

SLWP Activity Journal

January – June 2023

World Wetland Day 2023 Activities

Awareness program for school environmental pilot team and parents on wetland

Sri Ginarathana Junior school, Kotagaloluwa, Gelioya is in Kandy district, Gelioya Udunuwara Educational Zone, with 2 acres of land. This school's children are from low-income families.

The environment pilot group and parents, the director and 4 officials of the environment authority were participated for this programme. 5 teachers including the principal of the school also participated the programme. After the welcome speech by the school principal, the awareness program was started by the Assistant Director Central Environment authority Kandy.

First, the director explained what wetlands are. He mentioned that paddy fields, Kohila, Keera and cultivated lands in the central province are also wetlands.

After that, Environment officer Mrs. Ketakumbura explained the importance of protecting wetlands and ways to protect them. Other officials explained the benefits of wetlands to humans and animals and the destruction that can be caused to living things by destroying them.

Arecanut plants (Puwak) and fruit plants were given to the school and, marking wetland day, 2 plants were planted on the school land. Everyone appreciated Lanka Jalani and Lions club of Pilimathalawa for raising awareness about the protection of wetlands and the awareness fact wetlands exist not only in the lower countryside.

After a school child's vote of thanks, the program ended and we participated in planting trees.



Awareness program for Development officers at Pathahewaheta AGA office, Thalatuoya on wetland conservation

The programme was held for 81 Development officers at Pahathahewaheta AGA office, Talathuoya , in Kandy district on 6th February. The program was started by the Land Development officer after the welcome speech by Mrs. Kumarihami, The Additional secretary.

In the programme the land belonging to the AGA division was discussed and those lands were classified and wetland lands were introduced. The most important incident that happened here was that none of the participants knew that there were wetlands in that area. It was explained that all the lands in the area such as paddy fields, kira kotu, kohila kotu and mud swamps are wetlands. The Development Officers informed that the people of the region will be informed about the wetland in their area and a program will be implemented to protect it. She explained the importance of conserving those wetlands and the responsibility of the Development Officers for that.

All the Development Officers gave their comments and the Lions Club and Lanka Jalani Institute were praised for organizing such a program.

80 Mee plants were distributed among all participants.

The program was concluded after the vote of thanks by the Assistant Director (Development).



World Water Day 2023 Activities

Awareness and Tree Planting Programme in Marassana

Marking world water day 2023, an awareness programme was held with collaboration of Lions Club of Pilimathalawa and AGA office Pathahewaheta on 22nd March.

50 Mee trees were planted in water catchment area of the 3 lakes in Marassana Pothgoda village. All these 3 tanks are located next to each other. The first tank is 320 feet long and 150 feet wide, the second tank is 230 feet long and 109 feet wide, and the third tank is 150 feet long and 120 feet wide. From these tanks feed about 20 acres.

Secondly the awareness program on conservation of water catchment for the farmers was held at the Pothgoda pre-school hall. Development officer and Gramaniladhri organized this program. The awareness program was conducted by Land officer Miss Mangalika and Additional secretary Mrs Kumarihami of AGA office. The farmers' grant request is to restore these 3 tanks.

It was informed that the planting of 350 plants in the remaining 80 Divisions will be done in the upcoming week.

The teachers and the parents of Pothgoda pre-school agreed to take over the protection of the plants and they monitor and report the growth of the plants.



Awareness and Tree Planting Programme in Rewatha Vidyalaya

Commemorating the world water day 2023, a tree planting program and awareness program on water conservation and environment conservation was organized for school children in Rewatha Vidyalaya, Welamboda. This school is in Kandy district, Welamboda Uduuwara Educational Zone, with 3 acres of land. This school's 420 children are from rural area and low-income estate families.



For this program, the environment pilot group, 180 school children, 40 parents, Asst. Director and 4 officials from the central environment authority, 3 Lion members and 12 staff including the Reverend Principal of the school were participated. After the welcome speech by the Reverend Principal, the awareness program was started by the Assistant Director Central Environment authority Kandy.

From the start of Water Day, up-today was explained about the measures taken by the community to save water. The responsibility of the school community regarding water conservation and the conservation of water sources were well explained. The destruction caused to the water sources due to the wrong actions of the community was well explained and the responsibility of the school children to prevent those actions was pointed out.

Also, it was explained that the schools need to use rain water as they have to pay big bills for the tap water that they are currently using and the importance of using rainwater for toilets and farming.



World Water Day Programme for Gild Guides

Commemorating the World Water Day an awareness programme was organized by Lanka Jalani in collaboration with Sri Lanka Advancement of Science and Sri Lanka Girl Guide Association on 20th March at the Public Library main hall, Colombo.

The targeted group was little girls aged between 5 to 10 to be aware of the concept of clean water and sanitation. To aware them that clean water is a basic right and the importance of sanitation.

Around 40 “butterflies” (girl guides aged between 5-8) and “little friends” ((girl guides aged between 8-12) participated in the workshop with their team leaders. The workshop was conducted as an activity-based programme where the little girls were given activities related to clean water and sanitation.

Prof. Deepthi Wickramasinghe lead off the workshop with ice-breaking activities. Further, she introduced the concept of clean water, water resources, and the uses of water for humans and environment. Kids were given group tasks such as identifying songs related to water and free drawing activities on water resources.

Dr. Vindhya K. Fernando explained to the kids how to identify clean water and polluted water by using indicative species. She gave a brief introduction to indicative species and showed them images of indicative species and the kids were given an activity sheet to complete at the end of the session to identify clean and polluted water using indicative species.

Dr Devanmini Halwatura explained how to save the water, she highlighted why we need to save water by showing visuals of African kids and animals that drink murky water. Then a discussion was conducted with kids based on the question “for their age how they can save water”. Further, asked them to draw different ways that they can save water.

All the participants were given a fridge magnet with a message “water is Life, and clean water means health. Be the change you want to see in the world”, and a stationary for the workshop. After the refreshments the workshop ended with an action song sung by the kids about saving water.



Water Messenger Programme for Girl Guides (World Water Day Programme)

Water messengers programme for the Girl Guides of Colombo was held with 125 participants from 28 schools, on 12th of May at the Library Auditorium, Colombo. The Zones that took part in the program are Piliyandala, Japura, Colombo, Negombo and Homagama.



Professor Ms. Deepthi Wickramasinghe representing SLWP, delivered a very interesting and important lecture. The Guides participated in a vibrant question and answer session which will help the Guides to carry out the message to their peers. Another speciality of the programme was participants from Deff school with a teacher. Students took part in the discussion and expressed their ideas. Later they will carry out the programme for there

peers. The way forward was done interactively by Consultant in Community Guiding, Miss Priyanthi Rajapaksa. The success of the program is mainly due to the Colombo Zonal commissioners working as a team.

The messengers who deliver the message to their peers will achieve a patch and a certificate .

A group of guides composed a song regarding water safety. Further, a play was staged to show the importance of water safety and how they should take steps to protect water resources.

Other Core Activities

Awareness program for women's associations about protecting water security according to the effects of climate change

An awareness program for women's associations was held, focusing on protecting water security in light of the effects of climate on 30th March at Bingiriya Divisional Secretariat.

The event started with the welcome speech by Mr. S.P. Laksiri Sudhasinghe, the chairperson of the 'Deduru Oya Surakeme Ekabadda Janata Sanvidana,' who welcomed the attendees and introduced the panel of experts and supporters. Ven. Padiwala Sortha Himi, a monk from Bingiriya, delivered a speech emphasizing the importance of livelihoods centered around environmental issues. He stressed the need for common responsibility, personal profits, and a unified vision to address these challenges. This was then followed by a short speech by the Assistant Regional Secretary of the Regional Secretariat Ms. H.M.M.K Herath and Prof. Champa Navaratne (University of Ruhuna) who spoke about the importance of the program.

Prof. S.B. Navaratne's (Sri Jayawardenapura University) delivered a lecture on *Home Garden and Food Security*. His session focused on the critical role of home gardens in ensuring household food security and nutrition. He discussed how home gardens can improve food security through better nutrition and the importance of fruits and vegetables in this context. He explained the difference between climacteric and non-climacteric fruits and their significance in food security and nutrition. Moreover, he addressed the role of home gardens in providing micronutrients, such as vitamins C and A, as well as lycopene, a phytonutrient.

The next session Mr. Malith Fernando from Meteorology Department delivered a comprehensive session on climate change and its implications for Sri Lanka, particularly in the context of agriculture. He began by discussing the various aspects of climate change in different regions and how these observations can be applied to agricultural practices. He then explored the causes of global warming, including natural factors and human activities, as well as the greenhouse effect, its causes, prevention methods, and adverse effects.

During the question-and-answer session, Mr. Fernando discussed the measures farmers can take to mitigate climate change, problems related to North-East and South-West Monsoons, and the accurate use of weather forecasts in farming. Additionally, he covered the factors used in issuing weather warnings, natural calamities, and the overall implications of climate change. Further, a very interactive discussion also unfolded on the accuracy of meteorological forecasts and then on biological indicators, with members of the audience.

The event successfully concluded after providing the attendees with lunch and vouchers, leaving them better equipped to address the challenges related to climate change, water security, and food security in their respective farming communities. The farmers' associations and the expert panel alike expressed their commitment to continue working together to promote sustainable agricultural practices and protect the environment for future generations.

In conclusion, the awareness program for women's associations provided valuable insights into the challenges posed by climate change, emphasizing the importance of water security, home gardens for food security, and practical solutions for farmers. The two speakers Prof.S.B. Navaratna and Mr. Malith Fernando contributed to a comprehensive and engaging discussion, highlighting the significance of a unified approach to address the pressing issues of climate change and its impact on agriculture.

After the lunch, Bingiriya Temple, newly constructed Wewa and commercial Banana plantation with banana processing center was visited by the participants as a field activity.



Awareness Program for Farmers' Organizations Regarding the Water Security Under the Climate Change Impacts

Parallel to the CCA programme for women another awareness programme was held for farmer organisations. All the participants were welcome by Mr.S.P. Laksiri Sudasinghe, the chairman of "Deduru Oya Surekime Sanvidhanaya" Mrs.H.M.M.K.K.N. Herath, Assistant Divisional Secretary, Divisional Secretary Office, Bingiriya was address the participants and explain about the aim of this awareness program. Then Prof.Champa Navaratne was given a brief introduction about the "Sri Lanka Water Organization" and about the awareness program.

In the first session, Mr. Malith Fernando from Department of Meteorology have done the presentation and 1st discussion session under the topic of "**Empowering the agriculture sector according to the climate change impacts**". his presentation he was able to discuss about the follow mentioned areas,

- Climate changes
 - Climate changes in different regions in Sri Lanka
 - How observations and conclusions which are related to climate change can be applied to agriculture practices in Sri Lanka
- Causes of global warming
 - Natural causes
 - Human activity
- Greenhouse effect
 - Causes of Greenhouse Effect
 - Ways to prevent the greenhouse effect
 - Adverse effects caused by the greenhouse effect
- How climate changes are affects the occurrence of natural disasters
- How climate change affects agriculture, drinking water, life and property damage, health and ecosystems
- Actions to be taken to mitigate climate change
- Analyzing and explaining the data related to rainfall, temperature, forest population etc. in Bingiriya area

The 2nd session was conducted by Prof.Champa Navaratne from University of Ruhuna, under the topic of "**Building resilience for water security**". she was able to discuss about the follow mentioned areas,

- What is the water security?
- How to improve the water security?
- How can people adjust to water security in situations where there is no water security?
- According to the rainfall pattern in the North West Province the water security was described with more reliable details.
- Common problems associated with water.
- How rainfall patterns are change in different provinces in Sri Lanka (According to the rainfall forecasting for 10 years, from 2015-2025)
- How water related problems affect different regions Sri Lanka. Two major problems were discussed here.
 - Drought Condition
 - Floods
- Adverse effects of floods on water security and methods that can be used to reduce them. Two (02) methods were discussed in here. They are
 - Technical Solutions
 - Management Solutions
- What is artificial flood and hoe to prevent it.

Then the discussion part was carried out with farmers /participants to solve their problems regarding to the water security. In this discussion, most of the problems raised by the farmers were related to the following points.

- How to provide the right technical solutions?
- Problems associated with managed solutions

Most of the participants/farmers were suggested that the responsible government officials of the relevant institutions, should also participate in such valuable awareness programs to share their experiences as well.



Awareness Programme Celebrating Bio Diversity Day 2023

An Awareness programme was organized by the SLWP partner Lions Club of Pilimathalawa, commemorating the Bio Diversity Day 2023. The Programme was held on 22nd May CMS Junior College, Pilimathalawa. Around 300 school children and parents participated the programme.

Resource persons from Central Environmental Authority delivered a presentation on the importance of the day as well as the importance of conserving wetlands.

It was explained here that we all have a duty beyond celebrating this day to protect the environment including plants and animals. It was shown that plants and animals in the world directly affect human existence. Parents also commented in this regard. It was pointed out that it is important to act in relation to the environment of your garden at home and it is the responsibility of parents to guide their children in this regard.

In the vote of thanks speech of the Principal, pointed out that it is very appropriate for the parents to educate these children and take this message of environmental protection to the society.

After the awareness program, tree planting program was also conducted with the children.



Celebration of World Earth Day 2023

In commemoration of World Earth Day, Lanka Jalani and Lions Club of Pilimathalawa jointly conducted this program for the children of Manikdiwala Central College in Kandy District under the theme of “Invest in our planet”, on 24th May 2023.

About 300 children of Grade 7 and Grade 8 and 3 teachers participated in this program.

The Principal gave his welcome speech and said that he is happy to hold such a timely program and thanked everyone for organizing this awareness program.

Central Environment Authority officer Mrs. A.Subasinghe started the lecture and said that more contribution should be made by paying special attention to renewable energy, clean transportation and food and agriculture. It was shown that the contribution of the school community is very important for this.

At the end of the programme several children gave their comments and said that the program helped them to gained more information than what is in the syllabus and expressed special thanks for that.



Shramadana Programme for World Environment Day 2023

Marking of World Environment Day 2023 Lanka Jalani, Kadugannawa Police , Kadugannawa Urban Council and Lions Club of Pilimathalawa jointly conducted a Sramadana program to collect plastic and polythene on both sides of the road from Kadugannawa town to Kadugannawa Rock tunnel (Pahala Kadugannawa).

25 people from the area, 6 officers from Kadugannawa police, 2 officers from Open University, 15 parents and 15 children from Kadugannawa pre-school, 6 workers from Kadugannawa Urban council and 2 Lions from Lions club of Pilimathalawa participated in this program. The program started around 9.00 am. The participants were educated about the activity, importance of conserving the environment and the effect of dumping polythene & plastics to the environment. Polythene and plastic were collected separately in two groups and handover to Town Council (TC) tractor. About 300 kilos of plastic and polythene were collected here. After serving lunch for the participants, the Shramadana program was concluded at around 1.00 pm.



South Asia Water Challenge

The South Asia Youth Water Challenge was catered to empower youth with the opportunity to create impact on the ground by implementing their ideas. One proposal will be selected that will receive USD 2500 for project implementation with the support of Brandix Apparel Limited, Global Water Partnership South Asia, and Youth and Young Water Professionals (YYPP). More information can be found in <https://www.gwp.org/en/gwp-SAS/WE-ACT/change-and-impact/News-and-Activities/2023/south-asia-youth-water-challenge-2023/>

With an overwhelming response from youth applicants for the challenge there were 32 teams each having 3-5 members applied, 8 teams were selected for the second round of evaluations. From this round 4 applications will be selected. The evaluation took place on **Wednesday, 28th June 2023, from 2:00pm IST to 4:00pm IST.**

SLWP Country Coordinator participated this programme and found it very interesting and useful and looking forward to working with these young professional in the future.

Flood Green Guide – Awareness Program for Sri Lanka

Back to back with the GlobalWatr Champions program, WWF Environment and Disaster Management (EDM) Program along with Sri Lanka Water Partnership and Women for Water Partnership(WFWP) organized the FGG awareness program for Sri Lanka to introduce the basic principles of nature-based flood risk management, and lay the foundations for a full length FGG training in the future.

The one-day program took place on the 27th of June 2023, from 9:00 AM to 12:30 PM. The event was hosted at the prestigious Sri Lanka Institute of Development Administration in Colombo, Sri Lanka. The program was organized by the Environment and Disaster Management Program at the World Wildlife Fund, in collaboration with the Sri Lanka Water Partnership and Women for Water Partnership. The program successfully raised awareness and enhanced understanding of the Flood Green Guide. Participants actively engaged in insightful discussions and gained valuable insights into integrated flood risk management.

Expected learning outcomes:

The expected learning outcomes of this program include developing an understanding of the concepts presented in the Flood Green Guide and how they are interconnected with Integrated Flood Management. Participants will gain the ability to analyze and compare various flood risk management (FRM) methods, such as non-structural, soft-structural, and hard-structural approaches. This comparative analysis will encompass multiple perspectives, including technical, economic, social, and environmental considerations. By the end of the program, participants will have enhanced their knowledge in these areas, enabling them to make informed decisions regarding flood risk management strategies.

Lessons learnt

- 1.The current silo approach alone cannot be supportive of sustainable action in the future due to the intensity and exponential increase in extreme weather events.
2. FGG concepts needs to be integrated in organizations as well as academia.

Future steps

- 1) The group of trainees can continue to be FGG catalysts within their own organizations and liaise with each other through SLWP and other partner fora for promoting FGG advocacy programs
- 2) Trainees can develop their own skills through access to WWF online Learning Management System.
- 3) Trainees can contribute to improve DRR guidelines of the DMC by introducing FGG concepts.
- 4) The organizations can collaborate to carry out regional FGG webinars and a full length FGG training in future.

- 5) WWF US , SLWP and WFP can collaboratively contribute to South Asian and global fora on FGG.

For More information : <https://envirodm.org/flood-management>



Private Sector Collaboration

Reconnaissance visits to identify new schools

Perera and Sons Plc (P&S) supported 5 school for Rain Water Harvesting tanks in Denuwara educational zone in 2022. A donor follow-up visit was undertaken by senior P&S staff on the 23rd June. However due to doner constraints only 2 out of 5 schools were visited (Gonadika and Kirimatiyawa). During the visit P&S donated funds for Klrimatiya School for an extension of the water system and for Gonakida for building a community kitchen in the school and provide some dry rations and school supplies.

Perera and Sons has indicated that they are interested in another Rain water harvesting (RWH) project. Therefore a reconnaissance survey was carried out and was partially completed in 24th and 25th of June.

Not only Perera and Sons but other potential donors have indicated interest in supporting these types of activities. These rural schools been losing students to the towns due to their lack of investment- human and physical. Eg both Gonadika and Kirimetiya MV have requested for A/L teachers to keep the children from dropping out. But after the pandemic and the economic downturn there is anecdotal evidence of a return to the village school in keeping with the adage " Nearest school, best school". This factor needs to be studied further with data from the Zonal education offices. Also due to the small number of current students, the investment of a RWH tank in a remote school needs to be carefully considered by donors. But provision of facilities may help stay the outflow of students from rural schools. It is a chicken and egg question.





Knowledge Products / Media

Preparation of Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM) Booklet

SLWP has been a pioneer in giving visibility to MHM and has already produced a brochure for schools. Three of the people most engaged in the activity have come together to develop a book for which it is proposed to seek private sector funding. The content of the book will include existing material and new material from the MHM programs of the University of Jaffna and ADB WASSIP project. The finalization has to be completed and will be foreword to selected donor and UN Women Sri Lanka.

Existing MHM brochure a re-print is planned and quotation have been called.



Also some of other core publications are scheduled for re-printing.

Governance

4 Programme Committee Meetings held to date. A Steering Committee Meeting is scheduled for mid July.