

## **SUMMARY**

### **- Sarvodaya Publishes Six Month Post-Tsunami Report**

#### **WAVES OF COMPASSION COUNTER WAVES OF DESTRUCTION**

**3<sup>rd</sup> October 2005, Sri Lanka** - On the day that it is awarded the highly prestigious UN Habitat Scroll of Honour from the United Nations in a special ceremony marking World Habitat Day in Jakarta, Sarvodaya has released its six month report of activities following the Tsunami on 26<sup>th</sup> December 2004.

Sarvodaya's post-Tsunami work to date has spanned 226 villages from a matter of hours after the first wave struck up to the present day and the work is ongoing with a target of 1,000 villages as beneficiaries by 2008. With donations still coming in, Sarvodaya has so far received R397mill/- (US\$3.97mill) from institutional and private donors. These donations are being and will continue to be spent in accordance with Sarvodaya's '5R' recovery programme - Relief, Rehabilitation, Reconstruction, Reconciliation and Reawakening – 'From Tsunami to Deshodaya. '

Comments Dr A.T. Ariyaratne, Founder and President of Sarvodaya: 'In the face of extraordinary tragedy, and in many cases the loss of their own homes, friends and family, all of our staff, villagers and international volunteers throughout Sri Lanka rallied together without hesitation and worked as a team day and night to help the communities and their own colleagues in the immediate relief programme. Such ongoing selfless and generous commitment is perhaps typical of the Sarvodaya spirit but it has especially touched my heart to witness such selflessness at a time of great tragedy and personal suffering.'

The initial response from 26<sup>th</sup> December was for all Sarvodaya staff at head office and in the districts plus additional volunteers to work together to distribute

immediate, practical aid; by 8<sup>th</sup> February, essential food items, water, clothing, shoes, educational material and kitchen utensils to the value of R.44.6million/- (US\$450,000) had been distributed. Sarvodaya received 48 shipped containers and a further 15 plane loads of aid from international well-wishers and donors – of those, 36 containers were handed over to the Social Services Department.

Welfare Centres were created by Sarvodaya's Shanti Sena Peace Movement in 113 villages in the south and east for the month of February; in keeping with tradition, these Shanti Sena volunteers from non-affected villages lived within the affected villages to work alongside and offer emotional support to their fellow Sri Lankans. The priorities were to organise clean-up, healing, first aid, water purification and nutritional support.

Following the immediate relief work in distributing aid, the ongoing work focuses on 12 areas:- Camp and Community Management; Water & Sanitation; Health & Preventative Care; Housing Resettlement; Women, Children & Orphans; Psychological and Spiritual Healing; Livelihood Support; Documentation & Legal Assistance; Environmental Management & Ecology; Communications; Disaster Management & Mitigation; Integrated Villages.

At all times, Sarvodaya's principle aim is to work in complete harmony with the people of Sri Lanka and to carry out that work effectively, sustainably and efficiently whilst providing total transparency and accountability. It has formed the National Reawakening Council, consisting of 95 professional and intellectual Sri Lankan nationals whose goal is to formulate a national programme and principles which address all communities and direct the country towards national reawakening. The former Governor of the Central Bank advises the committee which takes charge of all funding and accountability. Sarvodaya continues to be in very close communication with all areas of the Presidential Secretariat, Government, Donor Community Group and TAFREN (Task Force for Rebuilding

the Nation) and urges the country 'not to rebuild poverty' and to effect rapid resettlement in all parts of Sri Lanka together with an early-warning system.

Sarvodaya has developed a detailed Donor Relations Policy which ensures good governance, monitoring and evaluation on the part of Sarvodaya.

Sarvodaya's website was updated daily with information on relief activity .As a result of this and its other chain friends and contacts, Sarvodaya received tremendous support from international and local communities and organizations. without their support from \$ 10 to over \$ 1 million, the immediate and ongoing relief to reawakening programme would not be possible.

**ENDS**

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3 October 2005

## **LESSONS LEARNED**

### **- Sarvodaya Publishes Six Month Post-Tsunami Report**

**3<sup>rd</sup> October 2005, Sri Lanka** -Sarvodaya has identified a number of key lessons learned from its experience as one of Sri Lanka's primary and most effective development organisations.

Sarvodaya is today awarded the United Nations 2005 Habitat Scroll of Honour in recognition of its work over the last 46 years and specifically its achievements since the Tsunami struck.

In spite of the many challenges experienced by Sarvodaya, and countless other organisations, Sarvodaya has been inspired by the generosity of spirit, financial generosity and the waves of compassion from throughout the world and believes the reaction to this unprecedented disaster to be indicative of the generosity of the human heart.

The lack of emergency warning system and international and national communication as the waves spread from the east were major contributing factors in the huge loss of life. Sri Lanka's coastline was hit between 8.30 and 10.30am, over 90 minutes after the earthquake. Sarvodaya has been one of a group of experts headed by the Vanguard Foundation who, following extensive consultation, presented a concept paper to TAFREN and the Presidential Select Committee. It can be accessed at [www.lirneasia.net/national-early-system/](http://www.lirneasia.net/national-early-system/).

Sarvodaya also intends to invest in improvements to its own communications capability and to work towards improved resilience to natural or man-made disasters by setting up a Sarvodaya Institute of Disaster Management.

Sarvodaya is now more determined than ever to assist in the spread of its Grama Swaraj plan which empowers villages so that they can work as a unit and make their own decisions and act upon them at a local level. The red tape and bureaucracy which had to be overcome in the wake of the disaster were a constraint.

The sheer weight of donations has in itself created challenges; projects must be managed as well as implemented and Sarvodaya takes seriously its role as custodian and implementer of donor funding and aspirations. The burden placed on the management, IT, staff, logistics and structure of Sarvodaya should not be underestimated and a number of key personnel have been undergoing disaster project workshops to help improve efficiency and effectiveness.

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## **BACKGROUND ON SARVODAYA SHRAMADANA**

*'The sharing of time, thoughts and energy for the awakening of all'*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Founded in 1958 by Dr A.T. Ariyaratne and now numbering a family of 15,000 villages throughout Sri Lanka, Sarvodaya is a nationwide movement for peace and development. It seeks a no-poverty, no-affluence society based on the sharing of resources which will uplift the status of the poorest people in Sri Lanka and promote participatory democracy, human rights and environmental sustainability. Sarvodaya is a non-governmental development organisation with charity status.

### **SCOPE OF WORK**

Sarvodaya's work spans both social and technological empowerment and is designed to preserve traditional Sri Lankan values and culture at the village level whilst simultaneously promoting peace and sustainable national well being.

### **'5R' TSUNAMI PROGRAMME – RELIEF TO REAWAKENING**

Sarvodaya is undertaking a vast catalogue of work to provide and promote relief, rehabilitation, reconstruction, reconciliation and reawakening in 226 villages in 13 districts across Sri Lanka

### **INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION**

Most recent of the many international awards and recognition bestowed upon Sarvodaya is the prestigious United Nations' 2005 UN Habitat Scroll of Honour in recognition of Sarvodaya's work, specifically its ongoing efforts and achievements since the first few hours of the Tsunami.

## **WORKING TOWARDS FINANCIAL SELF-SUSTAINABILITY**

More than ever before, Sarvodaya recognises the need to develop its financial independence and self-sustainability at grassroots and national levels, whilst protecting the values, culture and philosophy of the Sarvodaya movement. To this end, a new initiative is currently being established – the Community Tourism Initiative (CTI) aims *‘to enhance sustainably the income and cultural value of Sarvodaya and its village communities at grassroots level by sharing our natural resources, village culture and vision with paying visitors from home and overseas who seek meaningful and enlightening experiences’*. Experiences will range from simple home stays and interactive community centres in rural villages to the development of an eco-lodge. A British tourism professional is currently volunteering her time and expertise to establish this initiative – to register your interest or support, please email Catherine Leech ([catherineleech@mac.com](mailto:catherineleech@mac.com)).

## **FRIENDS OF SARVODAYA – REGISTER NOW**

Sarvodaya is also in the process of establishing a mechanism to develop a worldwide support network, information dissemination, donation schemes and professional volunteer support – ‘Friends of Sarvodaya’ will be launched early in 2006; to register your interest, please email [friends@sarvodaya.lk](mailto:friends@sarvodaya.lk). Sarvodaya will contact you at the time of the launch.

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