



Community Engagement Best Practice Award: Hambantota LTRT



Mr. G.B. Hurikaduwa receiving the Community Engagement Award from Mr. Perry Mansfield (LTRT Programme Director) on behalf of the LTRT Hambantota Office

Communities need to be involved in identifying their own problems, seeking solutions, and in making decisions about how to implement them. Projects often fail when they don't do this.

The best practice award is given to LTRT offices proactively engaging with communities and display excellence using various community engagement methods. It is also an opportunity for offices to learn from one another.

This month's award has been awarded to the LTRT Hambantota for their innovative community information provision meeting.

If your office or team is proactively engaging with communities and displays best practice we would like to recognize your team work.

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1. Meeting Tree

The meeting was held under a tree used by staff for community meetings and consultations. A LCD projector and photos without text were used to explain about World Vision's projects and plans. Photos without text were used so people with limited literacy, children and the elderly could participate and felt included.



2. Planning

A week before the meeting a community flyer was distributed to homes by a community mobilizer informing them of the time and place. A community notice board was also used to inform the community of other meetings and events. The meeting started at 5:00pm so women and children could attend and went for an hour.



3. Coordination

Each sector coordinator spoke for 5 minutes on their projects. Commitments made to the community were genuine and capable of implementation.



4. Local Capacities For Peace

Using the LCP assessment of the area staff knew how the meeting could divide communities or bring them together. Seeing it as an opportunity to bring them together, representatives from the surrounding communities, a Muslim cleric and Buddhist monk were invited to attend.



5. Community Participation

The community set up the meeting venue and local community based organisation (CBO) provided food and drinks at the end. The president of the CBO gave a presentation on their plans and commitments to work with World Vision on upcoming projects.



6. Information Gathering: Community Question Box

A community question box was used so people could write questions for sector coordinators. The box was translated into Tamil, Sinhalese and English. Questions were reviewed by staff and analyzed so trends could be identified. At the next meeting staff provided feedback on how the communities' feedback influenced the project and other issues addressed.



7. Meeting Evaluation

A community mobiliser interviewed 5 participants randomly selected from the group to participate in an evaluation. Interviewees provided feedback on the meeting and recommendations for the next.



8. Lessons Learned:

Staff participated in a lessons learned dinner after the meeting. Joshua Pepall (HAT Stakeholder Capacity Building Advisor) facilitated the meeting. Staff critically reviewed the community meeting and reflected on what they had learned as a team and individual for the next.

