

City Official's Workshop Report

Kandy City

Held on March 07th 2013

At

Queen's Hotel

Kandy

Sri Lanka

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1. Introduction

An increase in the number of people moving to urban areas, population growth and lack of government planning and investment, has led to an increase of informal settlements and overcrowding in existing settlements in Sri Lanka. With no secure tenure of land, many poor people have no affordable alternative but to illegally occupy government land, leaving them vulnerable to eviction. Sri Lanka's urban informal settlements are characterized by poor quality housing and inadequate water, sanitation, drainage and solid-waste infrastructure, resulting in pollution, ill health, and poor social wellbeing.

Women living in urban poor settlements in Sri Lanka engage in some form of income generation activity. They are considered as Home Based Workers and characterized by small scale in operation, unorganized and engage in primitive stage of entrepreneurial activities. They also have few social protection mechanisms and networking with mainstream micro and small enterprises. HBWs are neglected and marginalized in service delivery as majority of them are not identified in mainstream enterprise development services due to scale of operation.

To uplift the livelihoods of HBWs, project intends to link them with local livelihood support schemes and also to facilitate dialogue with city officials to include home-based workers in the city's decision making processes and policies that affects their living environment as well as the livelihood. In light of above city official's consultative workshop was organized in each project location.

2. Planning

Using the connections made during the urban study relationships with Kandy municipal council was made. Key issues found among the HBWs were falling either on livelihoods, infrastructure or social issues categories. Based on the findings of urban study further discussions carried out with HBWs and related government organizations to address them were identified. Kandy municipal council is responsible for provision of infrastructure while livelihoods related issues are addressed by various organizations. Accordingly participants list to the workshop was prepared including key government organizations responsible to address the issues identified.

Municipal Council, Rural/Industrial Development Department of Provincial council, Ministry of Economic Development, Small Business development unit in District Secretariat office, District planning unit and Samurdhi Authority were identified as main government organizations working on identified issues of HBWs. Based on the availability of Honorable mayor of Kandy as well as the Director General of Economic Development ministry workshop date was fixed. As in the case of other two cities it was vital to obtain the consent from central government to participate in NGO organized programs and participation of Director General of Economic Development ministry had created that credibility. Interestingly SETIC was the only non-government organization working in Kandy with urban poor and they were invited. Representing the HBWs 10 leaders were invited to the program.

3. Participation to the Workshop

Though Honorable mayor of Kandy municipal council was planning to attend the workshop, it was not realized at the end as he was invited for another function organized by Central Provincial Council. Thus coordination secretary to the mayor with two municipal councilors represented the municipal council. Director of industrial development department was also invited to the same function at central province thus did not attend. All the other invitees were present and program commenced as planned. Mentioned below are the participants to the program.

- ♦ Mr. Dhamma Disanayeka. - Director General, Divi Neguma, Ministry of Economic Development.
- ♦ Coordinating Secretary to the mayor of Municipal council - Kandy
- ♦ District Planning Director – District Secretariat office Kandy
- ♦ Kandy municipal Council members
- ♦ Samurdhi development officers
- ♦ Medical officer of Municipal council.
- ♦ Community Development Officers in Health section in Municipal council
- ♦ SETIC representative
- ♦ Community members from (MC Mahayyawa, MT Mahayyawa, Niththawela)
- ♦ Janathakshan staff

4. Agenda of the program

Time	Schedule
10.30-10.35 am	Welcome speech
10.35-10.40 am	Lightning the oil lamp
10.40-11.10 am	Introduction about the project – Mr Ranga Pallawela – Director of the Janathaksan (Guranteed) Ltd
11.10-11.20 am	Address the audience- To present the survey results of the Home Base Workers in three divisions in the Kandy city area by Prasad Rathnayake- Project Manager
11.20-11.45 am	Addressing the gathering by Planning Director, Divisional secretariat office Kandy
11.45-12.05 am	Address the audience by Honorable mayor, Kandy municipal council
12.05-12.25 am	Address the audience by Mr.Dhamma Dissanayeka, Director General, and Ministry of Economic Development.
12.25-12.45 pm	Presenting ideas by other officials
12.45-1.30 pm	Open discussion and planning future events
1.30pm	Winding up the program, vote of thanks.

5. Proceedings

Lighting the traditional oil lamp the occasion was initialized and then the audience was welcomed by Mr. Ranga Pallawala, Director Janathakshan. He has given the introduction to the project and “Janathakshan”. Further he explained the role of HBWs in

city economy and urban poor in service delivery. As such the need to address the issues they face in infrastructure and service delivery.

Presenting the findings of urban study, Mr. Prasad Rathanyake Project Manager of IUP mentioned specific issues HBWs in Kandy faced with. Following the presentation consultative process with HBWs carried out and potential solutions on their point of view were also mentioned.

Key issues presented are mentioned below.

Infrastructure related issues:

- No proper mechanism to engage slum dwellers in municipal council relocation plans (in Mahayawa settlement)
- Urban poor families unable to obtain electricity connection and water connection due to higher connection fee
- Insufficient space for HBWs
- Poor drainage facilities
- Mosquito borne diseases (dengue) due to poor waste management and drainage

Social Issues:

- Drug addiction and alcoholism
- Home based violence and sexual abuse
- Stigmatization of settlements as birth place for anti-social acts

Livelihood Related Issues:

- No proper marketing facilities
- Exploitation by middle men
- Restrictions on street vending (affects HBWs as their products are sold in streets)
- Unavailability of other income generation options
- Business registration cannot obtain due to illicit dwellings and less space
- Lack of financial assistance for production

Key note speech

Importance of involving community in decision making process for development was highlighted by Mr. Dhamma Dissanayeka, the Director General of Economic Development Ministry. Through projects like IUP such space for all the actors in development discussion needs to be created. He pointed out one key issue mentioned in the presentation, where Divi Neguma program was unable to reach urban poor. He presented the various steps of Divi Neguma program from home garden development to small business development from 2010-2013.

Mr. Disanayake further added that Kandy city development needs to take place in a planned manner where all the inhabitants of the city needs to be treated equally while any relocation is planned. Considering the maintenance of cultural identity of the city some relocation might take place to allow growing needs for land. However such relocation needs to be well planned where needs of the community as well as needs of the city are equally considered. He expressed his willingness to attend the relocation and related issues personally with the Minister of Economic Development as there will be some impacts on the economy of city.

Plenary Discussion

Director Planning of Kandy District Secretariat opted for bring his ideas during plenary discussion instead of making a speech. Initiating the discussion he mentioned that Divi Neguma program one of the biggest in food security and livelihood development initiatives of the government will target urban community in 2013 through the commencement of small enterprise development work. As such HBWs connected with the project will have an opportunity to get involve with the project. He further added that detailed out issues of HBWs will be beneficial for them to address their issues thus if project can develop such data based service providers will be able to cater the needs more effectively.

Assistant director of Small Business Development Unit in Kandy joining the discussion added that they are carrying out various capacity development programs for self-employees. Project already initiated entrepreneurship development program for HBWs

and they will be following up the progress of the trainees. She further added that if HBWs are more proactive there are support mechanisms from government sector for them to access.

Samurdhi Development officer of the area mentioned that she is providing various livelihood development supports to the HBWs in concerned areas where micro finance for small groups is one main. Regrettably they are some defaults in loans provided and beneficiaries claim various reasons. According to her HBWs are not engaged in planned business activity and credit facilities they get mostly used for consumption related matter instead of investing in the business. As a result they get trap in vicious cycle of debt and their businesses collapse within few months.

Explaining the experience of working with HBWs in Kandy, representative from SETIC mentioned that if they are organized there are opportunities to develop. They have formed one such organization in Mahaiyyawa area where members carryout own loan scheme with no interest. Thus organizing HBWs in to groups will be a key in developing their capacities as well as addressing their other social and infrastructure needs.

6. Out comes emerged / Possible solutions

Coordinating secretary to the mayor mentioned that municipal council will give more attention to the needs of urban slum dwellers. Municipal council's scheme to provide water for every house will be launched in Mahayyawa and connection fee will be charged in installments. Further, relocation plans for Mahaiyyawa settlement will be shared with the community and he requested the project to take lead in generating the discussion. Adding to the above, two councilors also confirmed their commitment to facilitate better resettlement process.

Divi Neguma program will be channeled to HBWs in Kandy addressing their livelihood development issues. Further support will be provided on enterprise development by District Small Business Development unit. Project needs to organize HBWs so they will be able to harness the available resources from various sources.

7. Conclusion

Project will further detail out the issues of HBWs and organize them in to group in order to address the issues they face collectively. Municipal council is willing to engage community in relocation program thus project will develop required capacities with in the HBW settlements for better engagement.

Divi Neguma program will be an ideal opportunity to address the livelihood related issues of HBWs thus project will develop more linkages with the program as well as develop the capacities of HBWs to access the service.