**1.0 Introduction**

Sri Lanka is an island nation situated in South Asia, close to India in the Indian Ocean. The island geography of the country supported the evolution of a unique culture to the island. Historically, Sri Lanka has had many connections with India and other trading countries in Far East and Middle East Asia. Over time, Sri Lanka has had the influence of the Western world such as Portuguese, the Dutch and the British, including being under the British rule for nearly 150 years, about 70 years ago.

The main livelihood of the nation is agriculture. The plantation culture evolved in Sri Lanka, under the influence of the western colonial countries. Tea plantations evolved in the hill country of the island under the British rule in the 1800s. With this introduction of tea plantation agriculture to the island by the British, they had to obtain the required labour by bringing and settling communities from South India. Thus they established small scale residential facilities for them in the estates which allowed them to continue their cultural identities. The neighboring local villages continued with their cultural practices in their changed and compressed environment. Both communities continued with their own gender identities and practices, including certain negative practices.

This paper presents a strategic approach implemented in such plantations and adjoining villages for mainstreaming gender equality among the resident communities. The details presented explain a ground level observation regarding a method of implementing gender and development programs at the grassroots level, with the goal to achieve gender equality in the long run. This includes process documentation as well as a qualitative description of the outcomes observed through the approaches.

The term gender itself highlights the social definition of men and women.

“As opposed to being a biological designation, gender is a social construction-the differentiation and institutionalization of the expected characteristics, norms, and behaviors associated with being female or male in any specific social context. Gender also refers to the rank ordering of this social division, and subsequent statuses, on interlocking societal levels. The distinction between female and male spheres operates

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1 Acknowledgements: The World University Service of Canada, Plantation Communities Project Phase II -PCP II staff, where the author was the Program officer of Gender Equality and Community Health (GECH) team; Field Director Mr. B. Duggan, PCP-II Deputy Director Ms. Y. Perera, and Supervisor of GECH team, PCP-I Senior Program Officer Ms. S. Victor, PCP-II GECH Senior Program Officer Mr. S. Ramar, Field Officers of GECH team, 4 field officers; Shan, Logaishini, Chandru and Kumar, 44 Mobilizers and 8 team leaders of all 8 partner organizations partnered for field implementation of GECH programs and all community members who benefitted from the program, the reason to develop this paper.
In the family, the economy, religion, political systems, educational institutions, and culture,”

In general, society is a mix of all these gender related traits presented in various levels and depths. Development project proposals often include sections or pledges on mainstreaming gender into the project or including gender equality as a component of the project. Yet, over the years, it is still a challenge as to achieve the level the anticipated social change.

1.1 Introduction to the project context

The project context involved two communities in the up-country region of Sri Lanka (Figure 1). One is the plantation resident community and the other is the village community adjoining the plantations. The plantation resident communities are of Indian origin and settled in Sri Lanka during the colonial period, about 200 years ago.

“The legacy of the estate sector in Sri Lanka dates back nearly 150 years. The British launched the industry in early Nineteenth Century with “imported” indentured labor from Southern India. Today’s estate population is descendants of this labor, brought into the country until the 1940s. Ethnically this population is classified as Indian Tamils, as oppose to Sri Lankan Tamils who reside in the North and East of the country.”

The adjoining village communities are the original settlers who lost land due to the establishment of plantations, but now restricted to smaller geographical spaces crammed between the larger plantations lands, with lesser land owned (Figure 2). These two communities have many similarities but also differ a lot from each other. These differences have further variety with respect to the geographical location and prevail due to many reasons such as economic opportunities and risks, cultural practices, historical developments of labour migration and changes of land ownership for traditional settlers during the colonial period of about 150 consecutive years etc.

“Female estate workers are amongst the most oppressed, marginalized and exploited populations in Sri Lanka due to their work and class status, gender, ethnicity, and the nature of plantation economics.”

The Sri Lankan plantation sector has a different social context compared to many other regions of the country, especially, due to the cultural stagnation, isolation and strong patriarchal norms prevailing in their regions since the colonial times.

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3 In many situations in Sri Lanka, gender programming is skewed towards an impression based on feminism (more focus on Women in Development - WID) rather than “gender” and development (more focus on Gender and Development - GAD). The practical platform for intervention of these two approaches may vary based on the prevailing context and desired objectives of change.


5 Primarily, the plantation resident communities are living in a somewhat restricted setting, whereas the village resident communities have comparatively free mobility and access to the greater society.

6 Plantation community in the up-country estates have different traits while Mid/Low country estates have different traits, and it is the same with the village setting in up country and Mid/Low country areas adjoining the estates.

1.2 Introduction to the project

From the author’s observation, Plantation resident women are generally deprived of their freedom and rights, compared to plantation resident men both due to cultural and economic differences. Plantation resident women are the major section of the labor force of the tea plantation sector of the country. They consist of nearly 90% of the tea harvesting workforce, which is at the bottom most segment of the plantation industry hierarchy.

“In the plantation sector, tea-picking, rubber-tapping, and coconut coir mill labour are traditionally confined to female workers”.

According to the traditional belief, which the author learnt from the community, tea harvested by women are fresh and less crushed compared to tea harvested by men, therefore, even though tea harvesting is hard and time consuming, it is preferred to have women as tea harvesters. These sort of stereotyped ideas are many in the estates as much as in any other community.

“The labors involved in tea plantations are basically Tamils of Indian Origin (Indian Tamils). Around 80 percent of the Indian Tamils are concentrated in the tea plantation sector. Most of the workers in the tea estates reside within the estate area. They are
housed in rows of rooms, which are generally called labour lines in Sri Lanka. The clusters of the labour lines are strategically located in different parts of the tea estate to enable quick labour deployment and to protect the boundary of the estates. The nature of work needs the involvement of both the male and female labour force. Plucking of tea leaves is an important activity and is a specialized job done mainly by the female workforce in the country.\footnote{Chandrabose A.S., “Outgoing Labour And Its Impact On The Tea Plantation Sector In Sri Lanka” in 5th International Symposium 2015, Oluvil: Eastern University of Sri Lanka, 2015 - IntSym 2015, SEUSL. Ampara: South Eastern University of Sri Lanka, 2015 Accessed July 2, 2017 http://www.seu.ac.lk/researchandpublications/symposium/5th/abstract/socialsciencesandhumanities/77.pdf}

Based on the authors experience, these women work long hours from about 4.30am to 10.00pm mostly physical work with no time to rest. The traditional role of the woman as the “care taker” and the industrial role of tea harvesting has tightened the work load of women and this trend has been prevailing from the time of migration to Sri Lanka.

Under these circumstances, the project was implemented to promote gender equality in the selected target group, which consisted of 44 Agricultural perennial plantation estates\footnote{Mostly tea plantations and additionally rubber and Coconut plantations, managed under 12 major plantation companies with a 99 year lease from the government where the plantation land management is with a private company with 99 year lease yet the land ownership is with the Government of Sri Lanka} with plantation resident communities\footnote{Original Indian descendants brought to Sri Lankan during the colonial period by the British for plantation labour. These people reside in settlements inside the plantation estates and their needs are managed under the plantation management. After independence in 1948, some of the people returned to India through a political agreement and some remained but as stateless. During the beginning of 1990s, they were offered Sri Lankan citizenship and were provided services under the government involvement, until then which was under the highly bureaucratic remnants of the estate management practices coming from the colonial period. Currently this structure is changing with more focus on human resource management approaches and human friendly approaches, but yet, much has to be done to facilitate this transition.} and 20 adjoining villages belonging to 4 Districts in the central highlands in Sri Lanka.

The project was implemented from 2008 to 2010; the implementation phase and 2008 to 2012; the observation phase. All program functions ended by the end of 2012 and the entire project was officially closed in 2013.

The Initial exposure to the method was from the first phase of the project for 5 years ending in 2007, where the gender component was implemented almost as a pilot approach on 12 estates in Kandy and Nuwara Eliya Districts of Sri Lanka. The second phase which is explained in this paper started in 2008 where the project was further expanded (Figure 1).

The final observation of the gender program in the first phase project, showed that the women gained better social recognition and women’s representation was evident at estate level leadership. A general increment in women’s status was observed in the first phase.\footnote{As per a concluding study done to evaluate the first phase of the gender equality program by the author as an intern at the latter part of the project in 2007} In 2008; the second phase was based on the learnings of the previous project where the strategy was improved with more efficient and effective methods to address gender equality within the time limit of 5 years. The overall process was re-developed to accommodate milestone wise plans over a time-bound change process. In mainstreaming gender equality in the community, attention was given on specific affirmative action for women to create gender equality in the long run. Accordingly, this paper presents four different approaches taken to address the gender inequalities prevalent in the target group.
The first approach was the formation and strengthening of women’s groups over an 18 month period which is referred to as the 18 month strategy. This was the main foundation activity of the gender equality component of the project. The second approach was supporting women’s empowerment through leadership and capacity building to penetrate through the estate hierarchical structure where the women are at the bottom most section. This is specially, for the estate women’s groups, while it was done with a slightly different approach with the village groups. The third approach was gender mainstreaming done through the groups, especially, with respect to other activities done on the estates and villages through the project and to mainstream gender through the groups. The fourth type was the monitoring of the women’s groups and observing its lead towards achieving the gender equality objectives of the project.

The desired objectives of the project were based on a baseline survey and gender analysis of the prevailing context. The change process was designed to fit a results based management approach through a logical framework analysis.


**Figure 2:** During the British colonial era, labour for plantations was brought from Indian origin communities from South India to the central tea plantation region in Sri Lanka.

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2.0 Methodology

The methodology presented here is based on the four key types of approaches used during project implementation presented in the introduction. Hence, the section below highlights;

1. The basic overview of the 18 month strategy to promote gender equality in the community (Approach 1)
2. The basic overview of the 12 month strategy of mainstreaming women’s leadership (Approach 2)
3. Overview of mainstreaming gender in other activities using the women’s groups (Approach 3)
4. Overview of the monitoring process (Approach 4)

The sections below will explain the basic principle used in all these approaches.

2.1 The basic overview of the 18 month strategy to promote gender equality in the community (Approach 1)

2.1.1 Formation and strengthening of the women’s groups

The main focus of the program was on “neighborhood women”, where the women of one particular group living close to each other (line houses), were concerned. This is to create non-representational groups where the priority is easy access. These women became members of their neighborhood groups out of their own will. This approach was used in Plantations as well as in villages. From the time of the entry point, trained mobilizers followed-up the groups and conducted the gender equality education process step by step; while developing the capacity of the group during a tentative period of 18 months. This process builds-up the 18 month strategy.

The group itself was the method to create affirmative action through providing a weighted interest towards the women in the community. The women-only membership of the groups increased and inspired more women’s participation; promoting a women focused approach. The group did not have formal restrictions for men joining the group meetings. This was in order to prevent conflict, yet, it strongly restricted men from having membership, committee membership and advisory positions in the groups. These groups were extremely informal in the functions almost to the level where if the men are interested they could join as observers. However, men rarely participated in the meetings, but continued to support the participation of their wives.¹⁵

The basic approach was to mobilize the community to understand gender norms for better living and to eradicate or minimize gender based discriminations. The women’s groups were formed with a general membership of about 22 – 25 members per group. This involved about 22 – 25 families per group, while occasionally, apart from the mother of the family, the elder daughters or grandmothers interested in the group were also considered as members.

The free entry and exit rule of the strategy made it flexible and not forced, while on the other hand the maintenance of the group was predicted to be very difficult, especially,

¹⁵ Mainly since, the groups were all female and also since, there was an economic gain through the seettu mechanism. Some men were generous enough to release the women, thinking it will benefit the women.
¹⁶ the usual size of neighboring line houses in the estate and neighboring sections of a village
with the working women as members. Hence, the binding factor of the group was the informal village traditional interest free saving mechanism called Seettu.

The Seettu system was introduced to the group to provide a more economically valuable requirement for them, and as a useful factor for earning time for the continued meeting with the group.

The Invisible ring – the informal women’s group with un-tied self-motivated commitment existing purely to mainstream gender equality in the community and promote and sustain women’s empowerment over time so that women’s empowerment and leadership is normalized in the community.

Figure 3: The features of a women group, depicting the invisible ring – the women’s collective with a porous ring binding the group together.
As explained in Figure 3, the basic principle of the group which is also called the invisible ring is the un-committed tie among the women of the group. The women usually sit as a circle in the group, while their commitment is informal but their collective strength is inevitable, almost like an invisible ring of social energy, hence, referred to as the "invisible ring". The success of the groups also rests on this un-dispersed, yet, commitment-less group action, where the group is not a burden for the women, instead becomes an interest factor which develops the self-motive to engage with the group and sustain the group. The porous nature of the group it-self evolves the group through an ecosystem approach, which creates a balance with the existing culture, but influences the entire community including men and women and masculine and feminine ideologies to change with the long term influence of the group and the sensitized behavioral change through the mobilizers discussions on gender.

2.1.2 The 18 month strategy to promote gender equality in the community

Gender education is a very challenging task, especially, in a culture with strong social norms some of which are contrary to gender equality. The 18 month strategy was based on the previous experiences of the team where the author worked as an intern and studied the gender equality and community health program to build upon it the plan for the second and more expanded phase. The theoretical basis rests on the women's groups concept explained above and with the strategic approach explained in this section.

The strategy of the women’s groups was continued to build up over 18 months. During this period, the involvement of the mobilizer reduced with time, while the involvement of
the group increased with time (Figure 4). 18 months was only a programming tool, whereas the actual extent of time varied with the ground context where in one area the time was shorter than 18 months and in some areas it was nearly 20 months. This time allowance was agreed and accepted, as, this foundation was more important for the re-freezing process of the change rather than a compulsory focus on the programmed time frame. So the Effective time period for the women’s group for the first cycle rests at an intermediary level of the 18 months.

As explained in Figure 4, there are three significant roles/dynamics in this process; the role of the mobilization process, the role/dynamics of the women’s group and the effective time frame of the group performance development until maturity (or independence from the mobilization process). As explained in Figure 4, the phases (1), (2) and (3) can be explained as follows.

1. **Involvement of implementing organization / mobilizers**
   - The mobilization process at the beginning / formation of the project is at 100% involvement where the guidance and mentorship of the mobilizer is most important for the initial stage of the project.

2. **Involvement of Community members/ Women’s group members**
   - The involvement of the community members at the initial stage is zero, while it increases over the time within the 18 months. Once it reaches a stable level, it comes to a balance.

3. **Effective time period of the Women’s group for the 1st Cycle**
   - The effective time period for the women’s group to function independently starts from about the 2nd month and continues to improve with time with the support of the mobilizers until the phase-out period of the mobilization after the 18 months.

The sustainability of this strategy is that the group has an invisible tie as it is not formal nor it acts as a formal group. It is only an informal collective – a tool – to facilitate the social mobilization sessions. Additionally, the groups are not intended to exist forever where the sustainability of the group will be very difficult to maintain with the reproductive, productive and social roles of the women (which is often a challenge that development practitioners face during development work) and strategically not required. Thus, the group with the invisible tie ideally is expected to survive only 18 months, and beyond that if the women are interested, they can keep the groups functioning.

During these 18 months, the mobilizer has a significant task to complete. It includes a three pronged approach; Formation and strengthening of the groups, Mainstreaming gender equality and Monitoring the progress. The mobilizer had to manage the group at three levels, the initial stage to form the group and facilitate change of belief in terms of gender norms. Then, at the intermediary stage to strengthen the group and facilitate change of attitudes with respect to gender. The last stage was to facilitate group dynamics and to facilitate change of behavior with respect to gender (Figure 5).

It is through these three activities that the 18 month strategy becomes functional. The role of the mobilizer, therefore, is of greatest value for the success of the program. 44 mobilizers were selected from 8 local partner organizations and trained with the requirement of the project. Hence, selection of the most suitable candidates, capacity building in terms of facilitation skills and sensitization skills with refresher trainings to
develop confidence and self-reliance was important. Navigating the group through the change process in a highly conservative environment, mostly depend on the effective do-no-harm attitude of the mobilizers, while elaborating the value of gender equality as a complementing factor for culture. It helped in differentiating between cultural needs and eradicating gender negative practices. A strong understanding of the community was required to develop the training agenda for the mobilizers and to develop the mobilization procedure for the groups.

With time, the community themselves began to understand the differences in culture, religion and practices, and move towards a sustainable change.

2.1.3 Educating the men

During the 18 month strategy, a separate education process was done simultaneously for men through an isolated gender sensitization session outside the community premises. This was started around the 6th month of the 18 month period and followed up with two further sessions ending within the 18 months. This supported the men to understand the change that was seen through the women’s groups.

2.2 The basic overview of the 12 month strategy of mainstreaming women’s leadership (Approach 2)

The 12 month strategy is the second phase adopted in this program. This session was conducted after the 18 months. This stage was more focused towards improving a social
level leadership among women rather than concentrating on the women’s immediate family level empowerment, hence, this had a slightly different approach and an implementing methodology.

This process was where the empowered women leaders of the community were grouped together to be advocates and representative of the women members of the community. They were also able to represent community governance programs on both official and social decision making at the estate level collectives and also ground level activities at the Divisional level. This is more on synergizing and utilizing the women leaders for community benefit and women’s representation in decision making.

2.3 Overview of mainstreaming gender in other activities using the women’s groups (Approach 3)

The women’s groups were identified as a main community based system to mainstream other village / estate level community practices, such as religious programs, traditional system of the collective labour donation system known as Shramadaana etc. These groups were used as general functioning women’s groups, to mainstream gender through other project activities, such as, agriculture, Occupational health and industrial relations related groups which were implemented under the other components of the same larger project.

They were also identified by some government officers for the implementation of mandatory island-wide tasks such as organizing and conducting maternal health clinics and well women clinics in the estate itself, conducted by the relevant government health officers. Other practices such as agriculture promotion programs conducted by the National authorities were implemented through these groups, where the groups were used as a strong collective to mainstream the proposed agricultural practices introduced through the program. This became an un-intended indirect benefit of getting recognition for the group from the community during and beyond the 18 month period and an opportunity to evolve as community leaders.

2.4 Overview of the monitoring process (Approach 4)

The monitoring of the entire 18 month process was conducted via three methods. The main monitoring of the group activity was done through a group based participatory Monitoring and Evaluation system (PME). This was used to evaluate the performance of the group and the growth of the group members. This was conducted by the Group members themselves.

The second monitoring tool was based on qualitative and quantitative details. The qualitative details; the intangibles were evaluated in terms of the groups capacity and identity development over time. The quantitative details included the number of group members, new additions, drop-outs, time frame and weekly meetings, seettu activities, revolving money from the seettu activities etc. This was conducted by the Partner organization through the mobilization process.

The third monitoring and evaluation was the level of performance and achievement of results indicators of the log frame conducted by the main project team.
Monitoring and evaluation was one of the major tasks of the program as it guided the team to the correct direction in achieving the anticipated results. The strong performance and results indicators were the main sources of correction and leading the change making process\textsuperscript{17}.

\section*{3.0 Results and discussion}

In this process the statistical details were collected for project monitoring purposes. To re-iterate the capacity and comparative progress of the program a few statistics of the project is presented below.

The total number of women’s groups created on 44 estates, were 223 with approximately 3200 women members, and 44 field mobilizers. The total number of 20 women’s groups was formed in 20 villages, with approximately 450 women members. The rotation of unfixed and interest free seettu support money accounted up to approximately 600,000 rupees per month in the groups only in the estates\textsuperscript{18}.

One of the key outcomes through this strategy was to establish a women’s representation with women leaders in the Estate Workers Housing Cooperative Society (EWHCS)\textsuperscript{19}. Hence, this change brought-about a huge recognition for women and a chance to highlight women workers issues to obtain effective solutions.

According to Figure 6 and 7, the evolution of the group members in-terms of the desired objectives of affiliating with the group, is discussed. In figure 6 and 7, the larger circle demarcates the psychological representation or the demarcation of the group. The other smaller circles describe the influential factors. The size of these circles indicates the significance of the factor to the women’s life and the distance from the demarcation of the group shows the relevance of the factor towards the need to being a member of the group. Some of the main reasons to join the groups were; the need to have a free time for the ever-working women and also the economic gain through the seettu program.

The neighborhood unity and personality development requirements were neither significant nor relevant to the reason for joining the group; it was the same with the children’s interest, whereas some members were driven to the group as they thought it will benefit the children\textsuperscript{20}.

\textsuperscript{17} Later the data were compiled to find trends and further development of the groups. A separate analysis was done to understand the level of savings made possible through the seettu system practiced by these groups.
\textsuperscript{18} World University Service of Canada Plantation Communities Project II, Annual Report. Kandy; 2010
\textsuperscript{19} EWHCS is an official estate level development society consisting of management, employees and residents of the estate. In this society, originally almost no female representation was found, where about 90\% of the workforce are females.
\textsuperscript{20} It is noteworthy that the details are generalized and summarized for the entire number of groups in the estates and villages, and the distances subjectively drawn to show the differences.
Figure 6: Before the intervention – the significance and relevance of identified factors influencing the members in joining the groups. (The size of the circle demarcates the significance and the distance from the group circle demarcates the relevance)

Figure 7: After the intervention (18 months) – the significance and relevance of identified factors influencing the members in joining the groups. (The size of the circle demarcates the significance and the distance from the group circle demarcates the relevance)
On the contrary, many of the relevant and significant factors for which they became a member were changed after their experience in the group. The most significant and relevant reasons at the later stage were the social recognition, especially, as women leaders in their community. This was mostly with the confidence developed by the community (including men and estate management staff) towards them. Freedom of thought and the group functioning as a platform for problem solving were among the other evolved significant and relevant reasons. On a significant note, personality development at this stage was noted as a very relevant and also much significant reason as compared to their view at the initial stages. Women learnt new things including domestic money management, personal grooming, social conduct and how to be strong and independent at their work place. The peaceful approach supported the women to grow in the groups without much harsh reactions for the men and the community. This brought about a change in the respect they gained from the work environment which originally was much tough and depressing. The estate management also saw their development and provided relevant support and leadership acceptance for these women.

Another most important result of forming and strengthening the groups, is the social strength and identity of the group in addressing and preventing gender based violence (GBV) issues if their community\textsuperscript{21}. After the 18 months period, domestic violence had reduced in their community as mentioned by the group members themselves. This can be complemented by the statement of Dr. Ramani Jayasundere;

\begin{quote}
“Although largely undocumented as a nation-wide process, community organization resulting in community action and support to address gender based violence has been used repeatedly by organizations as an effective mechanism to address issues of gender based violence. An approach that provides a key entry, into addressing the issue of stigma, secrecy and lack of adequate institutional support, organizations have harnessed the potential of communities effectively to address gender based violence\textsuperscript{22}.”
\end{quote}

Interestingly the women did not focus much on the group as a place to reach to avoid the influence of men, especially, their husbands, and this is also complemented by the confessions that many men have become supportive husbands after the sensitization sessions with the groups and group initiatives. Most men started respecting the group members and also women in general in their community. The groups created a forum to discuss community level issues with respect to women and support women victims of violence.

Another positive factor is the influence it has created on the children, where the children see the respectful family and learn that social norms they saw earlier could be changed. Both boys and girls have showed a positive change against gender role separation.

Alcoholism, which is a huge concern in the plantations, was also reduced in the project areas to a certain extent in some selected regions (not possible to provide exact

\textsuperscript{21} The prevalence of GBV is comparatively high in the context of the target group, as compared to other areas of the country. These groups have shown their capacity to change and challenge the culture of GBV by promoting the social change process while being more educated on GBV and preventive action.

percentage) due to the positive social impact of the groups. Overall the groups were able to improve and facilitate the living standards of the women with respect to their practical and strategic needs through the program.

Certain tea plantation companies took effort to promote women to supervisory levels after the group initiative, which was rarely seen previously in plantations in Sri Lanka. The estate productivity increased in many instances due to the better attendance of the women for work.

4.0 Conclusions

The 18 month strategy created a common guideline to empower women, of selected marginalized tea plantation communities and marginalized up-country villages in Sri Lanka. The formation of the women’s groups facilitated an informal setting merged with their own culture to understand gendered differences and how to address those at community level.

The above method adopted for field level implementation, facilitated women’s recognition (at home, work and community), empowerment with respect to decision making, leadership and development of skills, such as managing home finances and financial management of group initiatives. Apart from this, decision making, improved work place status, upward social mobility, macro level women’s representation resulting in improved lifestyle and social status were achieved through social and work place promotions.

Hence, to summarize, the women had improved in fulfilling their practical needs, strategic needs and also additionally their social appearance through the influence of the women’s groups.

5.0 Limitations

The main limitation of this study is the subjective nature of the approach itself. It is much difficult to prepare blanket guidelines; yet, the monitoring system is the main guidance to generate effective results as per the planned outcomes expected. Close monitoring of the program is required for the success of this approach.

Another limitation is the dependence on individual mobilizers for a common outcome. This approach tries to mainstream a similar outcome through independent approaches used by each mobilizer to achieve the relevant outcomes which may increase the standard error of the expected outcome. This individualized effectiveness may not be able to be replicated in a different context. Hence, most of the success is subject to the skills development of the mobilizers which is not presented in this report.

This approach is entirely context specific, where a marginalized community is concerned with a unique life style. These social specificities are not differentiated in the report, but only the basic principle concerned in implementation is presented, hence, replication needs a thorough study of the social structures and functions of the concerned area or community (such as a string gender analysis, proper feasibility study, cultural diversity, religious diversity, social traits and trends).
6.0 Recommendations

It can be recommended that this method can be replicated in a similar setting to the plantation communities in Sri Lanka. It is also recommended to replicate accordingly in a transit community where inter-community social ties are lesser, compared to a highly connected community. It is also recommended that the approach can be used without restricting to the 18 months, depending on the findings of the gender analysis.

This can be identified as a practical and successful approach that can be used at the grassroots level results oriented gender project implementation. A proper gender analysis is required before designing the implementation plan even though the structure of the program can be replicated.

Overall it can be recommended as an effective approach to practically mainstream gender equality into a marginalized community.
7.0 References

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    *As per a concluding study done to evaluate the first phase of the gender equality program by the author as an intern at the latter part of the project in 2007 –