

Having arrived with the tsunami four years ago, World Concern has since invested in the lives of 113,000 families through a full array of programmes. They have responded with emergency provisions during times of displacement and help families resettle afterward with livelihood, water and sanitation and protection needs attended to. They have built 144 new houses in Trincomalee and Ampara and completed construction on 329 half build NEHRP homes after the programmes initial funding ran short. They have worked with the Government's Disaster Management Unit to develop community disaster risk reduction plans. Essential assets and infrastructure have been installed in communities across the Eastern Province including: 143 transition homes, 1,350 wells of various types, 900 latrines, 123 fishing boats, 32 inland fishing ponds, four community centres, three village water piping systems, approximately 100 solar lighting units for vulnerable families, one large community bridge, several village access roads and playgrounds. Accompanying this building frenzy has been psychosocial and cultural programs' for adults and children and extensive work with farming cooperatives to strengthen their business models and market linkages. For more information contact admincmb@wcsrilanka.org.

WORLD CONCERN Sri Lanka

Strengthening the role of women in alcohol prevention

Women may often be non consumers of alcohol, drugs or tobacco yet they remain imprisoned in its powerful grip, forced upon them by none other than their own addictive husbands. They suffer immense economic hardships and struggle to keep the home fires burning. Managing and making ends meet is a nightmare to many of these women who are completely dependent on their male counterparts as the sole breadwinner within these households. Though the economic situation of these families seem very depressing and basic necessities are hard to come by, a generous portion of the earnings is always donated to cigarettes, alcohol and drugs.

Such was the situation in the Weerayah household as well. Weerayah a resident of Matale was hopelessly addicted to alcohol. His addiction weighed heavily on the family finances and his monthly pay packet dwindled as fast as burning timber. Most of his hard earnings were channeled towards the purchase of alcohol and tobacco. There was little left to meet the needs of his wife and child or for their daily survival.

"He used to get home drunk everyday," says Thirupathy recalling with emotion and disgust the ugly past that haunted her and the family.

"From the time he steps in to the house, he picks a fight with me, most often for no reason what so ever; several times he beat me up in front of my children, which really upset them emotionally" she added. Their older son eventually walked out of the house even before he could complete his formal education. He was desperate to get out of the house and the awful environment that was home to him. His unpleasant childhood experiences drove him to Colombo, 140 km from home, in search of employment.

Weerayah is not the only one with such experiences. The numbers are many especially in the outskirts of Colombo. In families in which the male counterpart remains the sole bread winner within the household, poverty remains rampant as much of the finances are burned by alcohol and tobacco. The untold sufferings of these women are often silenced as they remain dependent on the husbands.

In the modern age, the link between gender role and relationships in our society often drive women to be economically dependent. However, even in families where women contribute towards the home finances, a part of her earnings too are routed towards fulfilling her man's addiction towards cigarettes, alcohol and drugs. As the finances diminish and household expenses loom large, the frustration and anger grow thereby leading to heated conflicts within the households, ending in domestic violence. Alcohol is often used as an excuse for domestic violence, as society is always ready to pardon misbehavior under the consumption of alcohol.

Stepping in with support for such communities, FORUT Sri Lanka took on the of identifying areas in which women could play a crucial part in influencing the reduction or total abstinence, primarily through a change in attitudes. In several of the working areas, FORUT has implemented a series of activities that has helped many of the breadwinners engage in more worthwhile activities that contribute to their home finances as well as foster harmony in the family.

The Weerayah household was one such family that received the attention of FORUT's dedicated team. The FORUT team found Weerayah to be a challenging character but yet they never gave up on him. The efforts bore fruit as FORUT eventually succeeded in engaging Weerayah in a home gardening project. Today an enthusiastic Weerayah tends to the vegetable beds, after getting back from work, instead of picking a fight with his wife. On hearing of this transformation his son returned home to take up home gardening full—time. Carrots and Turnips keep Weerayah busy, instead of alcohol and cigarettes.

To date, FORUT continues to work towards the empowerment of women especially in overcoming family violence. A series of workshops and seminars have been organized by FORUT both at national and district level, with the participation of grass root and district base women's organisations. A National Conference on Women's Development and Alcohol Prevention was held at the Sri Lanka Foundation Institute Auditorium in Colombo recently, with much support from the DS offices islandwide.

FORUT anticipates that the participants will carry this message to their working areas and play an important role in influencing women at community level.

"We believe that our efforts will help many women especially those in the outskirts. We want women to realise that they can play a role in the prevention of alcohol and drug consumption. They need to simply

▶ Contd. on page 6

Interview

World Concern is an INGO with its Headquarters based in Seattle, Northwest United States. It is active in 20 countries with a global workforce of 1,000 staff. It engaged in Sri Lanka following the day of the tsunami, where it has a staff of 75.

With the support of Tear Fund UK and others, World Concern set about working with communities to rebuild, particularly in areas of:

- Livelihood support (at the household level);
- Transitional shelters;
- Small community infrastructure (1300 wells and 900 toilets, village roads, a pre—school, market places, playgrounds, and water distribution systems amongst others); and
- Children's activities such as swimming lessons, sports festivals, and cultural exchanges aimed at overcoming trauma and building confidence in children.

In the immediate aftermath of the tsunami, World Concern built 143 transitional shelters. In 2007, this gave way to permanent housing in the project's second phase. World Concern built 105 permanent homes on Trincomalee's Kuchchaveli coast upto Tiriyai (45 km north of Trincomalee). The organisation also built 39 houses in Ampara at Central Camp. With CIDA and USAID we have worked on both the infrastructure needed for a steady supply chain for milk and on smaller inputs such as milk cans training, mobilisation, and cash grants as working capital.

World Concern also provides solar lighting units for widows with a view to reducing vulnerability through the provision of all necessities in the 'backyard'. This also minimises the need to travel beyond the home until security improves in the area.

World Concern has also diverted its attention to the myriad of faith based donors, some of whom are engaged in Myanmar and elsewhere, and are proposing a combination of soft dairy inputs with peacebuilding. Partnerships are also being built with Churches and faith based organisations where they have access and capabilities that the organisation can collaborate with, again largely in the area of peacebuilding.

World Concern has worked with 117,000 individuals and spent USD 6 million. The organisation will spread its net wide to identify those who are interested in continuing with the organisation, giving it a few months to form new partnerships.

Our programmes

Tsunami Rapid Recovery Project — Phase II (TRRP 2)

▶ Contd. on page 5

(Contd. from pg. 04...)

Addresses key gaps for underprivileged, tsunami affected communities: sustainability, common livelihoods, housing and infrastructure, water sources and latrines, and peacebuilding in response to post—disaster migration, which has affected communities.

- Beneficiaries 12, 000
- Budget USD 1, 201, 722 (FY08)

Disaster Risk Reduction Project (DRR)
Works with communities to identify hazards, mitigate risks, and prepare for future disasters. Likewise it mainstreams disaster risk reduction principles across other sectors, such as livelihoods and housing, to boost sustainability.

- Beneficiaries 6, 144
- Budget USD 318, 152

Tsunami Livelihood Recovery Project (TLRP)
The project involves rebuilding dairy farming and inland fishing economies that thrived prior to the tsunami and the civil war. It mobilises grassroots' cooperatives, connects them with Government support structures, and equips them with training and infrastructure, such as milk chilling centres.

- Beneficiaries 6, 400
- Budget USD 363, 067

Dairy Farming Regeneration Project (DFRP)
This concerns the expansion of the TLRP project model to a new region — reconstructing a Regional Milk Chilling Centre, rebuilding farmer managed societies, and linking to Government milk collection networks.

- Beneficiaries 7, 696
- Budget USD 242, 464

Rebuilding Together Post—Tsunami Housing Project (RT—PTHP)
Partnering with underserved families to help them construct permanent homes.

- Beneficiaries 660
- Budget USD 398, 914

Eachchilampattu Emergency Response Project (EERP)

Assistance is provided to war displaced families returning home only to find their houses, crops, and water sources destroyed. Women are under threat of rape as they try to collect water at remote sources in a highly militarised environment. This project addresses critical security and survival needs, including well and latrine construction and crop replanting.

- Beneficiaries 1, 070
- Budget USD 106, 888

Kuchchaveli Housing Project (RT—KHP)
The project provides supplementary housing grants for 107 families in five villages in conflict and tsunami affected communities, to complete construction of their permanent homes. They were matched with The World Bank grant funding, restoring hope and improving quality of life.

- Beneficiaries 107 families and 428 children, men and women
- Budget USD 361, 061

Trincomalee South Disaster Response Project (TSDRP)
This contributes towards the wider programme of resettlement and reintegration of displaced communities by ensuring five conflict affected communities who have rebuilt their security in terms of income, household, and intercommunity relationship.

- Beneficiaries 948 households and 3, 790 individuals
- Budget USD 217, 942

International Ministries — Coastal Dairy Project (IMCDP)
It improves the quality of life of coastal Sri Lankan communities affected by the tsunami and the conflict through the economic recovery of the local dairy industry through the construction of three community level Milk Collection Centres, developing six local water sources for animals, and strengthening five community livelihood groups.

- Beneficiaries 170 households and 680 persons
- Budget USD 65, 002

Target groups include the economically and socially disadvantaged, tsunami affected, conflict affected, dairy farms, and families. In addition, **core sectors** include livelihoods, emergency response, housing and infrastructure, water and sanitation, peacebuilding, and disaster risk reduction.

Best of CKC

Conflict hit population to receive Indian government aid through ICRC

http://www.ckc.lk/Best_of_ckc/November/Conflict hit population to receive Indian government aid through ICRC.pdf

IASC Sri Lanka North East Humanitarian Sitrep 150

http://www.ckc.lk/Best_of_ckc/November/IASC Sri Lanka North East Humanitarian Sitrep 150.pdf

IASC Sri Lanka North East Humanitarian Sitrep 151

http://www.ckc.lk/Best_of_ckc/November/IASC Sri Lanka North East Humanitarian Sitrep 151.pdf

IASC Sri Lanka North East Humanitarian Sitrep 152

http://www.ckc.lk/Best_of_ckc/November/IASC Sri Lanka North East Humanitarian Sitrep 152.pdf

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http://www.ckc.lk/Best_of_ckc/November/IASC Sri Lanka North East Humanitarian sitrep 154.pdf

ICRC Sri Lanka Bulletin issue No 9 English November 2008

http://www.ckc.lk/Best_of_ckc/November/ICRC Sri Lanka Bulletin issue No 9 English November 2008.pdf

NPC Fresh Ceasefire Proposal Not Viable Without Political Framework

http://www.ckc.lk/Best_of_ckc/November/NPC Fresh Ceasefire Proposal Not Viable Without Political Framework.pdf

UN Statement Humanitarian Coordination

http://www.ckc.lk/Best_of_ckc/November/UN Statement Humanitarian Coordination.pdf

WFP convoy departs for Vanni

http://www.ckc.lk/Best_of_ckc/November/WFP convoy departs for Vanni.pdf

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refrain from supporting the unjust privileges attached to alcohol and drugs and related violence. The relationship between masculinity, domestic violence, alcohol and drug use has to be broken and this can only be achieved by an overall transformation of attitudes and true empowerment in tackling this social menace," says Samitha Sugathamala, Gender Advisor — FORUT Sri Lanka.

"Most of the grassroots women's organisations lack proper knowledge and effective mechanisms to address the issues of alcohol prevention and the reduction of Gender based violence. During the two—day National Conference, participants engaged in a series of discussions that created a new thinking in the minds of these women. It opened up their minds on the factors that lead to gender based violence and the role of women in prevention was also argued," she further added.

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