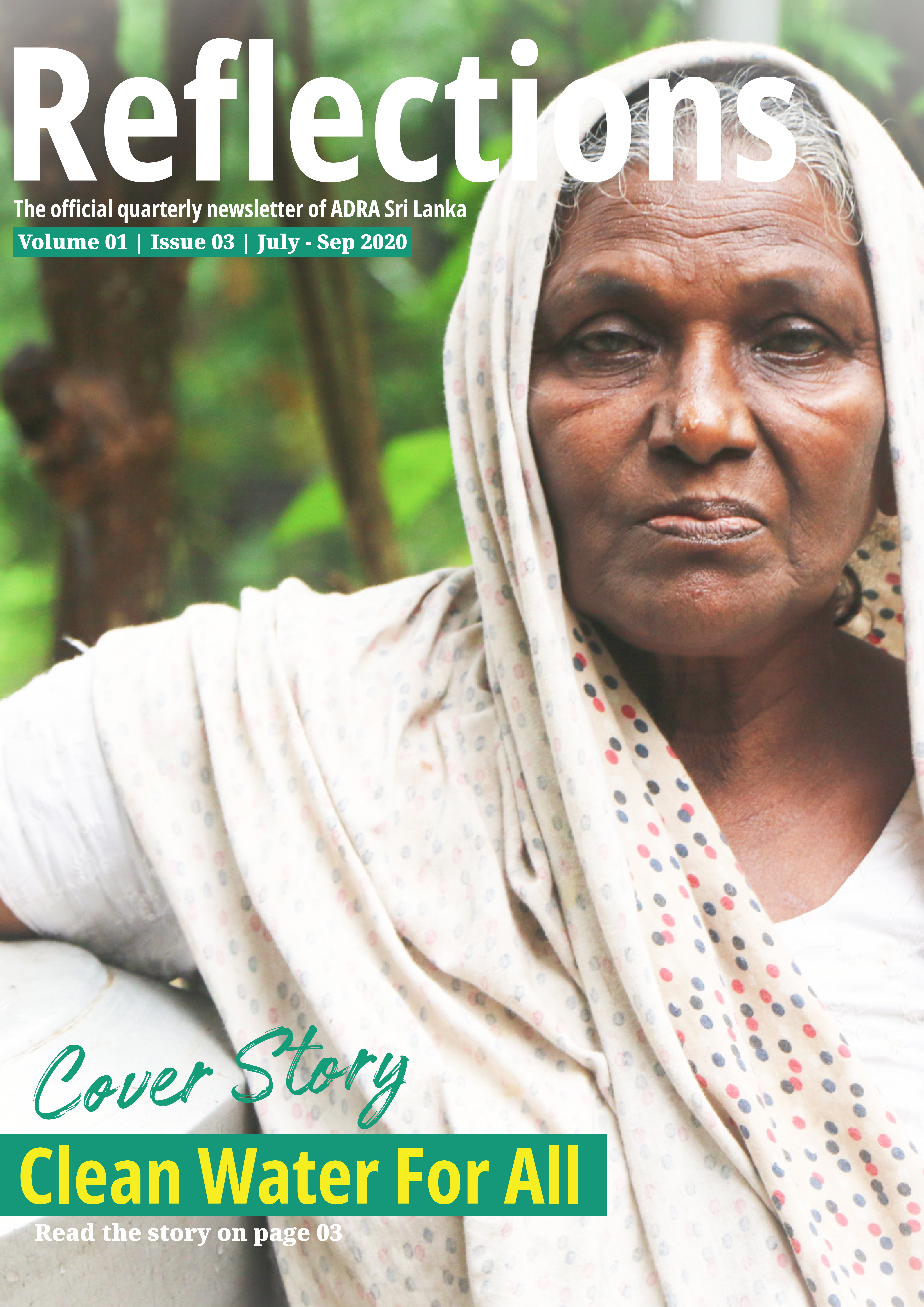


Reflections

The official quarterly newsletter of ADRA Sri Lanka

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Cover Story

Clean Water For All

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EDITORIAL

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MESSAGE

Do It Afraid!

Do it afraid. That was the title of my daily devotional the day before I flew out to a country I had never been to, to start a job I knew nothing about – and I was doing it alone.

Has God ever asked you to uproot your entire life and go somewhere completely unknown? In 2015, I hopped on a plane to Myanmar for what was meant to be a 1 year working assignment for ADRA Myanmar. I was warned by concerned friends and church members not to go. I didn't know anyone in Myanmar, which for an introvert is definitely an uncomfortable territory, and from what little knowledge I had, it didn't 'appear' to be a safe country. Naturally, I was afraid.

But what I have learnt about fear is this – whatever confidence you lack in the moment, God makes up for it. In my heart, I knew this was what God wanted me to do and that trusting in him and his plan is the most powerful fear eliminator there is.

Working for ADRA has changed my life. It's by far the hardest thing I've done, but it's also the most rewarding. Six years later and I am still here serving God to the best of my ability as a part of the incredible work ADRA is doing to reach those most in need. Am I still afraid? Sure! Do I have peace? Absolutely!

God wants us to jump into life without hesitation. We don't have to be confident to do it – we just need to have faith. I encourage you to jump in and do it afraid. I'm certainly glad I did.



Emma McCrow
Communications Officer
ADRA Myanmar

COVER STORY

Clean Water For All

Access to clean water is a right of every human being. However, most people in rural and estate communities of Sri Lanka do not have access to clean water. Our European Union funded ACCEND project is specifically designed to address this issue and it carries out several activities to provide people access to safe and clean water. One such activity is the renovation of existing non-functional hand pumps in the Matale and Monaragala districts.

The project has altogether renovated over 250 hand pumps. Among those renovated are the ones in Naminigama Gramha Niladhari Division of Wilgamuwa. Chronic Kidney Disease of unknown origin (CKDu) is highly prevalent in this area due to the lack of clean drinking water. The hand pump renovated in the small village of Kekalattanne in Naminigama provides clean water for more than 32 families.



The hand pump in Kekalattanne renovated through the project



K. M. Siriwardena

“32 families depend on this hand pump renovated through the project especially during the dry season when water is scarce. All the other wells and water sources dry up, but this hand pump never dries up. There are 15 CKDu patients in this area, including myself. We use the hand pump to fulfill all our daily needs including cooking, washing, and cleaning,” said K.M. Siriwardena, a beneficiary of the initiative. He further stated that the hand pump was constructed in the 1980s but was dysfunctional for almost 10 years until it was renovated through the ACCEND project with the contribution of the villagers.

“When the hand pump was dysfunctional, people had to walk about 15 km to nearby streams, rivers or wells looking for water. There’s a water plant which supplies water for a price, but it’s only for drinking. During the dry season this hand pump provides enough water for all of us, so we do not have to walk in search of water anymore,” said 39-year-old, Hemakumari, another beneficiary of the activity who very much appreciates the efforts taken by ADRA to provide them clean water.



Wimalawathi, another beneficiary of the activity.



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STAFF TESTIMONIES

Prabhook Bandaratilleke

Programs Director

It was the 13th of October 2008, when I received a call from Edgar Castillo (then Country Director of ADRA Sri Lanka) who informed me that I was selected to be the new Administrative Assistant for ADRA Sri Lanka. I was quite surprised as the interview did not go as well as I hoped. By 15th of October I reported to work. Little did I know that the “temporary job” that I applied for will impact my life so much.

It’s been 13 years now since my first day at ADRA, and throughout the years I have been blessed to serve the communities around me. I had the privilege to serve in various positions within the organization and to even have more exposure to ADRA’s work around the world.

During my time in ADRA, so far, we have faced many challenges and have celebrated major victories. Of our strengths I identify the strong team spirit as the most significant achievement. While there are many aspects that we could identify, I believe that it is a blessing from God that we face challenges together and are still able to trust each other with a high level of accountability.

I hope and pray that all our staff will be blessed as I have been by serving in ADRA and that we would continue to do our best with what is entrusted to us by God. The best days are yet ahead!

NEWS & HIGHLIGHTS

Awareness on Dental Hygiene for Children

The ACCEND project held a series of dental awareness programs in September targetting children in several areas of the Wilagamuwa Division. The programs created awareness regarding dental health and hygiene and promoted best practices on dental hygiene among children. The program consisted of interactive awareness sessions for children on dental caries, prevention methods, good and bad practices related to oral hygiene and demonstrations on proper brushing techniques.

Health and Nutrition Planning Workshop for Public Health Staff

Through the ACCEND project, ADRA, along with Regional Directorate of Health Services of the Nuwara Eliya district, organized a 3 day residential planning workshop from August 30th to September 01st for the health staff of the Nuwara Eliya district and other key government and non government authorities. The main purpose of the workshop was to contribute towards the development of a district nutrition action plan for the Nuwara Eliya district. Furthermore, the workshop was facilitated by Mr. Upali Navaratne, who is a freelance Development Planning Consultant with over thirty years of experience.

ToT CHAST & PHAST Trainings for Volunteers

The ACCEND project facilitated a Training of Trainers on Participatory Hygiene and Sanitation Transformation (PHAST) and Child Hygiene and Sanitation Trainings (CHAST), to train 20 young volunteers representing 20 estates to conduct these trainings in their respective estates. PHAST and CHAST trainings are conducted to create awareness and promote proper hygiene and sanitation practices among adults and children respectively.

SPECIAL FEATURE

Our staff during an exercise session



ADRA Promotes Healthy Living In Workplace

by Khayali Wilson

In a time where the world around us is battling a pandemic that essentially sifts the healthy from the ill, our team at ADRA Sri Lanka made a decision to be more mindful of our health. As a result, we put together an initiative which was inspired by the blueprint of the Adventist Health reform message giving birth to The Fighting Inactivity Together (FIT) program with the primary aim to help the team get on the road to healthier living together in a fun, burden-free manner that motivates each staff to intentionally make healthier choices in the workplace and consequently in their lives.

We believe fitness is not just a result of regular physical activity but also the regular exercise of healthy decision making and therefore designed the FIT program essentially to incorporate at least one healthy decision every day of the work-week to contribute to a holistic approach to optimal health. This gave birth to a mindful exercise throughout the work week with (i) Meatless Mondays: where we intentionally make a decision to eat a plant based diet, (ii) Treatless Tuesdays: where we refuse sugary and salty snacks and take in fresh fruits, (iii) Workout Wednesdays: where we spend an hour exercising or enjoying a game of badminton in the garden as a team, (iv) Thirsty Thursdays: where we mindfully remind each other and ourselves to take in at least 2L of water and no other drinks and (v) Fatigue-Free Fridays: where we say no to any stimulants such as caffeinated tea, coffee, chocolates or soft drinks.

Our team now makes voluntary contributions from their salary to buy healthier snacks and drinks for the office (Soy coffee, fruits etc). We've also increased our one day of physical activity to two days a week based on increased demand for more team exercise! In an effort to make these simple yet daily, intentional decisions, we found that we have not only created a happier, productive and strong workforce with better team spirit but also a culture of health and well-being in the office. Our team has shown an increased desire to make a journey to optimal health which in turn will make for a very FIT ADRA indeed.



ADRA

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