



Capacity Building Program for ZV Officers of the Maldives Island on Effective Local Governance

Acknowledgement

This course became a successful achievement of learning for all of the participants not only because of the desire and keen interest of the participants to learn the contents, but it is indeed, a great opportunity provided by the Civil Service Commission to the participants to gain insight into local governance practices in Sri Lanka. So we would like to convey our sincere thanks and appreciations to the Chairman and all the members of the commission.

Sri Lanka Institute of Development Administration (SLIDA) extended a very warm welcome and unforgettable hospitality throughout the whole training period. Arrangement of lectures, visits, sightseeing trips as well as leisure times were well planned. We wish to thank our course coordinator Mr. Jayasundera and his staff as well as SLIDA as a whole for the hospitality given to us and for the perfect arrangements of the field visits, lecture sessions as well as the welcome and farewell dinners.

Kolonnava Urban Council was the first local institution that we visited. Indeed the secretary and her staff received us as their honorable guests. The traditional welcoming celebration, the presentation and the memorable times we spent with them at their community center cannot be erased from our minds. For all these, we thank Kolonnava Urban Council for such a great honor.

It was a great opportunity to have witnessed a local council election especially in a foreign country. So we wish to express our heartfelt thanks to the Honorable Commissioner of Elections and his staff for providing this opportunity.

North West Provincial Council secretariat has given us a best opportunity to have a thorough knowledge about provincial local government system. The head of departments at the council were very curious about our visit and still we remember their smiling and welcoming faces. Therefore we gratefully thank the North West Provincial Council.

Kurunegala Pradeshiya Sabha Chairman and his staff received us with a warm welcome. They hosted a special function to receive us. For the welcome, the information and all such activities, we thank the Chairman and the staff of Kurunegala Pradeshiya Sabha.

Colombo Municipal Council extended us a red-carpet welcome. The guest of honor was not only for us but certainly that was for the Civil Service Commission and for the Government and the people of the Maldives as well.

We would be delighted if we had such an opportunity to welcome a delegation of the council. We learnt a lot from Madam Commissioner,, Ms. Badhrany Jayavardhana and her colleagues as well as her motivated staff. We thank the Commissioner and the staff of the council.

Eventually, we thank the people who worked closely with us; the Commissioner Mr. Abdulla Jihad, Lecturer, CSTI Mr. Hussain Naeem and Asst. Lecturer Miss. Mariyam Zeeniya, and indeed our course coordinator MR. Jayasundera (SLIDA) who guided us to every good way possible from the beginning to the end of the course. We express our heartfelt thanks to the director of International Relations, Mr. Ahmed Husham without whom the communications between SLIDA would not have taken place smoothly.

We thank everyone, in general, who involved making this great opportunity possible.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The twelve day study tour to Sri Lanka which took place from 2nd October 2011 to 15th October 2011 provided us with unique insight into the governance and public administration system of Sri Lanka, best practices and the issues facing in the current public administration of Sri Lanka.

The study tour provided a good platform for learning and understanding the best practices in Sri Lankan public administration through sharing and exchange of information and experiences. It also helped us to gain exposure on the practical experiences and challenges faced by Sri Lanka during the process of adaptation of new local governance in public administration. During the tour, we had the opportunity to visit some of the key local government organizations in Sri Lanka, which are tasked with implementing key local governance initiatives.

This report highlights the work of those organizations on which the programme of the tour was mainly based. Exposure trips of this nature are important to a country like Maldives, especially at this juncture, in which the country is undergoing profound political, economic and social transformations. Lessons learned from Sri Lanka, would be crucial for strengthening the democratization process, particularly the local governance and public administration system in the Maldives.

We take this opportunity to thank all those organizations visited during the tour, particularly the SLIDA who planned the programme of our visit, coordinated the various visits to the organizations and made all other necessary arrangements during our stay in Sri Lanka.

Study tour participants:

Mr. Abdul Jihad, Member of Civil Service Commission

Mr. Hussain Naeem, Lecturer of Civil Service Training Institute

Ms. Mariyam Zeeniya, Assistant Lecturer of Civil Service Training Institute

ZV's list for SLIDA's training Program

#	Name	Office	Designation
1	Aishath Jumana	Male' City Council Secretariat	Assistant Director
2	Nasir Ahmed	GDh. Thinadhoo Council Secretariat	Assistant Director
3	Mohamed Naseer	Ha. Atoll Council Secretariat	Director
4	Ahmed Niyaz	HDh. Neykurendhoo Secretariat	Assistant Director
5	Mohamed Shiham	R. Atoll Council Secretariat	Assistant Director
6	Mohamed Nizar Ibrahim	Lh. Atoll Council Secretariat	Assistant Director
7	Abdulla Sameer	AA. Atoll Council Secretariat	Assistant Director
8	Ahmed Rasheed Ibrahim	Dh. Atoll Council Secretariat	Assistant Director
9	Mohamed Jameel	L. Atoll Council Secretariat	Assistant Director
10	Mohamed Naseer Ali	Ga. Atoll Council Secretariat	Deputy Director

Atoll Trainers list for SLIDA's training Program

#	Name	Office	Designation
11	Azim Abdulla	GA.Maamendhoo School	Deputy Principal
12	Moosa Fathhy	National Office, Central Region	Administrative Officer
13	Ilyas Ibrahim	Ha.Hoarafushi Councilge Secretariat	Senior Municipal Service Officer

Background

The election of local councils in Maldives has brought tremendous changes to the governance of the administrative set up of the Maldives. The councilors brainstorm and decided on behalf of their respective areas regarding the development and upgrading of the services. The implementation and administration of the decisions made by the councilors are undertaken by the civil servants and the head of the civil servant in the islands and atoll councils, Zimmaadhaaru Veriyaa (ZV). The ZVs have a massive responsibility in coordinating the civil servants as well as the council members in harmonizing the smooth functioning of the secretariat.

It is a challenge for the ZVs to work in the current situation where they work as middlemen within the secretariat of the councils' offices. They get to implement the decisions made by the councilors and report back the progress of the matters in due time. Conversely, ZVs are the managers who allocate and assign workflows to the civil servants working in the secretariat. Their main responsibilities are to facilitate and provide fast and timely services decided by the councilors to the public. The challenge roots from the organization of both working bodies to function with the same environment. Hence, ZVs must be trained and acquainted with these working environments, and it is important that they are given opportunities to experience how these similar offices work and coordinate the functions within their working environment.

It is mandatory for Civil Service Commission (CSC) to train the civil servants to equip them with knowledge and experiences required for smooth running of their functions. One of those initiatives was the decision to upgrade the knowledge and skills of ZVs in atoll and island councils. The training was designed in such a matter that the ZVs get to experience the functioning of the local authorities in Sri Lanka. The recent MoU between Sri Lanka Institute of Development Administration (SLIDA) and CSC have facilitated the training initiative to be conducted and delivered to the participating group.

Introduction

SLIDA is the premier public sector training organization in Sri Lanka, for the development of knowledge and improvement of skills in Public Administration and Management. In addition to management training activities, SLIDA also undertakes Management Consultancy Services and Research to develop identifiable functional areas of management as well as review and improve organizational systems. The training program developed for the skill building of the ZVs of Maldives was a customized package of modules designed to cater the request from CSC and named as “capacity building program for ZV officers of the Maldives Island on effective local governance”.

The program was developed into two major areas of knowledge and experience acquisitions, lecture and visits. The lectures included the discussion and power point presentations on specific areas of local governance and soft skills. The visits included the experiencing of different local authority setups of Sri Lanka. The program gave opportunities to visit the Parliament, four different local authorities including the Colombo Municipal Council.

The selection of the ZVs for the program was done thoroughly by the senior officers of CSC based on the merit system. The ZVs were identified based on the English merit since the program was conducted in a foreign country and the medium of instruction was English. At the early stages of the selection, 15 ZVs were shortlisted from the database and a final selection of 10 was finally decided to take part in the program. Additionally, 3 members from the Atoll Training Network (ATN) were also given the chance to participate and their selection was very competitive. The first and foremost criterion to be selected was the ATN member should be from one of the atolls of the ZVs being selected. This criterion limited the selection of ATN member to a minimum and the reason was to give the ATN and ZV an opportunity to interact and experience a close bond and friendship during the training program. One of the main aims of this type of training was to promote the cooperation and coordination among the ZVs and ATN members.

Course Objectives:

At the end of the exposure program the participants should be able to:

- ⊙ Understand the evolution and administrative structure of local government system in Sri Lanka.
- ⊙ Know the planning and budgeting process adopted by the local authorities.
- ⊙ Know the type of strategic management processes adopted by local government institutions.
- ⊙ Understand how conflict resolution and negotiation takes place
- ⊙ Appreciate good practices in areas of transparency, accountability, participatory process, building stakeholder partnership, which may have had definite outcome and impact
- ⊙ Know governance, planning and change management practices that have attained intended impact and those that faced operational and other problems and attempts made to address these problems

Course contents:

- ⊙ Decentralization and multi levels of Governance in Sri Lanka
- ⊙ Evolution of local government system in Sri Lanka
- ⊙ Powers and functions of local government at different levels
- ⊙ Planning and budgeting
- ⊙ Revenue collections for local governments – strategies and issues
- ⊙ People participation in local government
- ⊙ Issues in local government
- ⊙ Conflict Resolution and Negotiation skills
- ⊙ Strategic Management
- ⊙ Change Management
- ⊙ Practice of good governance principles (transparency, accountability, participatory process, building stakeholder partnerships)

Arrangements and Issues

We departed from Ibrahim Nasir International Airport on the 2nd October 2011 in the evening. The air ticket was arranged from Emirates Airline. After the completion of the 12 day training, we came back to Male' on the 15th October 2011 night at 2200hrs.

We were received at the airport by an official from SLIDA. Our accommodation was arranged at SLIDA hostel where each participant was provided with a single room, attached bathroom. The Director of Housing, Mr. Abeyrathne welcomed us at SLIDA, but we noticed that the arrangements were not handled well. For instance they were not aware of the Commissioner, Mr. Abdulla Jihad's arrival and therefore we had to face some inconveniences in arranging a room from the hostel for that night. Furthermore, we noticed that our course coordinator was not there to welcome the Chairman of CSC, Mr. Mohamed Fahmy Hassan and the delegates. From the first night, we faced many issues regarding accommodation such as lack of hygiene in the rooms and not having electricity at times. This was communicated with the Chairman and Commissioner of CSC immediately.

After the first session of day one, coordinators received feedback from the participants regarding accommodation problems. The main issues highlighted by participants were the lack of hygiene and electricity in their rooms. Also they did not have any proper place to keep their belongings since they dejected to use the drawers and cupboards in their rooms. The issue was communicated with the Chairman and the Commissioner as well as the management of SLIDA.

A meeting was held between CSC staff and management of SLIDA to bring up the issues raised by participants. In the meeting it was agreed that all issues raised by participants to be given in writing and SLIDA will attend this predicament within no time. However, we noticed that most of the issues faced were major ones which would not be solved easily. Minor issues faced which were not solved during our stay at SLIDA included providing dustbins and hangers for the rooms. Taking into consideration the major issues which participants were facing in the hostel, we decided to move the participants to a nearby hotel.

On the second day the issues raised by participants were attended and solved by arranging accommodation facilities in two nearby hotels. Participants shared rooms in Pearl Hotel and Indra Regent Hotel on the second night.

Commissioner Mr. Jihad negotiated with the Manager of Indra Regent Hotel the third day to accommodate all 16 participants in single rooms on half board basis at a convenient rate. Accommodation issues were solved soon after moving all Participants to Indra Regent Hotel.

Food and transportation were well handled. Menu was emailed prior to the visit, consequently we did not face any problems regarding this matter.

Learning and Achievements

The program was arranged in such a manner that participants had the opportunity to learn and experience the theory and practices together by means of lecture discussions and study visits.

3rd October 2011 (Day-1)

Topic: “Decentralization and Multi Levels of Governance in Sri Lanka”

Lecturer: Mr. Asoka Gunawardhane, Former Chairman, Finance Commission of Sri Lanka

Introduction:

The first lecturer of this course, Mr. Asoka Gunawardhane, who delivered the first lecture after a brief introduction of him by the program coordinator Mr. W.A. Jayasundera, one of the senior consultants of Sri Lanka Institute of Development Administration (SLIDA).

In the beginning, the lecturer highlighted his knowledge about the Maldives by saying that he visited Maldives twice. But neither experience of the Maldives nor relative comparison was emphasized throughout his lecture.

Though the lecturer is a well-known public figure and a consultant in his profession, this lecture was not delivered so interestingly. Any involvement of the participants was not taken. So that it was a very silent session.

Objectives:

To provide the participants with back ground information on decentralization and governance at central and local levels in Sri Lanka.

Learning:

- According to the lecturer, two of the main purposes of decentralization are accountability and transparency which are very essential to the human development.
- Sri Lanka has a long history of decentralization of powers in governance. During the colonial era, British rulers initiated the sub-national local government system in which the country was divided into 9 provinces.
- The need for this change was to get the participation of the local communities in their own development.
- The most rapid decentralization activities, took place between 1928 and 1948, this included such activities as establishment of government departments, divisions and offices in the provinces.
- No one could become an eligible candidate without a proof that the person owns a minimum Rs. 500.00 and similarly, no voter could be enlisted in voter's registry unless the person owns a minimum Rs. 100.00.
- The system of sub-national government also continued to develop after the independence in 1948 with the significant change of administration.
- The first elected Local Councils of Sri Lanka were Kandy and Colombo municipal councils which were elected in 1939.
- The first model of the local government system had 4 tiers of governance, municipal council, urban council, town council and village council. The town council and the village council were abolished after the invention of Pardeshiya Sabha council act.

Topic: “Evolution of Local Government System in Sri Lanka

Lecturer: Mr. K.A.D Gunasinhe – Senior Consultant, SLIDA

Introduction:

This lecture was also followed after a brief introduction of the lecturer by the Program coordinator Mr. W.A Jayasundera, Senior Consultant, SLIDA.

Though the topic was about the evolution of local government system in Sri Lanka, it was not fully detailed to the participants by the lecturer. Some of such un-clarified information includes the Grama Niladari (the lowest level institution in rural area) and its functions and the relationships between its parent institutions. Later some of the relative information about these institutions was given by Kurunegala Pradeshiya Sabha during our visit.

Objectives:

To provide an overview of the origin and evolution of Local Government System in Sri Lanka

Learning:

- British rulers introduced the existing local government system in Sri Lanka before the independence.
- Municipal Council and Urban Council ordinances which were introduced during colonial era have detailed guidelines, to elect the councils, and their authorities. The town and village council ordinances were abolished when the Pradeshiya Sabha act came into existence.
- The definition of ordinance, law and acts in Sri Lankan context are the following;
 - Ordinances are the written laws and regulations established by British colonial assembly during their ruling era before 1948.
 - Laws are passed by the constitutional assembly which consists of local as well as British legislators.
 - Acts are those which are passed by the constitutional parliament after the independence.

- Sri Lankan local governance system presently consists of 335 authorities. The institutions are; 23 Municipal councils (for each city level area), 41 Urban councils (for each heavily populated area), 271 Pradeshiya Sabhas (for each town level area). The other two tiers of governance are the Central Government and the provincial council which is excluded from the local government institutions.
- We have the question why the nine provincial councils are not included in the list of local government. We concluded that the nine provincial councils, “sub-national governments” were not local authorities.

Topic: “Powers and functions of Local Authorities in Sri Lanka”

Lecturer: Mr. K.A.D Gunasinhe, Senior Consultant, SLIDA

Introduction

The first afternoon session was also followed by Mr. Jayasundera’s brief introduction of the lecturer and his lecture.

The lecture was delivered fairly well and the participation of the participants was taken by the lecturer about some similarities and differences of the two countries in the field of local governance.

Objectives:

To sensitize about the powers and function assigned to local authorities in Sri Lanka.

Learning:

- The Municipal Council, Urban Council and Predeshiya Sabha are separated governing bodies in their respective levels. They all have authority to take Rates, Taxes, Fees to implement projects and etc. Though local authorities in Sri Lanka have the authority to collect taxes in their area, MIRA centrally collects such taxes in the Maldives.
- These local governments control administrative, and all matters relating to Public Health, Public Utilities and Public thoroughfares and generally with the protection and promotion of the comfort, convenience and welfare of the people and all facilities and services. We see it is very similar here in the Maldives as well.
- Council’s Staff recruitments, entering into contracts, holding all inquiries which the Mayor thinks are necessary for any of the purpose of the ordinance, are included among the general powers of the Local authorities.
- In Maldives, there are no influences of any elected or selected politicians in personnel affairs of a local council, as the Civil Service Commission holds constitutional authority for all such recruitments.

4th October 2011 (Day-2)

Topic: “Planning and Budgeting for Local Authorities” Sri Lanka Practices

Lecturer: Mr. Premasiri Hetiarchchi, Former Additional Secretary, Ministry of Provincial Councils and Local Government

Introduction:

Second day was also begun by Mr. Jayasundhera, introducing the lecturer Mr. P. Hetiarchchi, former additional secretary, Ministry of Provincial Councils and Local Government.

As it was about the financial structure and sharing the central budget to the local councils, there were many questions by the participants to clarify the Sri Lankan procedures.

The lecturer provided very detailed information needed by the participants.

Objectives:

To know the steps in planning and budgeting process adopted in local authorities.

Learning:

- Council Secretary is responsible for submitting the budget to the council.
- The budget needs the council’s approval before it goes to the provincial financial commission for discussion and then finally it is submitted to the Central Financial Ministry for the parliament’s approval.
- The budget always must be surplus.
- The budget must be based on the annual revenue and estimated annual expenditure of the council.
- The budget must include recurrent and capital expenditure.
- Main recurrent expenditures are wages, salaries, and operational cost which always come as Central Government grant. Nearly 40% of the total budget of the recurrent expenditure covers this item while another 60% is allocated to infrastructure development.
- Main capital expenditures include projects and assets.
- Financial transactions always have to go through the provincial financial commission. Councils cannot go directly to the Central Financial Ministry.

Topic: “Revenue collection for Local Government”

Lecturer: Mr. Premasiri Hetiarchchi, Former Additional Secretary, Ministry of Provincial Council and Local Government.

Objectives:

To understand the powers of collecting revenue for local authorities and the nature of revenue sources at local levels, in Sri Lanka.

Learning:

- According to the article 148 of the Sri Lankan constitution “Parliament shall have full control over public finance.”
- That is one of the constitutional rights that “no tax, rate or any other levy shall be imposed by any local authority or any other public authority, except by or under the authority of a law passed by parliament or of any existing law.” This is very similar to the Maldives.
- Revenue sources for local government are divided into two major categories. They are locally generated revenue and recurrent revenue.
- Locally generated revenue includes rates, taxes, rents, license fees, service charges, warrant costs, fines and other revenues.
- Capital grants include, for example, if a private organization needs to have a function like carnival, (not a fund raising event) the local council collects a certain amount from their total collection.
- Recurrent revenue is mainly government grant which is allocated as a sum, based on the population of the local area.

5th October 2011 (Day-3)

Topic: “Conflict Resolution in local government institution”.

Lecturer: Mr. Dhananjaya Hettiarachi , Consultant, SLIDA

Introduction

After a briefing by the Program coordinator Mr. W.A Jayasundera, the lecturer gave an introduction of him and asked every participant to do the same.

He had a different style of delivering lectures by which he acquired the attention of all participants to his talk. Compared to the other lecturers, he had a Western accent which grabbed the attention of all participants.

This was one of the most interesting sessions we had in SLIDA.

Objectives:

To know how to resolve the conflicts in local government authorities

Learning:

- He introduced a new theory about unlearning, learning and relearning things. According to his speech, it means to unlearn the bad things in order to be a good human being.
- To make us aware about conflict resolution, he used a set of questions. We were given a form to be filled individually. After filling out the form, everyone came to know that it is more important to target in overcoming the internal weaknesses rather than external weaknesses. Following are the questions inquired in the form.
 - The first is “what do I want?” For example, one may want to be “great”.
 - The second is “what do I want from others?” For example, one may want from others to respect.
 - The third is “what is my mission?” For example, one may want a mission statement like “I will be honest”.
- Later he told a story about an animal called “Koodoo” which lives in Ivory Coast. It was about the Ivoirian tribesmen killing this animal without touching or attacking but tactfully chasing it by

a very regular and systematic manner. To complete this process they spend a lot of time and energy. The theme of his story was based on the fact that options create conflicts. He made us believe that if the Ivorian tribe had anything to eat; they wouldn't have done that much of a hard work.

- One of the examples could be taken from SLIDA. For instance, any public servant of Sri Lanka must complete a diploma in public management course at SLIDA for one year, before joining the service. As the institution provides a set of basis knowledge to every student, they all have same beliefs and attitudes in service environment.

Topic: “Negotiation Skills”

Lecturer: Mr. Dhananjaya Hettiarachi, Consultant, SLIDA

Introduction

This lecture was given by the previous lecturer, Mr. Dhananjaya Hettiarachi. He used the same teaching methods but different techniques to attract the participants. He shared his own experience when he explained the liking principle. It was a negotiation by two people about a big contract. Instead of mentioning about the deal, they spoke about the meal, the wine which was served by the hotel and about playing golf, during the last session.

Great deal of technical words; principles were explained as many participants came up with questions about those new things.

All the participants enjoyed very much while he delivered the lecture.

Objectives

To know the negotiation process and develop negotiation skills.

Learning:

- During the session, the lecturer mainly spoke about persuasion skills.
- According to the lecturer, one of the most important points for negotiation is to follow the model “CLASSR”, which stands for, Commitment (by making the other person feeling guilty or praising), Liking principles (what are common likings and similarities of both), Authority (by showing the symbols of power), Scarcity (by being afraid of losing something which the person already have), Social proofing (comparing something relevant and proofing) and Reciprocation (giving something earlier voluntarily and asking for something later).
- For persuasion, thorough knowledge in different areas is vital.

6th October 2011 (Day-4)

Topic: “Performance Oriented Program, Monitoring and Evaluation”.

Lecturer: Mr. V. Sivagnanasothy, Secretary, Ministry of Traditional Industries & Small enterprises Development

Introduction:

The lecturer was a secretary (PS) of a Central Ministry. His lecture was based on three of the very famous methods which are Oregon Bench Mark, Minnesota Milestone and Virginia Score Card.

The lecturer spoke broadly about result-based management as well. He also explained the meaning of input, activity, output, outcomes and impacts. Some techniques for managing results were also elucidated.

He mentioned about various methods of monitoring such as KPI (Key Performance Indicators), several laws such as GPRA (Government Performance and Result Act), institutions such as MRC (Management Reform Council), and NARC (National Administration Reform Council).

Objectives:

To understand the various techniques used in monitoring performance.

Learning:

Though, the lecturer’s presentation was very good and the delivery was excellent, no handouts were given for later reference.

- Oregon Bench Mark, Minnesota Milestone and Virginia Score Card are very helpful tools that can be used in monitoring and evaluating performance.
- According to the lecturer, the most important component of a result is outcomes and impacts.
- Shared vision, clear goals and measurement of results must be included in any management for development.
- LFA (Logical Framework of Action) should be considered during the result based management process.

Topic: “Issues in Public Spending in Local Government”.

Lecturer: Mr. S. Mayaddune, Former Auditor General

Introduction:

The lecturer, Mr. Mayaddune was wearing traditional clothes and was bare feet. He conducted the lecture in a less interactive method whereby he was unable to gain attention from majority of the participants.

Objectives

To understand the nature of issues encountered in public spending in local government.

Learning

- According to the lecturer, Sri Lankan local authorities often violate even the constitutional requirements as well as other laws by ignoring the rates, taxes etc.

7th October 2011 (Day-5)

Topic: “Strategic Planning for local government”.

Lecturer: Mr. M. Thilakesiri, Senior consultant and Head of Post graduate school of SLIDA

Introduction

This lecturer used his excellent teaching skills to make all the participants aware about the area of discussion. He divided the participants into three groups and inquired to list out the definitions of strategic planning as per the participant’s knowledge. The list of definitions was displayed on the white board and repeated definitions were identified and omitted.

The rest of the lecture was based on the definitions forwarded by the participants.

All the participants were involved with the lecturer’s activities as he delivered the lecture in a very interesting and interactive mode.

Objectives

To understand the strategic management principles used in the local government sector.

Learning:

- According to the lecturer, strategic planning is a comprehensive set of activities or action developed by strategists to match the organizational internal environment and external environment.
- If we develop a strategic plan for the local government sector, we have to ask five questions to ourselves;
 - Where have we been?
 - Where are we now?
 - Where do we want go?
 - Where shall we go?
 - And how can we go there?
- Planning is an intellectual thinking process. It is preparing for the day after tomorrow.
- He described the importance of planning by saying that if you don’t plan to develop, you are planning to fail. So fail to plan means plan to fail, he said.

Topic: “Application of Strategic Planning for local government”.

Lecturer: Mr. M. Thilakesiri, Senior Consultant and Head of Post Graduate School of SLIDA.

Introduction

The lecture was given by the previous lecturer, Mr. M. Thilakesiri.

Objectives

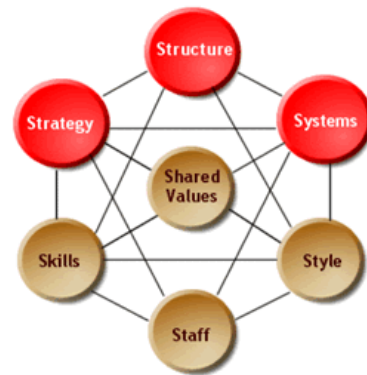
To understand the practical application of strategic management principles used in the local government sector.

Learning

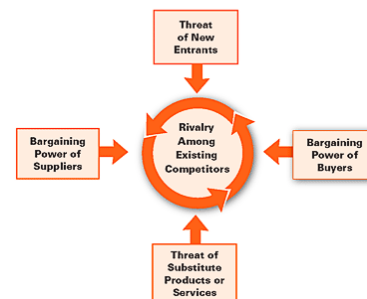
- He introduced Seven M's (Money, Machine, Men, Market, Materials, Measurements and Methods), seven S's as well as PESTEL and five forces.



- He listed the components of a strategic plan as;
 - Vision, mission, trust area, baseline, needs, targets, strategies, budget, evaluation procedures, result measurements and reporting system.



The Five Forces That Shape Industry Competition



Topic: “Strengthening Fiscal Policy, Resource Mobilization and Public Expenditure Management”.

Lecturer: Mr. Mr. Asoka Gunawardhane, Former Chairman, Finance Commission of Sri Lanka,

Introduction

The lecture was given by our first lecturer, Mr. Asoka Gunawardhane. This was not an interactive session, hence the participation in discussion was minimal.

Objectives

To know the nature of fiscal devolution in Sri Lanka and resource mobilization and public expenditure management at sub national levels.

Learning

- Local councils always to submit budgets through financial commissions of the provincial council.
- Local councils cannot submit deficit budgets. Their budget always must be surplus.
- Financial transactions go to the central government through the provincial financial commission.

11th October 2011 (Day-9)

Topic: “Change Management Principles”.

Lecturer: Dr. I.H.K Mahanama – Senior Consultant of SLIDA

Introduction

Dr. I.H.K Mahanama’s focus of the lecture was more on theory of change management principles. Following was a practical experience by visiting to the Lanka hospital to gather further insight of the changes experienced by the management of the hospital.

Objectives

To understand the change management process.

Learning

- The lecture started with the discussion on why changes occur and the participants shared their experience. He also shared his experiences and highlighted the theoretical point of change in management principles.
- He elaborated the change in management and explained it by stressing the following points;
 - Pressure from the customer, new technology, new products, service and imposed changes.
 - One of the most important point of the lecture was stressed the new model of change management. It was ADKAR model.
 - ▽ Awareness of the change
 - ▽ Desire to participate and support the change
 - ▽ Knowledge of how the changes
 - ▽ Ability to implement the change on a day to day basis
 - ▽ Reinforcement to keep the change in place.

Topic: “Outcome oriented local program Development, Management and Decision Making”

Lecturer: Mr. Y. Ratnayake – Senior Management Consultant

Objectives

To gain international exposure on outcome oriented local development, management and decision making.

Learning

- We were able to recognize the most important areas to concentrate when running outcome oriented local programme in development management. They are the need of people, problems faced by the people and the solution for the problems.
- The examples highlighted by the lecturer were very much relevant to the Maldives. When the projects were carried out without proper research then the outcome will produce bad impacts.
- To summarize the session, the following points were highlighted;
 - Project management
 - Project identification
 - Revenue collection
 - Administration of the staff.
 - Resources identification.
 - Partnership with private sector
 - Customer care and service quality.
 - Program management.

13th October 2011 (Day-11)

Topic: “Result Oriented Leadership”

Lecture: Mr. B. Wijayaratne director/SLIDA

Objectives

To understand the possible strategies to introduce changes in the government sector.

Learning

- The lecture raised a very important question at the beginning of the lecture; what is the new public management? And what is the new public new administration? Being Civil Service ZV’s, it is an extremely eye opening question for us. We shared our ideas and he thoroughly explained the difference between both administration and the management.
 - Administration is very rule based and controlled, but the management is more result based oriented activity. We came to know the role of us very clearly, towards the result oriented leadership.
- Another important aspect of this session was how to change the institution for better results. The most basic principle is to see as others see and do different. He also highlighted that if it’s more concrete it’s easier to change and if it’s less concrete, it’s difficult to change. For instance, organizational culture.
- Lecture emphasized on the quality of leader, leader strive, leader director, popular, believe and leader questions. And the types of leaders like Autocratic, democratic, situation leader and more.
- Lecturer shared his successful experience as a public service officer on how he transformed a corrupted organization to an outstanding organization. He stated that he used the same strategy that he taught us; seeing as others see and doing different. He used the management theory to develop that organization and revolutionized the entire environment of the organization.
- At the end of his lecture we understood that the clear vision and strive forwardness of a leader can do wonders.

Topic: “Practice of human rights in local government”.

Lecture: Ms. Samantha Jayamanne, Director

Objectives

To understand the practice of human rights principles in local government sector.

Learning

- At the beginning she brainstormed which gained our interest towards the lecture. We discussed on the meaning of human rights and why it is important.
- She briefly explained the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in her presentation. Since Sri Lanka was unable to implement it well, they’re graded as B. Likewise, Maldives is also in B grade as reservation of some numbers in UDHR.
- As the local government has to deliver the public health facilities and drinking water. They are very important human right so that local government has guaranteed the services are provided equally. If not the people can report the Human right commission in Sri Lanka to investigate.
- The hard talk between lecturer and us arouse the issues in human rights in both countries, Sri Lanka and Maldives. The main concern was because of the way human rights is being promoted, people are losing their values in the society.

14th October 2011 (Day-12)

Topic: “Practice of good governance principles in local government and Anti-corruption strategic for local government”.

Lecturer: Mr. W.A Jayasundera, Senior Consultant / SLIDA.

Objectives

- To understand the good governance principle and their practice in local government sector.
- To know the anti-corruption strategies adopted by the local government institutions.

Learning

- This was an incredibly inspiring session. The way the lecture room was arranged was impressive. The lecturer used a ball as a token making every participant speak about the topic.
- When we define the good governance he used key words to explain the good governance in local authority. It encompasses the following domains;
 - Political governance;
 - Economic governance;
 - Civic governance
- According to him, good governance is a debatable topic, but mostly it includes the following key principles;
 - Accountability;
 - Transparency;
 - Participation;
 - Shaping the direction of the Nation
- At the end of the session, we understood that the good governance in local authority will strengthen democracy, promote inclusive growth of country, change the role of Government and combat with corruption.

- The second important topic of this session is anti-corruption. The lecture highlighted on the different kind of corruption and its bad impact to the nation. Main forms of corruption are given below;
 - Bribery/kickbacks - Gratification
 - Embezzlement – Misappropriation
 - Fraud – Concealment of material facts for benefit
 - Extortion – Compelling action by illegal means – by force
 - Nepotism – Bestowal of official favors on relations etc.
 - Conflict of Interest – Exploiting competing interests etc.
 - Insider dealings – Abuse of privileged information

- We recognized the 11 main pillars of anti-corruption. So that we have ensured that we are maintaining those pillars. The pillars are bases on public awareness and societal values.

- We had a thorough discussion with lecture regarding the corruptions in both countries. We came to a mutual agreement that the political corruption is the dangerous and harmful. It is not illuminate easily such buying votes and selling votes.

Sri Lanka Parliament House

4th October 2011, 14:00–17:00hrs.

Introduction

- Sri Lanka Institute of Development Administration (SLIDA) arranged a visit to Sri Lankan Parliament House for the participants on 4th October 2011, as an event of the course schedule.
- Course participants were received by the Director of Administration and his staff of the Parliament House.
- The visitors were given detailed information regarding the following topics.
 - Brief history of the existing Parliament House as well as that of the previous building.
 - How the legislative affairs of Sri Lanka, functioned so far.
 - The local government related ordinances, acts and bi-laws.
 - Processes and procedures of the meetings and sessions of the formal and informal meetings as well as committee meetings.
 - Administrative system of the house.
 - Existing facilities and services for the MPs.
 - Some important halls, rooms and areas of the building including the Chamber were open to visitors with a guide who thoroughly explained the use of them.

Objectives

To be able to identify the differences between the Maldivian and Sri Lankan legislative systems mainly in the area of local governance as the legislative function is essential to invent and change any system of governance in a country.

Learning

- Sri Lankan parliament house is an important land mark of the state. Its location, design, size and the extreme care taken by the authorities clearly shows its supremacy.
- The house is situated in a very high security area encircled by a river. Outsiders are not allowed to enter with devices such as cameras or cell-phones. All vehicles are checked and screened from a very far distance. Visitors has to get through special security doors and is individually checked before entering. Though a terrorist attack took place there during early eighties, we observed the level of security as the highest ever seen.

- The house is not only built for meetings, but has parliamentary monuments, archives and photo galleries of the former parliamentarians, some of whom served during the colonial era.
- Arrangements are done to keep the opposition and ruling MPs separated in the main meetings. This is a very good model for the Maldives because it can provide the MPs with great deal of privacy and togetherness with their colleagues.
- The House provides parliamentary education to students in a regular basis by the demand of schools and colleges. One of such session was conducted at the Chamber with the school children.
- As the house is systematically open especially for students, it is very useful for participants to visit the house to get relevant information.

Kolonnawa Urban Council

5th October 2011, 14:00 – 17:00 hrs

Introduction

- Kolonnawa Urban Council is the first local government authority we visit. Though the council was dismissed for the forthcoming election, the council secretary managed everything in an excellent manner with the available resources and facilities.
- We were received by the council secretary and her staff. A bundle of beetle leaf was offered as a welcome indicating their tradition.
- Before the presentation, the national anthem of both the countries was played but due to an error, there was some other song in place of the Maldivian national anthem.
- During and after the presentation, we were given opportunities to ask questions about the interesting topics which are relevant to the council's administrative issues.
- The Council Secretary gave a briefing on the following;
 - Plan of the Kolonnawa city, the council's vision and mission.
 - Brief history of Kolonnawa.
 - The administration setup, organization chart, functions, income and expenditure of the council.
 - Nature of the council meetings and their sequence.
 - The roll and duties of the council secretary.

Objectives

To know and understand the functions and duties of an urban council.

Learning

- The council was temporarily headed by the Council Secretary as the Council was dissolved to conduct the council election in accordance with the Urban Council ordinance.
- The physical facilities of the council need a lot of improvement as there was minimal maintenance during the recent years.
- Administrative and managerial works were mostly done manually as there were no enough computers available.

- Most of the staff was not aware of the mission and the vision of the council, as they had not been taught to the staff.
- According to the presentation more than 59% of the annual budget depends on the central government grant which mostly were spent on office management and development activities. The rest of the budget was spent on maintaining public health and utility services.
- Utility services which are obligatory for the council has not been provided efficiently due to the lack of funding.
- Water and electricity services are being provided by the Central Government though it is listed among the duties of the urban council.
- Kolonnawa Urban Council own a newly built community centre which is being used to generate income for the council as well as its own needs.

Department of Election

6th October 2011

Introduction

- The Commissioner of Elections of Sri Lanka invited us to his department through SLIDA.
- All the participants were received by the Commissioner, his colleagues and staff. After a brief introduction of the participants and his staff, one of his advisors gave a lengthy and very detailed presentation about the local election process in Sri Lanka. During the presentation, refreshment was served.
- After the presentation the Commissioner again met us in his office and hosted a dinner at the refreshment hall of the Department.

Objectives

To understand the roll and the authority of the Commissioner of Elections during the process of Local Authority Elections.

Learning

- Election officers are selected among public servants by the Elections Commissioner. When an election date is set, election officers will be selected and trained.
- All the complaints are to be received by the Department of Elections where police and other relative authorities have desks deployed there under the direct supervision of the Commissioner.
- Elections Commissioner is appointed directly by the President while assistant Commissioners are from the Public Service.
- Postal voting system exists in which a person can apply to get the ballot paper through and that will be sent back through the post to their registered constituency.
- There is a special auditorium for meetings with political parties.

Observation of Colombo Municipal Council Election

8th October 2011

A pair was assigned with an ARO (Assistant Returning Officers) and travelled to different polling stations to observe and understand the practical process of voting and we witnessed the counting process too. We were given a special permission by the Commissioner so that we can enter all premises of the stations. We observed repetitive steps as well as new techniques that could save time and money.

Kandy Visit

9th – 10th October 2011

Introduction

Kandy city lies in the midst of the hills of Sri Lanka, and it has a very different climate and scenery. The purpose of our visit is to visit to North West Provincial Council in Kandy.



Objectives

To see a function and operation of a provincial council, Pradeshiya Sabha (Village Council) and observe a totally different type of environment from the home country.

Elephant orphanage

Introduction

Pinnawala Elephant Orphanage which started in 1972 is a branch of the Department of Zoology of Sri Lankan government. Now it is a “profit making setup” as a lot of guests come to see baby jumbos wandering around their cramped foster home or bottle fed and bathed by their human foster fathers.



At Pinnawala, about 90Km from Colombo towards Kandy is the home to 60 or more elephant orphans. A place you will really enjoy and never forget. Most orphans are accustomed to their curious human visitors. The “Elephant Orphanage” was relocated to the present site in 1975. Bathing time at Ma Oya just in front of the orphanage is sharp at 10.00am and 2.00pm.

Learning

- Elephants could attract people as they are being visited by hundreds every day. There were a lot of European and Asian guests to see the elephant bathing.
- Elephant dung is being used to make paper. It is one of the many recycling and environment friendly programs that are initiated by the people of Pinnawala area.
- Various jobs and other sources of income existed in the area, after the orphanage’s existence.
- Similar activities such as dolphin parks could be established in many areas in the Maldives.

LUCKYLAND Super Spices Garden

9th October 2011

Introduction

One the way to Kandy from Colombo, we stopped at Luckyland Super Spices Garden where different varieties of plants, vines and trees are grown for traditional medicine and other herbal treatments.



We were received by a university professor for traditional healing. During a tour to the areas where the most important varieties are grown, he elucidated us on the use of those as well as the scientific and common names of them.

Later, each of us was given a cup of herbal tea before briefed us about the special Ayurvedic treatments made for business use. He provided us with a promoting leaflet.

Some of us were offered for his free massage treatment while he was briefing.

Objectives

To understand the value of Ayurvedic medicine.

Learning

- Revitalization of traditional medicine is seen in the garden.
- Many different trees which bear common fruit to us are also seen.
- Importance of natural traditional medicine is strongly defined and their use is highly publicized in the papers distributed. By the attraction of the papers and his briefing a number of his products were sold to us.

Royal Botanic Garden

9th October 2011, 14:00 hrs

Introduction

Development of floriculture and amenity horticulture being among one of its prime objectives, Royal Botanic Garden in Peradeniya still remains so fantastically attracted to over 1.2 million visitors per annum, since 1371 when king Wickramabahu III kept the court at Peradeniya near Mahaveli Ganga. Occupying the land area of 59 hectors; the garden is beautified by over 4000 species of under cultivation.



Learning

- It is because of the creative thinking and hard work of the ancient British and Sri Lankan people that such a fantastic park even without much technology and equipments exists.
- Amazing natural beauty and the extraordinary care provided by the authorities for the maintenance of the garden.
- The need for such beautiful gardens for the happiness and well being of the society.
- Similarly, underwater gardens and its natural surrounding could possibly be attracted in Maldivian seas, lagoons and beaches.

North West Provincial Council, Kandy

10th October 2011



Introduction

North West Provincial Council (NWP) is one of the nine provincial governments in Sri Lanka. The headquarters of this sub-national government is situated in Kandy. This province consists of two districts, Kurunegala and Puttalam. NWP is the 4th biggest province with a population of 2,169,892 that is 11.61% of the total population of the country.

Objectives

- To observe the provincial council operations.
- To understand provincial law making setup and physical facilities.

Learning

- The office building has rooms for provincial parliament, chief minister and other ministers.
- The administrative setup includes a meeting hall where we were given a presentation by the Council Secretary accompanied by all head of departments.
- The presentation delivered by the secretary included the following items;
 - Authority hierarchy and connectivity of the different level of administration in provincial and other levels of governance.
 - Legal mandate of the provincial council.
 - Organization structure of the Department of Local Government.
 - Definition of “devolution” and its instruments in Sri Lankan context.
 - Definition of “provincial council” in Sri Lanka.
 - Objectives of the provincial councils.
 - Provincial law-making process and related national legislations.
 - Major functions of the Provincial Council Act.

- Major differences between the Central Government and the Sub-national or Provincial Government.
- Provisions of the 13th constitutional amendment which defines the provincial councils and mandates.
- Three lists of areas identified by the ninth schedule of the constitution:
 - ▽ List – 1: The Provincial Councils List,
 - ▽ List – 2: The Reserved List
 - ▽ List – 3: The concurrent List
- Provincial institutions their mandates within the Province.
- Revenue collection and expenditure system of various sectors of the province.
- Quality of physical facilities and office environment.

Kurunegala Pradeshiya Sabha

10th October 2011

Introduction

Kurunegala Pradeshiya Sabha is one of the twenty nine Pradeshiya Sabhas of North West Province. It has relatively the same mandate as an island council in the Maldives.



The chairman of the Kurunegala Pradeshiya Sabha council Mr. Patrick Karunasinghe is the only elected person that we met during the visit. Hon. Chairman gave us a warm welcome and he personally involved in all events of our visit to Kurunegala.

Objectives

To observe the Pradeshiya Sabha council operation and physical facilities.

Learning

- The Chairman of the Pradeshiya Sabha made an astonishing welcome event with special canvas hanging outside the office building.
- The Chairman gave a welcome speech in local Sinhala language that was translated to English right away by his interpreter. He highlighted the close and historical relationships between Sri Lanka and the Maldives.
- Two days of the week are public days on which all female staff wear the same color clothes to identify that they as well as their male colleagues are open to the public for service delivery. The staff is to be engaged with the rest of the administrative functions on the remaining three weekdays.
- A special presentation was displayed for our visit in which great deal of information about the Pradeshiya Sabha and its management functions were given in detail.
- Though the Physical facilities and office environment of Kurunegala Pradeshiya Sabha was not as much developed as the other local authorities, the system of management was much better.

Lanka Hospitals

Introduction

Lanka Hospital previously known as Apollo Hospital of Sri Lanka became one of the booming public own private institutions under the concept of public private partnership program.



Our team was received by a high level management staff, and guided to the hospital auditorium where the vision, mission and the song of the hospital was played.

After a brief introduction, the director responsible for management answered the questions raised by our team members.

After refreshment, a tour of the key areas of the hospital was conducted by the director explaining the change they have made to overcome identified problems in each area of management. Two sister-in-charges helped the director with this event.

Objectives

To observe and understand the progress and its reasons after the management change from Apollo Hospital's standard formula of service to the Japanese model "Kai-Zen".

Learning

- Vision and mission are displayed almost everywhere in the hospital building and its premises.
- It has a slogan, "care and cure" and a song which is filmed as they are on the mission, by group famous singers, actors and their own staff covering all areas of service. Within the audio visual clip, the hospital's capability and quality is shown.
- Previously, the hospital was a highly subsidized public institution, but now it is a profit making public private partnership establishment. It made a profit of Rp. 130 million last year.
- The result is not by the change of ownership but by the change of the management.
- Previously, consultants are available only through medical officers but now the role of the medical officer is reduced.
- A brand name itself does not work all the times but a quality an effective service is rather more effective in business.

- “Kai-Zen” principles are being applied as the model of the management system.
- As our health system is being criticized heavily by the internal as well as the external stakeholders after decentralization, this institution can be a good example for relevant authorities of Maldives to gain knowledge to regain their reputation. For that, the director of this hospital could possibly be a consultant.

Community Development Council, Gauthamipura, Colombo

12th October 2011

Introduction

Community Development Council (CDC) is a community based private organization which mobilizes people to solve their own problems by themselves on the principles of participatory development methodologies.

This methodology is practiced in several countries including India, Pakistan, and Indonesia. The main theory is to pool up the community potentials and systematically use for individual development purposes by having the responsibility as an organized group.



Objectives

Observe and understand the importance of an ongoing community development program in collaboration with local community and a local authority.

Learning

- Within city areas, still there are pockets (called under-served areas) which need basic facilities such as water and sewerage.
- Local councils in Sri Lanka still fail to provide all basic needs of their citizens. The helping hands of the NGOs and cooperation of the needy are very essential to overcome basic issues.
- Donor countries and interested foreign agencies help to solve this kind of issues if the beneficiaries cooperate with their systems. This business needs involvement of other parties as well as the government representatives as the use of money and its value is to be guaranteed.
- CDC managed to have funds from Canadian agency through CLAF Net (an umbrella of NGOs) and established a sewerage system which could connect all the households of the area to the existing sewerage pipeline of Colombo.
- The CDC also has a small setup to manage garbage which is produced within the area.
- A primary school facility is provided for the children by this CDC with other funding agencies.

Solid Waste Management Division, Colombo Municipal Council

12th October 2011



Introduction

The visit was organized by SLIDA in cooperation with Colombo Municipal Council. A representative and two photographers were always around us taking photographs almost every step of us.

Objectives

To see a local government function in practice.

Learning

- Solid waste of Colombo is to be managed by Colombo Municipal Council but the government has taken control of it after dissolving the Council.
- Intake facility is provided to the main street from collecting points to get the garbage easily.
- Different divisions are made for different types of garbage at the collecting points.
- Sorting of garbage was done manually.
- No safety measures were taken during the manual sorting procedure.
- Bags for different types of garbage are freely distributed to the households. The need of the bags is identified by printing a brief instruction on each bag.
- Sorting laborers are working as member of the Municipal Council staff on salary basis.
- It is said that the most households sort out the types of garbage according to the instructions.
- For the garbage disposal, US\$ 600/- are being spent every month while US\$ 400/- are being received as an income. Hence they operate on US\$ 200/- loss every month.
- Recyclables are collected from the garbage and sold for reprocessing. This model could be possible in the Maldives as well.

CLAF Net Secretariat, SEVANANTHA Urban Resource Centre, Colombo

12th October 2011



Introduction

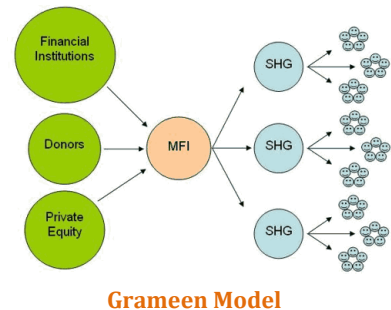
We were invited to SEVANANTHA Urban Resource Centre which is the Secretariat of CLAF Net.

Objectives

To understand some of the functions of the NGO.

Learning

- This NGO mostly applies Grameen model in dealing with its clients and other stakeholders. This model could also be practiced in Maldives.
- The NGO always need to complete the project rather than getting the loans back on time.
- This NGO plays the role of a custodian for the Woman's bank.
- There are certain rules and regulations to which any community member has to apply when demanding for a loan.



Grameen Model

Colombo Municipal Council

12th October 2011

Introduction

The last local government authority we visited was Colombo Municipal Council, the town hall. It is a very large and beautiful building shaped as a model of the Capital Hill or the parliament house of The United States.



Before we reached the building, we saw our national flag waving in front of the building as well as many other areas of the council premises, side by side with the Sri Lankan flag. It gave us a special privilege to have such a recognition which surprised us all.

Since there was a special engagement at a central ministry, the Special Commissioner who heads the council was unable to be present at the function, the Municipal Commissioner Ms. Jayavardhana was in-charge of the staff. We were very happy to receive a red carpet welcome at the council.

The team then was proceeded in to the meeting hall where the council regularly has their formal meetings. Though the physical structure and the surroundings of the hall is very old fashioned, their treatment was very modern and formal. All head of departments were present while we were occupying the seats which regularly the council members use during their formal meetings. The Municipal Commissioner was seated as the chair and her assistant sat aside.

One of the assistant commissioners opened the meeting according to the agenda, which was followed by the Madam Commissioner's welcome address in which she has praised us for visiting there and made a lot of positive comments about our country.

A very detailed presentation was displayed by the head of financial department and the floor was open for questions.



Before beginning of the questioning, Mr. Jihad thanked on behalf of our team, for the very warm and unexpected welcome from the Council.

After the session, there was a special memorable token presented to our team by the council, forwarded by Madam Commissioner and

received by Mr. Jihad.

Before we left, there was refreshment at the formal refreshment room. During this event, there was a great deal of exchange of information and experiences between the guests and the hosts.

Objectives

To observe the municipal council operation setup, administration and physical facilities.

Learning

- In the process of service delivery, the inhabitants of the tenant gardens in Colombo city are still not been recognized as the ordinary citizens, as one of the assistant commissioner said that they have no plan to provide the equal service to those who are living on under-served areas.
- The public service staff are said to be more mission oriented than to favor any political interest. This is witnessed by their arrangements and coordination with the present presidential appointee and the newly elected mayor who belongs to the opposition party. We hope to have a healthy working environment as such in our offices whereby the staff are not disturbed by any political influence.
- All the projects of the council are financed by the council revenue while the grant of the central government is used only for the salary of the staff.
- If such a rating system is introduced for Male' City Council, it could be self sufficient.

Welcome dinner

There was a very special dinner at Agra restaurant in Colombo arranged by SLIDA to welcome us to Sri Lanka on 3rd October. The Chairman of the Civil Service Commission Mr. Mohamed Fahmy Hassan and some members of the senior management of SLIDA were present along with the secretary responsible for public administration affairs at the Ministry of Public Administration and Home Affairs in Sri Lanka. During the dinner, a group of musicians played a very interesting and fantastic traditional music.

Welcoming dinner, by the H.E High Commissioner of the Maldives to Sri Lanka

H.E High Commissioner Mr. Hussain Shihab invited us to his official residence when he attended the course commencing ceremony.

A senior officer of the High Commission received us at the residence and guided us to the high commissioner. Later we had dinner with him and his residing family members as well as the staff of the high commission.

During the dinner we had exchanged many ideas regarding the course and some other matters related to the high commission. According to Mr. Shihab there are more than 3000 Maldivians residing in Sri Lanka for different purposes.

Before leaving the high commission, we thanked him as well as to our government for the opportunity given by facilitating CSC for this course and for his invitation as well.

Farewell dinner

SLIDA arranged a farewell dinner for us at the Navy Restaurant in the evening on 13th October. There was a dance item in which everyone had to join after the dinner. That was very memorable and unforgettable gathering as everyone cooperated in the event.

Recommendation

Generally, the participants are all satisfied with the program and all agreed that the training program met their expectations. In this training program all participants have gathered vast number of knowledge and ideas. Most of the knowledge and experiences can be used in their daily work in order to make the councils more effective and efficient. So participants recommended that CSC should conduct this training program again in the future to other ZV officers and other top level staff of the councils.

It was also recommended to lengthen the training period to make it more effective; all the contents of training were interesting, relevant, and important but the time allocated was not enough to cover it all adequately. More practical and class exercises and exposure visits were suggested. Furthermore they recommended to include more review sessions after each day to make the participants more attentive and serious. Furthermore, it will help the participants to know the depth of the topics covered.

Moreover, the whole program was conducted in seminar style and there was not much interaction between the resource person and the participants. As a result, some sessions were boring and the information that participants got from those sessions were very few, due to lack of concentration. So if CSC is going to conduct another program, participants recommended to design the training program more interactive. Communication between participants and the resource persons on the topics needs to be continued for the further support and backstopping.

Participants also recommended that the resource person's presentation should be given before starting the session. Therefore everybody can be read its contents and will be able to prepare for more comments during and after the session.

The lecture on Strategic Planning and lecture on Negotiation Skill and Conflict resolution in local government benefited the participants and they were very much satisfied on both presentations. The resource persons (Mr. M. Thilakesiri and Mr. Dhananjaya Hettiarachi) gave a very good presentation on those topics respectively. Participants recommend that CSC should invite these two resource persons if CSC is conducting any workshop/seminar on that area.

In addition, participants highly recommended that CSC should request Councils to develop and place their mission and vision statement in the council where everybody can see it. As a result everybody knows where their focus should be and it will also motivate and inspire the staffs to work towards it.

Conclusion

In a nutshell, the participants gained international exposure, understanding the evolution and administrative structure of local government system in Sri Lanka. At the end of the training program, participants understood the strategic management processes espoused by local government institutions and the planning and budgeting process adopted by the local authorities. The participants acquired a clear knowledge on the best practices comprehending the planning and change management practices, how to deal with conflict resolution and negotiation. Thus, the customized training program has achieved the expected knowledge and experiences from a different context of local governance.