

Case Studies of Collaboration

The **InCollaboration Initiative** is being undertaken by a group of over 15 civil society networks working in DRR and resilience around the world. We are working together on some joint actions so that we may effectively achieve a shared goal:

More systematic collaboration between governments and communities, and the CSOs that represent them, in the design of national and local DRR strategies.

Towards this aim, we are looking for examples of where governments have worked together with communities or civil society organisations to design policies, plans or projects related to resilience. We will share these examples at the Global Platform for DRR in Mexico to generate discussion on the benefits of multi-stakeholder collaboration and how it can be achieved. The good practice we collect will also be drawn upon and referenced to develop a How-to Guide on Collaborative DRR for UNISDR.

Please send your examples to lucy.pearson@gndr.org AND gcharles@ccic.ca by May 4, 2017.

Your name and organization:

Diluksion Francis - World Vision Lanka; Robert Sulistyo – World Vision South Asia & Pacific Regional Office

Location of example:

Sri Lanka

Name of organizations and institutions involved:

Sri Lanka, Disaster Management Center

Tell us the story of the collaboration. *What were they trying to do together? Who initiated the collaboration? How? What were the steps?*

Project: “ Early warning to the last mile “

In Sri Lanka, Early Warning message dissemination to grass root communities had always remained a challenge. The Disaster Management Center(DMC) implemented various alternatives to disseminate early warning messages, such as SMS to people, relaying the message to respective Police stations and through their mobile transports. In the case of landslide warning dissemination, a common practice in the country is to rely on manual rain gauges(75 mm to be vigilant, >100mm to be evacuated) and automated rain gauges which will automatically pass rainfall data to EOC(Emergency Operating Center) in Colombo, This is then be verified through NBRO(National Building & Research Organization) and then disseminated through local police and local news services. Due to unique challenges observed during disasters such as flooding and landslide, there are several pockets of the community that have been difficult to reach due to the geographical nature of the terrain and restricted road access due to rainfall and flooding. Recently, rapid flooding was caused in many areas within 20 – 25 minutes of rainfall and river overflow in Colombo/Westera Areas region, leaving little time for warning systems.. As Sri Lanka

is also vulnerable to tsunami threats, Tsunami towers have already been installed along the coast and coverage is considered adequate when compared to the gap of early warning systems for other natural disasters.



Fig: WVL Staff Brian and DRR specialist Ajith Melder explaining to the Technical Officer of DMC.

World Vision Lanka, utilizing the electronic and IT expertise of a local WVL staff member started the engagement with the Disaster Management Center to help understand the challenges and urgency in addressing this crucial need/gap. After various discussions between the DMC officials and WVL staff on the 27th of April, WVL staff conducted a small demonstration of the functionality of an early warning unit developed by the WVL staff to the officials, which had increased the expectations and enthusiasm to build the unit as a working prototype. The

Director General who attended the discussion immediately invited all their technical team to be present and asked their official photographer to take some photos during the discussion and demonstration.

Further, the following decision had been taken/ instructed by the Director General:

- WVL should submit a fully functional early warning prototype in real scale. DMC will provide a location based on the disaster vulnerability priorities. These units will be installed and monitored for functionality for 6-12 months.
- DMC will be forming a technical team consisting of the University of Moratuwa (Leader in electronic studies), Agrarian department, Irrigation department, etc. They will review the functionality against the product's reliability and submit a report to DG.
- Through this process, DG will keep the president and other ministerial people informed.
- Once the product is proven to be a success, DG will get this approved through President of Sri Lanka and Parliament of Sri Lanka and will fund for full implementation across the Island. For the government, accessing funding for research and prototype testing is a challenge but accessing funding for implementation is much easier and possible through internal and external funding resources.



Fig: WVL Staff Brian Fernando on left who had build the unit is demonstrating the functionality.

DMC expressed appreciation for WVL's support in working with them to address this gap. DMC also welcomes this initiative as it will improve local production capacities and improve the sustainability and problem-solving/troubleshooting requirements.

WVL, with the support of Humanitarian & Emergency Affairs team, will be supporting the IT and DRR staff to raise funds to build the working prototype and conduct field testing.

The units proposed will have remote monitoring capabilities where, through a registered and controlled mobile device, the status of the systems, battery level, etc could be monitored and any malfunction will automatically send an alert to the maintenance staff. This device will have greater flexibility to cater to the requirements as per the context and nature of the disaster.

What were the positive outcomes of the collaboration?

- All progress and key discussion will be filed and tracked through a separate filing/documenting process with the technical team at the DMC.
- The technical team will be comprised of various experts, including university members skilled in conducting evaluation and monitoring during the field testing period.
- DG confirm that they could raise funds once the prototype is tested and proven. DG mentioned that these type of models are unknown to them and would highlight Sri Lanka's profile globally. IT would be a source of pride for the country if it succeeds.

What were some of the challenges faced in collaborating? How were these overcome?

- As existing organization policies do not provide flexibility to internal staff to work outside of their roles, this can limit collaborations between the humanitarian, disaster risk reduction and technology teams. This does need to be reviewed as to create a win-win solution for all involved and encourage internal talent to develop ideas and get exposure.
- The staff member who conceived the idea does not have personal financial capacity to invest in building the prototype at this time.
- Staff may decide to seek external funding support if WVL is unable to support this process which may cause an opportunity to be lost for the organization.

What do you think were some of the critical factors for success?

- WVL is seen as an INGO supporting the capacity building efforts of the Disaster Management Center to save lives of vulnerable communities prone to disaster.
- Sri Lankan Government will see World Vision as their crucial partner in Disaster Risk Reduction and a partner providing innovative solutions for challenges.
- Increasing donor attraction to World Vision for DRR interventions in Sri Lanka for new and creative project models.
- The opportunity for WVL to highlight these issues and build leadership in the global arena for their contribution to DRR