



NPC

**Annual Report
2013**

this page intentionally left blank



Vision

A peaceful and just country
in which freedom, human and democratic rights
of all people are assured.

Mission

To work in partnership with different target groups to educate,
mobilise and advocate to build a society of rights-conscious
citizens and a political culture that enables a political solution to the
ethnic conflict and equal opportunities for all.

Contents

About NPC	3
Board of Directors	4
Governing Council	4
Staff	5
Chairman's Message	6
General Secretary's Message	7
Directors' Report	8
Programmes and Projects	10
Finance	22
Way Forward	25
Map of Working Districts	26

About NPC

The National Peace Council (NPC) was established as an independent and non-partisan national non-government organisation on 2 February, 1995. The formation of NPC was the culmination of a process that began with a campaign against election violence in July 1994, launched by an inter religious group of individuals and organisations.

The interventions made by this group during the 1994 Presidential election campaign specifically, and for a peaceful and permanent resolution to the protracted conflict generally, led to the organisation of the first National Peace Conference the same year. The vision and mandate of NPC were formulated at this conference, leading to the establishment of NPC the following year.

In order to achieve its overall goal - that of the establishment of a long-term, viable solution to the ethnic conflict - NPC is committed to the creation of a culture of peace that upholds the values of non-violence, respect for human rights and the free expression of ideas.

Members of the Board of Directors

Mr. Tony Senewiratne (Chairperson)
Mr. G. V. D. Tilakasiri (General Secretary)
Dr. T. Jayasingam (Treasurer)
Dr. Jehan Perera (Executive Director)
Mr. Joe William (Director)
Dr. Anita Nesiah (Director)
Prof. H. S. Hasbullah (Director)
Ven. Budiagama Chandrarathana Thero (Director)
Prof. M. S. Mookiah (Director)
Mr. Javid Yusuf (Director)

Members of the Governing Council

Mr. John V. Thamber
Sr. Mary Barbara
Mr. Raja M. B. Senanayake
Ms. Visaka Dharmadasa
Rev. A. Iyadurai
Ms. Saroja Sivachandran
Mr. M. H. M. Niyas
Ven. Kalupahane Piyarathana Thero
Rev. Fr. Joseph Mary
Ms. Padmini Rajadurai
Ms. Christobel Saverimuttu (Company Secretary)

Staff Members

Name of Employee	Position in the Organisation
Dr. Jehan Perera	Executive Director
Ms. Sumangalie Atulugama	Manager Programmes (until December 2013)
Ms. Rupika Chandani	Manager Finance
Ms. Krishni R. Sourjah	Manager Administration
Mr. Wipula Dahanayake	Development Advisor (short term)
Mr. Samitha Hettige	Project Coordinator (until October 2013)
Ms. Vagisha Gunasekera	Project Coordinator (until March 2013)
Mr. Thushal Dhammika	Project Coordinator
Mr. Shantha Mahindapala	Field Coordinating Officer (until October 2013)
Mr. Benet A. Samantha	IT Coordinator
Mr. Saman Seneviratne	Senior Project Officer/Acting Project Coordinator
Mr. Fazal Mohamed	Senior Project Officer
Mr. Munidasa Sureshkumar	Senior Project Officer (joined December 2013)
Ms. Pushpa Ranjanie	Monitoring and Evaluation Officer
Mr. T. Vaigunthan	Monitoring and Evaluation Officer (until October 2013)
Mr. B. Rukmal S. N. Silva	Assistant Programme Coordinator
Ms. Rasika Seneviratne	Project Officer
Mr. B. Ranjeewa Indika Perera	Project Officer
Mr. Thiyaga C. Kumara Bandara	Project Officer
Mr. Upendra Perera	Technical Assistant Publications
Mr. Rohitha Wickramarachchi	Graphic Designer/Administrative Assistant
Mr. Wesley Weerasinghe	IT Administrator (part time) (until January 2013)
Mr. Fazeen Mohamed	Assistant Accountant (joined May 2013)
Ms. Suganiya Sathanandan	Assistant Accountant (resigned February 2013)
Mr. Ajith Wickremasinghe	Accounts Assistant
Mr. Sarath Karunaratne	Driver
Mr. A. Francis	Driver
Mr. H. K. Sugath	Driver (joined January 2013)
Mr. P. Navanetharan	Office Aide

Chairman's Message

The purpose of an annual report is to both highlight our achievements this past year and to take stock of the shortcomings and drawbacks. We should not be afraid to be introspective and critical in our appraisal of the work that has been done, and indeed of our personal contribution to that effort. As C. S. Lewis, the great English author, said, “only mad men take themselves seriously”.

So let us pause in the middle of the mad rush of activities and deadlines and reflect on what has been done and what lies ahead. The annual report records the valiant effort that we have made to make a change in the sphere of reconciliation. We have achieved some notable milestones and possibly encountered a few stumbles – all of which provide great learning in forging our way forward in the coming year. Will Rogers, the famous comedian, stated, “I don’t make jokes I just watch the government and state the facts”. We are standing in a continuing “post war” period. Hopes have always been high that there is and will be a dawning of peace and great prosperity.

Currently the most talked about, used and liked development is the construction of highways and roads that stretch across the country. Having enjoyed the luxury of the ride, we are impelled to ask where the “roads” are leading.

There is a fear that terrorism is raising its head again, or so we are made to believe. The general consensus is that the rule of law is rapidly deteriorating. The Attorney General was quoted in an editorial as saying that even a schoolboy would find it a joke when he read reports of extra judicial killings that frequently happen when police take arrested suspects to “recover weapons”. There is also the often-reported torture of innocents and sometimes the numbers even include women and children.

Corruption has reached unprecedented levels, making our country descend to abysmal depths on rating scales. We read with great horror and dismay reports of large consignments of narcotic drugs being detected (and the mind boggles at the undetected). However, the guilty roam free to repeat the same offenses. The most disheartening aspect of the current reality is the growing polarisation of communities along ethnic and religious lines. Persons the press openly calls “mad” create havoc with no fear of reprisal and impunity. All of this threatens the goal of a lasting peace with justice.

In the pages that follow, my colleagues have detailed what the NPC has done and hopes to do. I must in duty and joy thank the staff, who have continued the hard and often thankless work of trying to address these issues in spite of adverse publicity and opposition. I also thank our partners who join us in the various campaigns to hoist flags of reconciliation and justice, and our Board and Governing Council who sacrificially give countless hours of their time to attend meetings, events and actively participate in our projects and programmes. Last, but certainly not least, I thank our public supporters who inspire and motivate us to tirelessly fight a good cause and reach for the stars of hope.

I conclude with a thought from Winston Churchill (slightly modified). “Reports, by their very length, defend themselves against the risk of being read”. I trust ours will not.

Tony Senewiratne

General Secretary's Message

Although Sri Lanka's 30-year long internal war has ended, the government still has a security-centered approach to governance in the North and East. There is an absence of progress in negotiations and a suspicion of separatist activities both inside and outside the country.

The tightening of military control over the day-to-day activities of the people in these areas is neither democratically acceptable nor will it win the hearts and minds of the Tamil citizens. Therefore the only way the government has to move forward is towards an acceptable and just political solution that erases the possibility of any separatist activity that can gain the support of the masses.

The problem we face is the failure on the both sides of the political leadership to find the way to come to the negotiating table and yet survive politically. However the government has opened an avenue for a political discussion for changing the Constitution and the arriving at a political solution to the national question through the Parliamentary Select Committee. The government has invited all political parties including the TNA but neither they nor the major opposition parties have availed themselves of this offer.

The delay in commencing political negotiations has a negative effect on the radicalization of extremist forces in the society from both the ethnic and religious sectors. These trends are harmful to the democratic system and the socio-political environment in the country.

However, the majority of people of all communities are waiting for an acceptable political solution. The leadership of the government and the leadership of the elected Northern Provincial Council must use their credibility to strengthen the moderate sections within the country and the international community. The only way for a solution to the national question is through political negotiations within the country. The National Peace Council will always encourage and support those who stand for a long lasting political settlement through negotiations.

G. V. D. Tilakasiri

Directors' Report

The past year has been a significant one for the National Peace Council. We sought to remain engaged with all stakeholders in the continuing civil conflict, even while maintaining our call for a political solution. NPC chose to participate in the civil society forum of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM). We also chose to participate in the parallel civil society event, the People's Forum. These were decisions made within the framework of our belief that engagement is a necessary component of seeking a political solution to a problem that has debilitated Sri Lanka since its independence. This is also in the belief that it is engagement that will bring reconciliation to the increasingly fragmented and fractured country.

Sri Lanka is still in a post-war state and has yet to transition to a post-conflict state and beyond. The centralisation of power within the government that grew during the period of war has been to such a great extent that it has today eroded the rule of law, independence of the judiciary and the freedom of the media throughout the country. The government has focused on economic development and has so far chosen to ignore the political roots of the ethnic conflict that gave rise to the war in the first place. In the post-war context, the government has attempted to move directly to economic development, leaving out the need for post-war transition that includes healing of war-torn communities. Instead of change focused on relationship building, we have seen a continuing polarisation between the ethnic and religious communities in the country.

NPC's task in this situation has been two-fold. As a peace organisation with engagement and reconciliation as its core philosophy, we have through our many activities sought to rebuild relations among different ethnicities and communities. We continue to support religious leaders countrywide to reclaim their role as the moral arbiters of their communities and rebuild fractured relations in that process. The LLRC report too contends that rebuilding of the Sri Lankan nation must be on the shared values of its religions. NPC can take pride that it has shown in a microcosm what is achievable on a wider scale. We have also sought to educate the people on the spirit and substance of the LLRC. This has been a happy exercise, although on occasion our field staff did come under violent attack. The LLRC engagement is an uplifting one. Through this we find the vast and diverse spread of people who share the same values and spirit articulated in the LLRC, a reflection of the ethos that is at the heart of this country.

The second focus of NPC's work has been to give voice to those who have been marginalised or victimised, and to provide critical commentary on unfolding issues. We called for the release of human rights defenders when they were arrested. We called for a commemoration of all those who fell in the last days of the war. In all of this we urged an engaged process to rebuild relations between communities. We also highlighted the plight of those who remained in temporary resettlement or outside the boundaries of their homes, hoping to return home at the end of the war. They needed a hearing and empathy, for it seemed what they desired was a restoration of normalcy and a need for the familiar.

The NPC staff and advisory board have been courageous and steadfast in their commitment to justice and reconciliation. They have steered the organisation through rising currents with great political acumen, but without compromising the core values of NPC. It is a blessing to be part of such a team.

Jehan Perera, Executive Director



PROGRAMMES AND PROJECTS

Towards a Shared Future

Almost five years after the end of Sri Lanka's bitter civil war, the different ethnic communities remain divided with many unresolved issues troubling the minority communities. The root causes of the conflict are still unaddressed.

While for most of the majority Sinhalese the war's conclusion signalled the end of their troubles, for the Tamils, Muslims and Christians it is a different story. The Tamils feel marginalised and oppressed by the heavy military presence in their areas, the takeover of their lands for state use and the lack of funds to run the Northern Provincial Council. The insecurity of Muslims and Christians has deepened as they face hate campaigns and sporadic attacks on their places of worship.

In this scenario, the NGO sector struggled to carry out its work in a hostile environment. Now that it is officially termed a mid-income country, Sri Lanka's donor base is shifting away to poorer countries despite the fact that many people here still live without the basic necessities, especially in the north and east. We value the resources made available to us by our donors. We use their resources with care. We are pleased that for the past five years (2008 to 2012) our Management Letter from auditors PriceWaterhouseCoopers has been a Nil report, which shows the strength of our internal control system.

In 2013, NPC concentrated on its central mandate of seeking peace and reconciliation for the fractured ethnic communities in the country.

Promoting Reconciliation Through the LLRC

One of the main tools for promoting reconciliation among Sri Lanka's polarised ethnic communities is the government appointed Lesson Learnt and Reconciliation Commission's (LLRC) report. It contains numerous recommendations covering all aspects from devolution to militarisation and human rights.

The government has not given adequate publicity to the LLRC report and most people including professionals, trade unionists, teachers, and government employees are not aware of its recommendations.



In 2013 NPC conducted a series of awareness creation workshops and follow up actions based on the LLRC recommendations with support from the Royal Norwegian Embassy and Diakonia.

NPC's approach to finding a domestic solution to the post-war problems of reconciliation has been as follows:

- Training of trainers on broad concepts of Transitional Justice relating to the re-establishment of post-war reconciliation; also on the LLRC recommendations and their strengths and shortcomings
- Publication of a Guidebook on the LLRC report and six booklets on International Humanitarian Law, Civil Society, Reconciliation, Human Rights, Governance and Summary
- Workshops on LLRC and its recommendations for community leaders and their practical applications and relevance
- Follow up activities by local level committees drawn from workshop participants to actualise LLRC recommendations within their areas of competence
- Establishment of a civil society network of partners' organisations and resource persons
- Exploring the possibility of cooperation with government authorities implementing LLRC recommendations at the local level and nationally

The LLRC recommendations were used to identify relevant issues in each district. Some examples of activities were a training programme on child protection issues and lobbying with local level authorities (Vavuniya); cultural activities depicting past and present problems of reconciliation (Mannar, Puttalam and Anuradhapura); and reaching new groups for LLRC awareness creation (Trincomalee and Matara).

"I encouraged other members to come to this workshop. I knew very little about the LLRC. But now I know it very well. This knowledge is very useful for me to work as a politician and to speak at council meetings. The resource materials were also very useful."

Mr. Weerasumana Weerasinghe
Southern Provincial Council
member

Promoting LLRC Implementation

Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO) and NPC carried out a project to strengthen the role of civil society in promoting human rights and democratic reforms by holding two workshops in Puttalam and Trincomalee. The workshops focused on increasing the knowledge of the LLRC recommendations and the role of government and civil society in the implementation of the recommendations while promoting collaboration among civil society and government/public officers.

Participants discussed the LLRC recommendations and prioritised those that were applicable to their district. They identified activities and actions that could be undertaken to support the delivery of those recommendations either on their own or in conjunction with local government authorities.

Partnerships for Peace Strengthens Peace Building Efforts at Community Level

Under a two-year project funded by the European Union, NPC strengthened the capacity of eight grassroots partners to further their peace building and reconciliation efforts at the community level across the country.

Partnerships for Peace targeted war affected, inter ethnic communities whose largely harmonious and peaceful lives have been shattered by three decades of bitter war. Despite an end to fighting, suspicion and alienation remain. The project sought to help the partners to overcome these new attitudes through discussions, dialogue and activities to bring about peace, democracy and adherence to human rights.



The partners selected by NPC were Centre for Women and Development (CWD-Jaffna), Resources for Peace and Reconciliation (RPR-Mannar), Vanni Cultural Foundation (VCF-Puttalam), Organisation for the Welfare, Counselling and Upholding of Rights of Disabled (OWCURD-Gampaha), Social, Economic and Environmental Development Organisation (SEEDO-Moneragala), True Vision Rural Rehabilitation Organisation (TVRRO-Ampara), Ruhunu Rural Women's Organisation (RRWO-Hambantota), and Centre for Communication Training (CCT-Colombo).

The partners were given training in a variety of subjects including project management, monitoring and evaluation and results based management. Workshops were held on human rights, peace advocacy, conflict sensitivity, gender based violence, reconciliation and inter cultural relations. There were exposure visits for the partners to visit different parts of the country to understand the issues facing other communities. In addition, each partner organisation was funded to implement a small project of their choice, which contributed to community healing.

Kondachchi village in the Mannar district is home to 75 families of whom 80 per cent are Muslim and the rest Tamil and some Sinhalese. They lived together in harmony until the war began. In 1990, the villagers had to flee heavy fighting and became refugees in another area. With the end of the war in 2009, most returned to resettle in their homes. However, they no longer lived together in peace. Instead, violent clashes occurred over religious issues.

Jalal Ahmad had lived in Kondachchi since he was born. He was dismayed to see the misunderstanding and intolerance that had sprung up among his formerly happy neighbours and friends. He believed that if they could only discuss problems calmly, they could find solutions.

Mr. Ahmad decided to enlist the help of NPC's partner, Resources for Peace and Reconciliation (RPR), to conduct training in ways to avoid conflict and conflict resolution. Twenty five participants were chosen for the first round, including Mr Ahmad who says that he now knows how to control conflicts that lead to violence. His knowledge has helped to create better relationships within his community.

Improving Government Services

NPC, supported by the Catholic Agency For Overseas Development (CAFOD), launched a project to improve public services by targeting local government institutions through issues based partnerships between civil society and local government authorities.

The project was implemented in the Galle and Batticaloa Municipalities. Direct beneficiaries were 25 municipal council members including former members, local government officials and 30 civil society leaders within Galle and Batticaloa municipal areas.

In both districts, awareness raising workshops were held on local government laws, community participation and service delivery for community groups, officers and members of the Municipal Councils and officers.

A handbook on local government powers and practices was published and distributed.

A special feature of this project was the sharing of lessons learnt and experiences gained by the two Municipal Councils. This was done through study tours between Galle and Batticaloa. A strong civil society mechanism was in place in Batticaloa, which the Galle Council studied, while a strong administrative structure was in place in Galle, which the Batticaloa Council studied. The Galle Municipal Council realised the value of a strong civil society mechanism and undertook to strengthen its Community Development Department.

A common platform for discussion of urban problems was created. Both Municipal Councils were drawn towards the engagement of the people's representatives, officials and community groups to identify and solve common community problems. A final statement of lessons learnt was developed to be distributed among relevant stakeholders.

As the project was getting underway, the Galle Mayor, who had been amenable to work with NPC, was suddenly removed. The new mayor was concerned about cooperating with non-governmental organisations. However after an introductory meeting and a subsequent workshop, his attitude toward NPC changed. As a result, the team was asked to conduct similar training for 200 Municipal Council staff. The mayor believed that the content was important not only for his officials but for all staff engaging with and providing services to the public.

Strengthening North-South Relations

North-South University Friendship Bridge Programme, funded by the US Embassy in Sri Lanka, was launched by NPC to rebuild relations among university students living in North and South and to improve their awareness of transitional justice.

NPC selected the Sri Palee campus of Colombo University and Jaffna University for the programme.

A total of 36 Media Studies students from Sri Palee Campus of Colombo University and 46 students from Jaffna University Media Studies participated in the programme.



It covered two educational visits to the North and South. The students wrote articles on their experiences for a book that was published.

During their visits, the students took part in community work, met civilians, held discussions with civil society, religious and political leaders and shared their experiences with each other. Special visits were conducted to media organisations to study how they functioned.

Workshops were held to create awareness on transitional justice and on the recommendations of LLRC report. There were cultural performances and events to strengthen friendships.

***“Let us
extend our hands to them to build a united
country. Then we shall not have to make another post-war
visit to the North to see devastation and decay but only a visit to meet
old friends, make new friends and renew bonds. What is happening now is
erasing the memories of a dark past and creating space for a new springtime of
rejuvenation, restoration and regeneration. Let us rejoice and renew our hopes.”***

**Akila Madhusanka Baddevithane
Sri Palee Campus Student**

Writing for Reconciliation

This year, NPC supported a project that was somewhat different to its usual work - Write to Reconcile, in conjunction with the internationally renowned Sri Lankan author, Shyam Selvadurai.

The project brought together 23 emerging writers who were interested in writing fiction, memoir or poetry in English on the issues of conflict, peace, reconciliation, memory and trauma as they related to Sri Lanka's civil war and the postwar period.

Over the course of two residential workshop and two online forums, these writers, under the guidance of Shyam Selvadurai, honed their craft of writing and produced work that showed a diversity of cultural, ethnic and geographical points of view on the civil war and its aftermath, as well as a diversity of styles and genres.

The work produced by the writers was published in the Write to Reconcile Anthology, which was launched in September 2013. Two thousand copies of the anthology were mailed to libraries and schools across the country and a downloadable version is available as well.

The project, which was funded by the Royal Norwegian Embassy and the American Centre, was so successful, that it will take place again in 2014.

"It has been very good working with the National Peace Council," Shyam said, "I went to them as they seemed like a good fit."



**"WTR
was an amazing experience
educationally, historically, and emotionally.
I learned new things about our country's history, learned
essential tips about creative writing, made firm, fulfilling
friendships, and saw anew the immeasurable value and beauty of true
reconciliation. WTR was definitely one of the best experiences of my life!"**

**Shalini Abayasekara, Kandy
WTR Participant**

NPC Addresses Rising Religious Tension

In late 2013 with support from SPICE/USAID, NPC began a new project to address the growing religious tension within Sri Lanka. Despite the end of the war, inter-community relations have deteriorated. Anti-Muslim propaganda is on the rise and there are attacks on Muslims by a section of the Buddhist clergy and their followers. The unwillingness of the state to speak up is one indication of the failure of post-war reconciliation.

There were also Tamil-Muslim conflicts in Mannar over land settlement and anti-Christian violence in some parts of the country.



The 12 District Inter Religious Committees (DIRCs) set up by NPC have a history of over three years. Some members have undergone training programmes on conflict resolution, conflict sensitivity and prioritisation of humanitarian needs under a EU funded project. Through these activities, people are able to understand one another and their religions. They have realised the nature of the political problems that separate the ethnic communities and make their political leaders see each other as opponents instead of as partners.

The new project will strengthen the work of six of the DIRCs while setting up new ones in Kandy and Nuwara Eliya. NPC will work with partner organisations that will collaborate with DIRCs at the district level. The funding enables NPC to strengthen the effectiveness of the existing DIRCs and build partner capacity so that together they can serve as a District-level mechanism to prevent localised conflicts.

“Inter religious coexistence is very important to minimise religious tension in the country, which is increasing day by day. When I was a Member of Parliament, I convinced my party members and parliamentarians to promote sharing political power but we faced resistance when we talked of power sharing. I am still working on this issue.”

**Ven. Baddegama Samitha Thero
Former Parliamentarian
Southern Provincial Council Member**

MEDIA AND ADVOCACY

An Alternative Voice

As part of its educational and advocacy work, NPC disseminated over a hundred political commentaries and press releases that were published in the mass media in three languages. These materials often presented a different point of view and endeavoured to be a voice of reason during challenging times.

A monthly newspaper, Thulawa, was published in all three languages and sent to libraries across the country and to academics, NGO officials and the diplomatic community. The newspaper presented an alternative voice to mainstream media as well as highlighting NPC's work and activities.

Excerpts from NPC media releases:

Do Not Utilise The Army To Maintain Public Order

"The tragic incident at Weliveriya in the west of the country, where the army was deployed to bring a public protest to an end, has led to the deaths of three persons and serious injuries to many others. The protest, which was against the contamination of groundwater consumed by village communities in the area by a factory, spilled over onto the highway obstructing traffic. The National Peace Council deplores the government's use of the army and shoot-to-kill methods to suppress a protest by the people in the exercise of their freedom of association..."

Consolidate Present Gains By Going Beyond Symbolic Acts Of Goodwill

"The issue of devolution of power has been at the forefront of the search for a political solution to Sri Lanka's ethnic conflict for the past nearly six decades. From the perspective of the National Peace Council, the establishment of the Northern Provincial Council after elections is one of the most positive political developments in post-war Sri Lanka. It reintegrates the northern polity in to the democratic system and gives recognition to the regional voice of this constituency. The election constitutes the first step in a process for reintegration and reconciliation. However it must be noted that for the process to be sustained, it must be mutually acceptable."



Citizens Peace Award

NPC's Citizens Peace Award for 2012 was presented to human rights lawyer and activist J.C. Weliamuna for his courageous and committed work to defend and promote human rights during the traumatic period of the war, and now in its unsettled aftermath. Previous winners have been Dr. Paikiasothy Saravanamuttu and Dr. Nimalka Fernando.

As a leading human rights lawyer, Mr. Weliamuna has appeared in hundreds of challenging and leading human rights cases that have contributed to change human rights jurisprudence.

As a member of the Sri Lankan branch of Transparency International, of which he was the Executive Director for many years, he led the advocacy campaigns to mainstream anti-corruption and good governance in the public consciousness.



NPC at Commonwealth People's Forum

The Commonwealth People's Forum was held in Hikkaduwa ahead of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Colombo in November.

With "Equitable growth and inclusive development: beyond 2015" as its theme the CPF, hosted by a consortium of Sri Lankan civil society organisations with support from the Government of Sri Lanka, was an opportunity for civil society to engage with Commonwealth leaders on global development issues. It brought civil society representatives together to discuss key issues facing the Commonwealth.



The People's Forum was boycotted by several leading human rights and activist organisations on the basis of the Sri Lankan government's violation of Commonwealth norms. However NPC participated on the grounds of constructive engagement.

NPC's Executive Director Jehan Perera, NPC Chairman Tony Senewiratne and Board Members Joe Williams and G.V.D. Tilakasiri gave presentations at a fringe event on "Civil Society Approaches to Post-War Reconciliation" exploring their own and larger civil society efforts to work together towards a long term, peaceful political solution.

Dr. Perera was also part of a panel on "Reconciliation - international lessons and perspectives from across the Commonwealth", which also featured speakers from the Philippines, South Africa and Nigeria giving their experiences of forging peace and bringing about reconciliation in their fractured nations.

Parliamentary Select Committee: NPC Outlines 10 Urgent Issues to PSC

In August, NPC presented written submissions to the Select Committee of Parliament to Recommend and Report on Political and Constitutional Measures to Empower the People of Sri Lanka (PSC).

The PSC has been boycotted by the opposition political parties. However the government sees it as the way forward to finding a political solution that would unify the country.

Although the open conflict has ceased, the divisions that existed in the past are still very much alive. The violence, suspicion, and segregation of the conflict have become deeply embedded in social and political life. One of the challenges to national integration and reconciliation will be to give people from different ethnic communities a better understanding of those from other communities. Another challenge is to promote engagement and dialogue. It was in this spirit that NPC made its submissions to the PSC.

NPC outlined ten areas that it felt needed to be addressed:

- Use Concept of Sufficient Consensus - where minority views must form a part of the decision making process to mitigate majoritarian decision-making.
- Power sharing - through the implementation of the 13th Amendment.
- 13th Amendment - must be implemented fully as it represents the absolute minimum basis on which a process of constitutional negotiations towards a new power-sharing settlement may be initiated.
- Police powers - a provincial police force is best equipped to serve the needs of the local communities in the provinces.
- Land issue - providing the provincial councils with land powers will substantially improve their financial viability.
- Militarisation - serves as a reminder that even four years after the war, normal civilian life and civilian administration has still not been restored.
- Human rights - the government needs to give utmost priority to getting resources into the war-destroyed areas. There needs to be an upholding of the Rule of Law and the rejection of impunity.
- Compensating victims - even a token payment may provide relief for those living in poverty and serve as a psychological role of acknowledging responsibility for abuses.
- Implementation of language laws - more resources need to be provided to implement language laws for healing and nation building.
- Religious freedom - The teaching of all religions in schools needs to become a part of the school syllabus and the establishment of inter-religious committees at the community level is necessary.

Assisting Disadvantaged Students

The Rotary Club of Camerthon in the UK, facilitated by NPC, is funding six disadvantaged University students from the Badulla and Nuwara Eliya districts whose parents work in the plantation sector, to complete their education. Two other students are being assisted by local donors. The funds, which are used for books and other study materials, are disbursed every six months. It is proposed to add three more students next year.

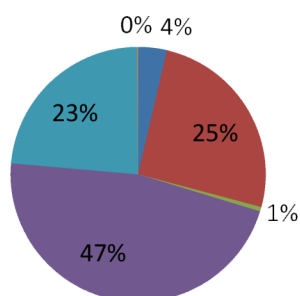
FINANCE

FUNDS RECEIVED FROM OUR DONORS

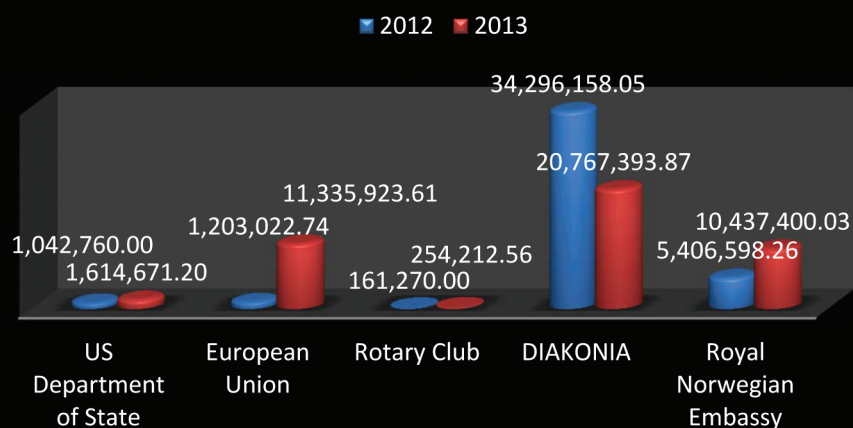
Donor Agency	2012	2013
US Department of State	1,042,760.00	1,614,671.20
European Union	1,203,022.74	11,335,923.61
Rotary Club	161,270.00	254,212.56
DIAKONIA	34,296,158.05	20,767,393.87
Royal Norwegian Embassy	5,406,598.26	10,437,400.03
SPICE	-	48,300.00
	42,109,809.05	44,409,601.27

Our Donors (2013)

■ US Department of State
 ■ European Union
 ■ Rotary Club
■ DIAKONIA
 ■ Royal Norwegian Embassy
 ■ SPICE



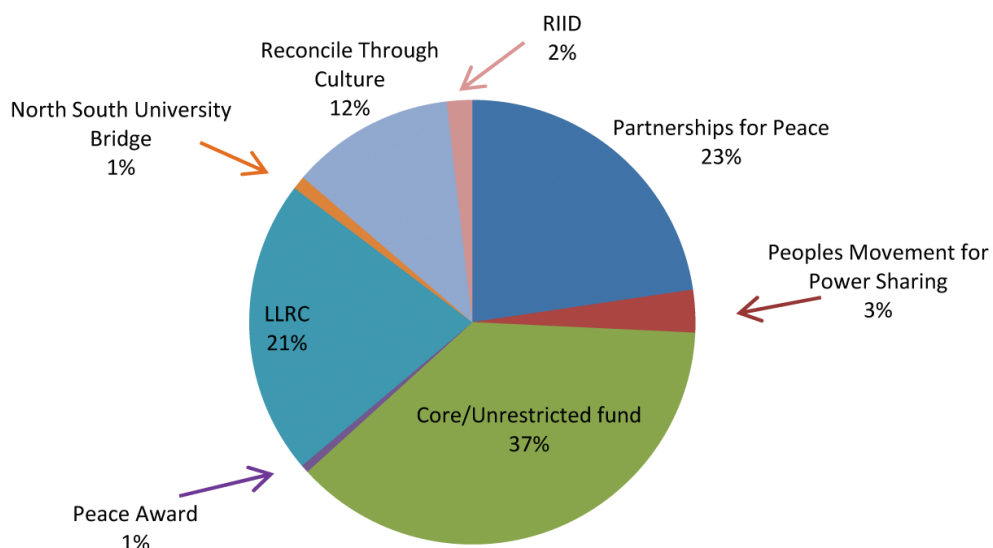
Our Donors-2012/2013



OUR PROJECTS

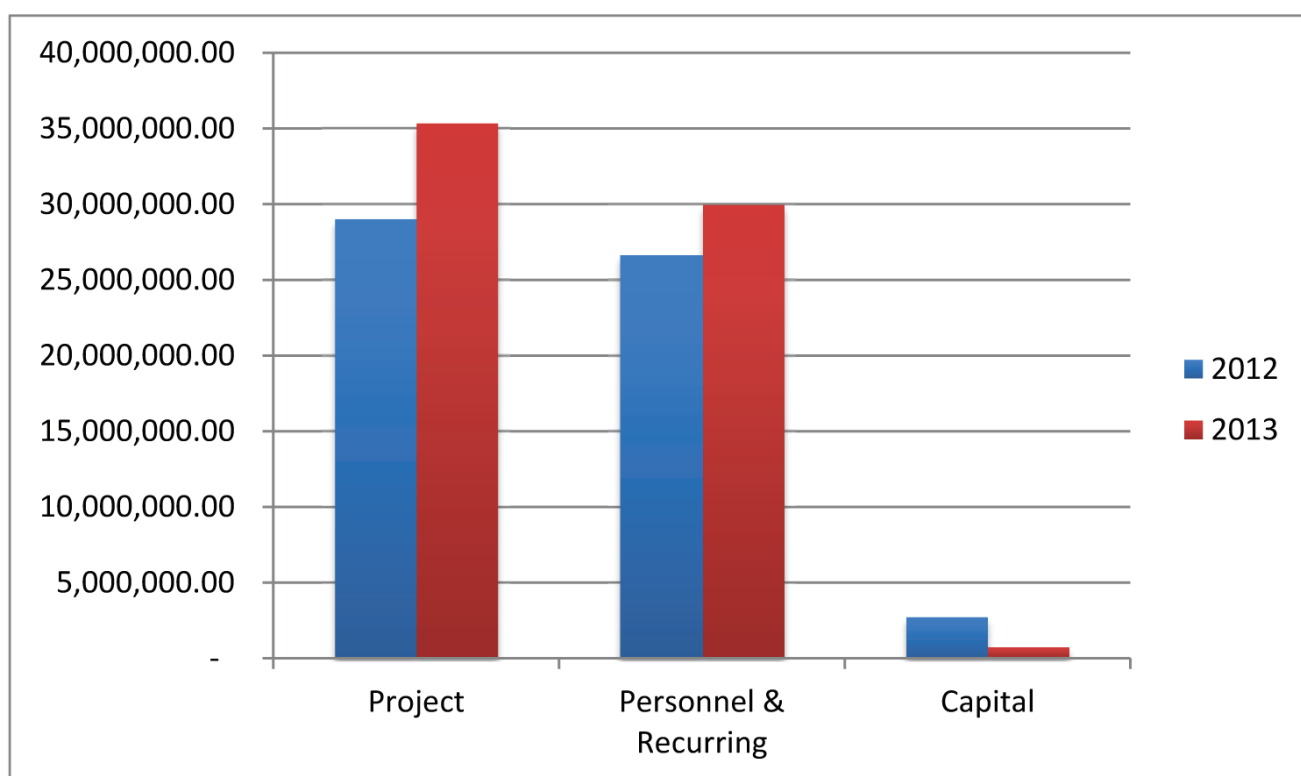
Project Title	Amount Spent (Rs)	Donor Agency
Partnerships for Peace	14,998,555.00	European Union
Peoples movement for power sharing	2,054,584.41	CAFOD
Core/Unrestricted fund	24,824,579.09	DIAKONIA/NPC
Peace Award	387,255.00	NPC-Sakai Fund
LLRC	14,224,266.82	DIAKONIA
North South University Bridge	647,661.00	US Department of State
Reconcile Through Culture	7,862,378.79	Royal Norwegian Embassy
RIID	1,211,235.68	SPICE
	66,210,515.79	

OUR PROJECTS



Analysis of Expenditure

Type of Expenditure	Amount	
	2012	2013
Project	29,058,437.16	35,384,625.61
Personnel & Recurring	26,652,231.51	30,013,590.18
Capital	2,788,928.32	812,300.00
	58,499,596.99	66,210,515.79



Way Forward

The year so far has been a divisive one with ever deepening polarisation and strident acrimony. Internationally, the government has been singled out for an investigation into its human rights record in the last days of the war. The government's response on the ground has been unconstructive. Politics has generated bitter divisiveness on the basis of ethno-centric issues. But there is a glimmer of hope. South Africa is stepping in as mediator between the Sri Lankan government and Tamil National Alliance. It is seeking to share its own experience of transition to help Sri Lanka find its way forward. We at the NPC have a continued role in these efforts. We need to articulate the framework for the solution, that it is one that recognises the pluralistic nature of the Sri Lankan nation. We need to rebuild trust between communities so that the ethnicities are not separate entities with disparate destinies but have a shared focus. We need to try and resolve the problems of the day-to-day to help reintegrate communities that feel alienated from the Sri Lankan state. And we need to help strengthen the larger legal and political framework that makes all of this meaningful and sustainable.

Accordingly, in the year to come NPC will be having four priority areas of work.

1. Promote reconciliation through acceptance of a pluralistic society

NPC will emphasise pluralism in its approach as this is a unifying concept not a divisive one. Pluralism is about respecting the right to be different and accepting diversity as the basis of reconciliation. It is not divisive in that it does not focus on the rights of any one group in opposition to another.

2. Trust building

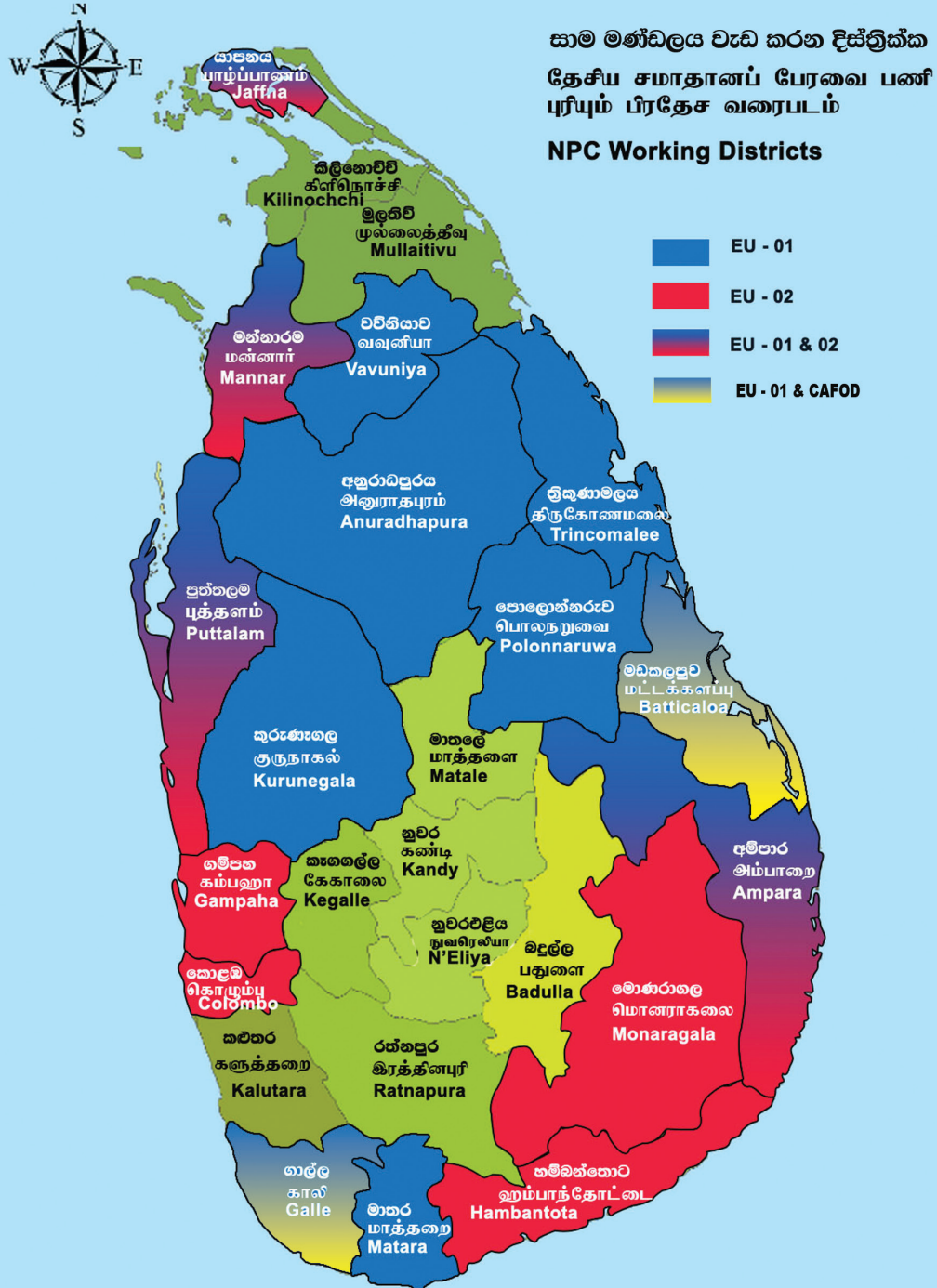
Sri Lanka is today a fragmented society. Each group operates in its own sphere. There is also a breakdown of institutions that enables trust. Any process of post-war transformation requires trust building. NPC will be seeking to build trust at all levels, both within and between communities.

3. Address needs, short term and otherwise, to prevent future conflict

Sri Lanka has yet to progress from being a post-war society to being a post-conflict society. There has been no conflict transformational process that addresses political roots of the conflict and wounds inflicted by the war. The end of any major conflict also opens up sub conflicts that have been suppressed by the larger one, and these have the potential to further fragment society. It is necessary to pre-empt possible future conflicts by addressing them before they escalate.

4. Strengthen the organisation institutionally for greater efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability

NPC will review its existing administrative structures and introduce changes where necessary. It will also seek to strengthen its delivery capacity through enhanced training for staff on newer methods of conflict transformation and resolution. The organisation will set up a memory centre to be the repository for all its work and its learning in that process.



Notes

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

this page intentionally left blank

National Peace Council of Sri Lanka

#12/14, Purana Vihara Road, Colombo 06

Tel: 2818344, 2854127, 2809348, Fax: 2819064,

E-mail :info@peace-srilanka.org

Web: www.peace-srilanka.org