

## Workshop Report 1

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October 2008

Gemisarana Kendrya, Tunthota (Kegalle District)

Participants	:	
Facilitators	:	Stephen Suntharaja-CHRD Francis Solomentine-CHRD
Resource Persons	:	Thilaka Wijayasinhe-Lawyer Niranjan Dias-Coordinator-Human Rights Commission, Kandy

The workshop commenced at 8.30 am with a silent prayer. During the introductory session the traditional oil lamp was lit. Gemisarana Kendrya, Coordinator, Mr. Athukorala welcomed participants and briefed the workshop objectives, vision and mission of his organization. Participants introduced themselves. CHRD Programme Manager, Mr. Stephen Sunthararaja explained the objectives of the workshop and briefed about CHRD and its activities.

The session commenced with a need assessment. The assessment was to identify the participants' knowledge on Human Rights and Fundamental Rights. Parameter method was used for the assessment. In addition to parameter method, two other methods like Diamond Ranking and Wen Diagram were also applied.

Following tea break, participants were divided into five groups. Each group was asked to identify problems they face in their communities. Analyzing community problems, using the Diamond Rank method, problems were prioritized. One representative from each group spoke on the main problem they identified. Describing these problems, a common discussion was held to analyze the priority problems in-depth.

Soon after lunch break, two resource persons, Mr. Thilaka Wijayasinhe, attorney-at-law and Mr. Niranjan Dias, Coordinator, Human Rights Commission, Kandy, conducted the second session. Participants were divided into two groups and each resource person conducted sessions for each group separately. Issues on real estate and land was taken up by Thilaka Wijayasinhe, attorney-at-law, while Niranjan Dias, HRC, Kandy spoke on Human Rights and Fundamental Rights. During the session, the resource persons touched on the issues that were identified in the Diamond Rank method. Shortly after evening tea the two groups were brought together for a panel discussion. During the panel discussion participants raised questions and some were able to find immediate solutions for some of their problems. However the long term problems too were discussed and CHRD assured that these issues will be taken up with relevant authorities. Thereafter, certificates were issued to the participants by CHRD. Workshop concluded at 5 pm.

### Outcomes

#### *End of workshop participants,*

- were more aware of their fundamental rights
- developed a network with each other, since they represent various organizations in the Kegalle district
- Assured to take up issues faced by Tamil communities living in the next village. (The nearest police station to the village does not accept any complaints, without a Sinhala translator present.)
- Came to know the structure of problem solving if and when problems arises in the community
- Promised to contact CHRD & Human Rights Commission, Kandy when assistance is needed
- Promised to update CHRD on their progress as well as gather information of violations taking place in their areas.