



Board of Social Responsibility Church of Ceylon Diocese of Colombo

Mandate

of the Diocesan Committee for Social Action:

- Study and Reflection on the Social Issues and needs in the light of Christian Principles and Gospel Values.

History...

Set up by resolution in Council in 1946 as “Diocesan Committee for Study and Social Action” - DCSSA

Emphasis in early days was on study, publishing of booklets and lectures on social topics, visiting parishes, encouraging them to study and respond to social needs.

Organizational Land marks

- 1990 - The BSR is “ born ” by decision of DCSSA committee
- 2004 - Tsunami Relief and Rehabilitation Desk was set up.
- 2006 Dec. - R & R Desk wound up and balance work transferred to BSR.
- The BSR was decentralized in 2013 and Regional BSRs were set up under the leadership of Archdeacons and Regional boards.



BSR Objective

To provide considered guidance to the members of the Church and to suggest action which might be taken by them individually, Parishes, local Organizations and the Diocese....

Present Mission of the BSR

The core mission of the BSR is in the following areas:

1. Awareness Building and Training
2. Emergency Disaster Response
3. Rehabilitation and Development
4. Education
5. Advocacy

Major programs

- Assistance to Tsunami victims through emergency relief, Housing, livelihood and psycho-social care.
- Assistance provided to War victims through emergency relief, housing, livelihood, psycho-social care and community development.
- Assistance to victims affected by natural disasters.
- Disaster Risk Reduction capacity building program to minimize impacts of disasters and enhance capacity of the Diocese to respond and manage disasters.
- Education for Children through Scholarships and coaching classes.
- Awareness programs on various social issues prevailing in the community.
- Environment programs to help create an environmentally friendly Church and Communities.



Regional Boards of Social Responsibility

The BSR was de-centralized in April, 2013 so as to make its work more efficient and specially to provide rapid and effective relief during emergencies. The de-centralized boards are known as “**Regional BSRs**”, and there are four of these; Colombo South (including the Galle Archdeaconary), Colombo North and Nuwara Eliya (combining the Eastern province and N’eliya) and the Northern BSR. All emergency relief activities, local projects and programs are carried out by the Regional BSRs while the Centre BSR does National level programs, including training and also coordinates the activities of the regions. The Centre intervenes in Disaster related activities only in the case of major incidents such as the recent floods in May.

Regional BSR programs....

Awareness

The Regional BSRs have been working to create awareness among Adults, Children, parents and Churches on a number of social concerns and issues which affect our communities such as child abuse, women’s right, parenting, social media, environment, good governance and HIV Aids.

Education

Educational assistance to selected school children and University students by way of donations of books and stationary, coaching classes and scholarships. Children have been identified based on abilities, and income levels.

Livelihood

Selected low income families have been supported with livelihood assistance to enhance their family incomes enabling better nutrition and assisting children to pursue their studies.

Emergency disaster response

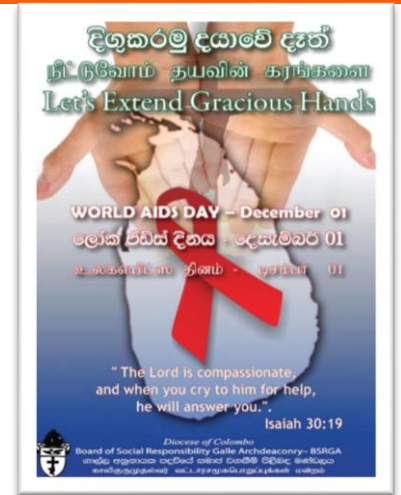
The RBSRs have been assisting communities during localized disasters according to their capacities. The response has been through providing emergency food items, non-food relief and assistance for recovery. The Central BSR supports relief assistance if this exceeds the capacity and resources of the RBSRs.

Disaster Risk Reduction

A group of Diocese of Colombo clergy and laity followed a 2 year comprehensive “Training of Trainers” program on Disaster Risk Reduction. The program was facilitated by expertise from CASA India, a specialized organization in Development and DRR in India. This group followed up by training a second group in the Diocese of Colombo, in order to equip and build capacity on DRR within the Diocese.

The diocese thus has trained personnel in the Regions to assist the Centre and Regional BSRs in building capacities as well as to act as responders during disasters. The Diocese has witnessed the success of this initiative in disaster management in a Church context and has now been able to take it to a further level.

The Church of Ceylon – Diocese of Colombo and National Christian Council of Sri Lanka jointly commenced a Disaster Risk Reduction capacity building program for NCCSL constituent members. this year. The focus of the programme is to create awareness and equip members and communities on Disaster preparedness and Management in order to minimize the risks and the effects of disaster. The capacity building program includes Regional trainings, formation of Disaster management committees and regional programs and activities related to disaster management. In the first phase of the programme, there will trainings at regional level to educate and enhance skills of the Clergy and laity on disaster preparedness and response management.



More information

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