

Narrative Report

Dialogue series towards Reconciliation and Nonrecurrence

ASSOCIATION OF WAR AFFECTED WOMEN | 2023

“A Sri Lanka where every individual can live peacefully with dignity, trust and no fear or suspicion, and enjoy equal rights”

(VISION FOR SRI LANKA 2035)

The Association of War Affected Women (AWAW) facilitated a dialogue between select members of the Tamil Diaspora and the Buddhist monks over three days (24-26 April 2023) in Nagarkot, Nepal. Despite the recognized importance of these two groups for peace and reconciliation in Sri Lanka, no entity, government or non-government, has demonstrated the ability to bring these two groups together thus far. The AWAW successfully brought these diverse groups together, creating history and providing them with the opportunity to get to know each other, build trust and friendship, and reduce the gap in misperceptions and misunderstandings. But more importantly, AWAW provided the space for these two groups to own the process, setting their agenda and the pace of future engagement.

Objectives

The overall objectives of the initially proposed series of dialogues were

- Better understanding between the Diaspora and the Buddhist monks on the genuine grievances faced by the people of North and East and the challenges that exist in addressing them
- Joint action through advocacy and lobbying as a collective to address the root causes of the conflict, initially, through the full implementation of the 13th Amendment to the Constitution.
- Explore a dialogue for options for the full participation of all communities in the governance of Sri Lanka.

The overarching goal of the project was:

New opportunities for a genuine reconciliation process are utilized and expanded.

Though the proposal initially envisaged three rounds of dialogues, each one building on the other, funding was made available only for the first round of dialogue. This narrative report covers the conduct of the first dialogue that was facilitated by the Association of War Affected Women (AWAW) in Nagarkot, Nepal, over three days (24-26 April 2023).

In the first round, we expected to

- i) Enable the participants to get to know each other better, building upon the Zoom meetings.
- ii) Understand the positions and situations that each one comes from and the rationales behind each of them.
- iii) Understand the specific issues the diaspora faced in Sri Lanka and the change in the ground.
- iv) Build synergies upon small agreements through a free flow of ideas, aspirations, and positions.
- v) Have breakout sessions as well innovative methods where the participants who come from two sides of a protracted and one of the most brutal war of 27 years will be able to meet and come to an agreement to work together.

Summary of Activities and Results

There have been previous dialogues that have engaged the diaspora or the monks. However, none of these dialogues has attempted to bring the monks and the diaspora together, primarily due to their lack of access to both groups and also the reluctance of both groups to be seen in the presence of the other. Years of conflict had ensured that these two influential groups remained separate, furthering their mistrust and antagonism. In addition, very few organizations, such as the AWAW, enjoy the credibility and trust of these extremely powerful and important actors. Finally, the confluence of COVID-19, global economic slowdown, the political mismanagement of the economy, *Aragalaya* and the reawakening of the political youth, and the new government have provided fresh impetus and urgency among key stakeholders to revisit long overdue reconciliation. A small window of opportunity opened up to bring key members of the Tamil diaspora and senior monks from three important sects, and AWAW took the lead in bringing them together.

PREPARATORY PHASE

In preparation for the dialogue, AWAW undertook several rounds of consultations among key stakeholders and experts. Given the historical significance and sensitivity surrounding the dialogue, it was absolutely critical that every effort had to be made to ensure the dialogue was well planned, the agenda well structured, the methodology for engagement was meticulously chosen, the facilitators and rapporteur were carefully picked, the apt venue selected, and discretion maintained throughout the process.

AWAW set up a Core Group, which included one representative each from the Tamil diaspora and the Buddhist monks. The Core Group also included the Project Coordinator, the facilitators, and the Rapporteur. A WhatsApp group was created to facilitate communication between them. The Core Group met at regular intervals to plan for the dialogue. The Project Coordinator ensured that *there was greater transparency, inclusivity, and ease of interaction right from the planning stage (Result #1)*.

Preliminary discussions on each group's motivation for the dialogue were facilitated. Each group was also individually encouraged to have their respective rounds of discussions to identify their list of delegates for the dialogue. A few weeks before the dialogue, each group shared their list, along with a brief delegate profile. (See Appendix A for the list of delegates from the Tamil diaspora and the Buddhist clergy.)

As a next step, the facilitator was introduced to each group's delegates over two Zoom calls, one for the Tamil diaspora and one for Buddhist monks. At the meeting, they were asked about their expectations from the dialogue. Both sides expressed the need for trust, greater understanding, and a desire for friendship. Though a discussion on the issues faced by the diaspora was part of the project objectives, the diaspora was equally keen on understanding the problems faced by the Sinhala Buddhist community.

Following these discussions, the facilitator had individual conversations with each delegate of the Tamil diaspora to understand their expectations, key desired outcomes, and identifiable risks and volatile issues that were best avoided in the first round of dialogue. A combined Zoom call was arranged for a similar conversation with the Buddhist monks to address the need for interpretation. One output that monks expressed was that they did not want this dialogue to end up as another talk show but instead wanted to come away with an action plan, something tangible to work on after the dialogue. These inputs were taken while drafting the agenda.

The rapporteur and the facilitator drafted a tentative agenda, which was discussed within the Core Group. While an overview of the agenda was discussed, the detailed agenda was not shared with the representative from each group, even within the Core Group so that they could be spontaneous in their reaction and interventions at the time of the dialogue. The agenda was drafted with key objectives for each session keeping in mind the expectations of each delegate and group and the outcomes they aimed to achieve at the end of the dialogue. (See Appendix B for the draft agenda).

Despite drafting a preliminary agenda, it was agreed among the Core Group members that the agenda would serve as a guiding document and that greater flexibility would be ensured depending on the flow of the conversation during the dialogue.

The dialogue was thus planned meticulously right up to the smallest detail to ensure its success.

DIALOGUE PHASE

The dialogue was held over three days from 24-26 April 2023, with arrivals on the 23rd and departures on the 27th. On the day of arrival, an informal session was planned for at 7 pm at the hotel's library. It was designed to provide an opportunity for both groups to interact with each other socially outside the conference room. This 60–90-minute session became a regular feature each day for the duration of the stay at the hotel. It achieved all the project's objectives, particularly getting to know each other and understanding their perspectives. But fundamentally, it helped in synergizing their respective outcomes from the dialogue. The groups shared anecdotes, stories, and songs. *It was a compelling way of breaking down barriers and building friendships (Result #2).*

On day one (24 April 2023), the first half day was devoted to building on the personal interactions that had started the previous day. Even though they represented two groups – the Tamil diaspora and the Buddhist monks, there was great diversity within each group. While the monks had spoken to each other over Zoom before their travel, they had not met before and came from three of the four Buddhist sects in the country. The Tamil diaspora delegates were also from different countries. Therefore, the first half of day one was dedicated to giving the group an opportunity to get to know each other personally. This was done by breaking the participants into groups of two, with each group having one Buddhist monk and one member of the diaspora. Since the groups were meeting for the first time, they needed to be given every chance to understand each other's perspectives. Therefore, this session was designed to be longer than the usual five-minute icebreaker. When the participants re-grouped in the plenary, each two-member group had to introduce the other person, provide a personal story on why they left the country

(in the case of the diaspora) or why they decided to become a monk (in the case of the Buddhist clergy). They also shared their expectations from the dialogue. (See Appendix C for a list of expectations)

This session established the dialogue as a safe place for sharing their individual perspectives and laid the foundation of trust for the discussions that followed the remaining two days (Result #3). Before the session, specific ground rules (Chatham House rule ++, no social media, restricted photography, etc.) were established in consultation with the delegates, which greatly helped create a safe space for candid discussion.

The second session of the day was also spent in break-out groups. The groups were encouraged to identify the key issues that needed to be addressed to bring about lasting peace. At the plenary, when each group presented the issues, it was apparent that many of the issues were similar between both groups, but each had a different perspective. For instance, one of the issues that was raised was the controversies over the archaeological sites. While the perception of the Sinhala Buddhist community was that the presence of Buddhist sites made it their responsibility to preserve these sites, the view of the Tamil community was that it was equally their history as there were (and are) Tamil Buddhists, a fact that many Sinhala Buddhists were unaware of. At the core of the controversy was the identity of each community linked to the historical site.

Many of the delegates were hearing the other perspective for the first time. *It was remarkable that the groups were curious in the discussion that followed to know more about the other side's views instead of dismissing or belittling them. This ability of the delegates to candidly express their opinion and intently listen to each other underlined the success of the dialogue (Result #4).*

At the end of day one, discussions continued on the various challenges to peace during the pre-dinner session. It was evident that each group wanted to invest as much time as possible in conversation with the other group.

On day two, after a quick recap of the previous day by one of the participants, moderated discussions in the plenary focused on unpacking the issues identified the previous day. In particular, attempts were made to categorize and prioritize these issues. Key questions that were discussed were: Are there issues where there is some agreement? What are the issues where the differences are significant? What could be some quick wins/low-hanging fruits? This session was aimed at preparing the delegates for the post-lunch session that focused on developing a shared vision for Sri Lanka. One of the issues that came up in the discussion the previous day, on which greater understanding was reached on day two, was the Thesavalamai Law. While the Sinhala Buddhist community perceived it as a discriminatory legal arrangement that privileged the Tamil community and prevented the Sinhala community from purchasing property in Tamil areas, the law, in reality, did not discriminate purchase of property by the Sinhala community; its focus was only on joint ownership of property where preference was to be given to the joint owner before offering it to any outsider, Tamil or Sinhala alike. Further, the ensuing discussions highlighted similar norms practiced by other communities in Kandy, Kiribathgoda, or Kattankudi. *The frank discussions helped address misperceptions (Result #5)* surrounding the Thesavalamai

Law, and the delegates expressed the need to inform the general public of the exact legal provisions of the law to dispel misunderstanding and build trust between various communities.

Before lunch, a special session was curated. Two key figures of the Nepal Peace Process were invited to share their journey in bringing together the Maoists and the rest of the political actors toward peace and reconciliation. More importantly, their combined effort at drafting a new constitution. This special session aimed to familiarize the delegates to examples from South Asia where conflict had been equally protracted, peace similarly elusive, and political ideologies quite divisive. Their constitution and political power-sharing may be flawed, but it is locally owned, albeit with some external support. The delegates appreciated this special session immensely.

In the post-lunch session, delegates worked in small break-out groups to arrive at a shared vision for Sri Lanka by identifying and prioritizing some of the key issues that had come up for discussion. In particular, the delegates were encouraged to envision Sri Lanka in 2035 politically, socially, economically, and internationally and identify what role each group could play in achieving the vision. The discussions continued beyond the scheduled time for the day, and the groups were eager to share their vision during the evening pre-dinner socialization hour.

On day three, after a quick recap, the delegates worked together in the plenary to arrive at a shared overarching vision and complementary vision statements. The joint document later termed the Himalaya Declaration, is set to be published in the next three to six months after a review of the political situation on the ground. *A week earlier, it would have been unimaginable that two groups as diverse as the diaspora and the monks could arrive at a common vision for Sri Lanka and work together on a joint vision statement. This has been the singular significant achievement of the dialogue (Result #6).*

Following the finalization of the vision document, the delegates worked in their respective groups to arrive at an action plan which would provide a roadmap with milestones and timelines but, more importantly, outline what they could do as a group to achieve the vision they had commonly agreed upon. In the post-lunch session, the groups presented their respective action plans, followed by discussions and further synchronization of the action plans to support the other group's timeline of activities. *This was another noteworthy achievement in how both groups drafted their action plans that complemented each other, and greater synergy was achieved in finalizing them in the plenary (Result #7).*

The penultimate session of the dialogue was dedicated to planning ahead and visualizing the next steps. The delegates decided to call this dialogue and future ones that would follow from these conversations the Nagarkot Dialogue. *This indicated ownership of a process that would be locally led and locally owned. Still, more importantly, it signaled the continued commitment of the two groups to this dialogue process (Result #8).* The delegates emphasized the need for confidentiality moving forward, even as they worked on their respective action plans, which included partnering with each other until the process could be made public. Both groups were deeply aware of the spoilers on each side and the risk each group was taking in even participating in a process such as this one. However, *it was remarkable to notice in the conversations that the delegates were willing to take the risk. Still, more importantly, they acknowledged and respected the*

risk the other group was taking. To that extent, each group was willing to take whatever steps were required to make it easier for the other group to communicate with its constituency (Result #9).

The last session was evaluatory in nature and revisited the expectations that the delegates had expressed during the pre-dialogue meetings and during the first session on day one of the dialogue. *All expectations had been met, and more (Result #10).* A diaspora member read out a list of ten key indicators their group had drafted before the dialogue to assess the success of the dialogue. And he remarked how every item on that list was achieved in this dialogue, though he had never shared the list with the organizers or the other group. *Positive feedbacks such as this are evidence of continued commitment and indicators of a sustainable dialogue process (Result #11).*

The session also included the participants sharing key takeaways from this dialogue. What was planned as a 30-minute debriefing on key takeaways was extended to over 90 minutes as *delegate after delegate shared powerful testimonies on how their whole attitude and approach had changed over three days (Result #12).* One of the Buddhist clergy remarked that before coming to the dialogue, he was highly concerned about meeting the diaspora because of 30 years of war, but now felt like they were his family, relatives, and neighbors back home, and he was willing to risk it all to continue this process. A member of the Tamil diaspora shared that after the war ended in 2009, he promised never to visit Sri Lanka again. Still, the seven members of the Buddhist clergy who had participated in the dialogue had, in a short period, filled him with trust and hope. He said he would return to Sri Lanka now, not because of anything else, but because of the hope they gave. *These testimonies far exceeded the expectation of the dialogue coordinators and participants in building trust and friendship over the course of the dialogue (Result #13).*

Feedback on the dialogue organization and coordination was briefly discussed. Delegates appreciated the planning behind the dialogue, the facilitation enabling free and frank discussions and the methodology of mixed pairing and small groups that created space for greater familiarization. In particular, they admired the flexibility in the agenda that provided opportunities for the free flow of conversations, which has been in short supply between these two groups.

POST-DIALOGUE PHASE

Both groups have committed to continuing their respective action plans and have set up respective communication channels for further conversations. A WhatsApp group has also been created for all the dialogue delegates. It remains active with posts and relevant videos on reconciliation and peace. More importantly, there are posts encouraging and lauding the work of individuals from each group, which they were previously unaware of. *These efforts will consolidate many of the results achieved during the dialogue (Result #14).*

Difficulties

The original plan for the first dialogue was five days. Due to the final approval of the budget for only a three-day dialogue, some of the planned agenda items had to be shrunk into 90-minute sessions instead of the originally planned 180 minutes. We could also not schedule buffer time for the spillover of conversations. This meant that some 90-minute sessions were reduced even further. Last-minute additions, such as the interaction with the mediators of the Nepal peace process, which was fascinating, further cut into whatever time was available. The delegates attempted to catch up by spending beyond the scheduled hours. This might have impacted the time that should have been available for each group to debrief themselves each day. Since this was a historic meeting of the diaspora and the monks, a five-day dialogue could have helped us achieve and consolidate more results.

The original proposal was for a series of three dialogues. Funding was eventually received for one dialogue. Even as the delegates decided to proceed with their action plan, an assurance of when the following dialogues would happen would have helped strengthen their action plan. Not knowing when the next dialogue might happen has added to the already challenging future pathways of the dialogue process.

There was a requirement for translation during the dialogue. There was lingual expertise within the group, but the time taken for translation impacted time management in some plenary sessions.

Given the highly confidential and classified nature of the dialogue, there were self-imposed restrictions on digital technology, like an audio recording of proceedings.

Despite being coordinated by a women's civil society organization, it was difficult to get greater gender representation in the delegation from both groups. This was primarily due to the existing huge trust deficit. However, it is hoped that after a few rounds of initial dialogue, which has built trust and friendship, we might see a greater gender representation.

Lessons and Recommendations

The post-dialogue risk of exposure remains high for participants from both groups. Therefore, organizers, facilitators, participants, and donors must be cautious in sharing the outcomes of the dialogue until the participants can jointly publicize it (which is an item in their action plan).

The choice of location, in a remote place and a third country, provided the right opportunity and environment for this dialogue. While future dialogues can be planned in Sri Lanka to facilitate the implementation of the action plans, a few dialogues should still be planned in remote locations in third countries, especially when new stakeholders (such as politicians) are added to the dialogue.

The selection of non-Sri Lankan facilitators and rapporteur helped navigate some troubled conversations. As the dialogue proceeds from building trust to addressing some critical issues, it might be helpful to have a couple of resource persons from Sri Lanka who can help unpack these issues with key questions and help shape the agenda. They could serve as an advisory group within the organizing committee. However, great care needs to be exercised in identifying such individuals as they need to be accepted by the groups who have agreed to come together. Though this might be a desirable inclusion, the time may not be appropriate yet for it, and it could be considered further down the line.

To consolidate the dialogue process, it would be helpful to set up a few joint working groups (three-four member groups) that could oversee the implementation of the action plans. They could also work together on issues of common concern, like the PTA or economic recovery plan for Sri Lanka.

It must be acknowledged that a woman-led women's civil society organization made this dialogue possible between two groups that have, until now, shared feelings ranging from ignorance to animosity. AWAW has managed to bridge multiple gaps in understanding that existed between these groups. Though the dialogue did not have greater gender representation in the delegation, the agenda and conduct of the dialogue were significantly gendered as delegates foregrounded issues such as "fear," "dignity," and "trust" in the place of mainstream traditional conversations on overall peace, reconciliation, and justice; these traditional issues were addressed through the gendered lens of inclusivity, equality, dignity, and freedom from fear. There is, therefore, a need to engage more women-led and women actors to engender further conversations on security, peace, and justice at a national level.

Appendices

Appendix A | List of Delegates

List of Buddhist clergy

1. Ven. Madanpagama Assaji Thero, Anu Nayake of Ambagahapitiya Chapter of Amarapura Nikaya
2. Ven. Siyambalagaswewa Wimalasara Thero, Chief Sanganayake of Northern and Eastern Provinces, Malwatta Chapter
3. Ven. Kithalagama Hemasara Nayaka Thero, General Secretary, Siri Dharmarakshitha Chapter of Amarapura Nikaya.
4. Ven. Prof. Pallekande Rathnasara Thero, Acting Mahanayake of Vajirawansa Chapter of Amarapura Nikaya,
5. Ven. Kalupahana Piyaratana Thero
6. Rev. Narampanawe Dhammaloka Thero, Chief Sanganayake of Central Province, Asgiriya chapter
7. Ven. Walatara Sobitha Thero, Anunayake, Sri Sadhammawansa Chapter of Amarapura Nikaya

List of Tamil diaspora

1. Mr. Suren Surendiran, Global Tamil Forum, based in the United Kingdom
2. Mr. Velupillai Kuhanendran, Global Tamil Forum, from the United Kingdom
3. Mr. Mukunthan, owns a company doing technical work, based in Australia
4. Mr. Bhuvan, works for a British bank, from the United Kingdom
5. Ms. Shanthini Jeyarajah, leading a community organization in the US, from the United States
6. Mr. Raj Thavaratnasingham, Canadian Tamil Congress, from Canada
7. Mr. Prakash, from Australia

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE OF DIALOGUE (21 April Draft)

Day Zero Sunday, 23 April 2023

- 1900-2000 Social hour**
- 2000-2100 Dinner**
- 2130-2200 debrief and planning – Martin, Visaka, Bhumi, and Mallika

Day One Monday, 24 April 2023

0830-1200 Session 1: Introductions and Expectations

- Objectives:*
- (a) Establish ground rules and a safe environment for frank conversations
 - (b) to provide an opportunity for both groups to get to know each other better at a personal level.
 - (c) participants gain a better understanding of each other’s perspectives
 - (d) participants articulate their expectations

- Methodology:*
- plenary for ground rules
 - mixed breakout (one diaspora and one clergy) in two. 7 groups
 - debrief in plenary

Session Plan: This session will have four parts.

- Part 1 – 15 minutes (0830-0845 hrs) – Welcome
- Part 2 – 30 minutes (0845-0915 hrs) – Discussion on Ground Rules
- Part 3 – 45 minutes (0915-1000 hrs) – mixed group breakout
- Part 4 – 90 minutes (1030-1200 hrs) – debrief in plenary

Suggested topics to be addressed during breakout:

- at least one memory from childhood
- reasons to have become a monk / leave Sri Lanka
- expectations from the dialogue
- possible specific contributions to the dialogue
- potential name for this dialogue process

Suggested plenary format:

10 minutes x 7 groups for introductions and debrief
20 minutes discussion on expectations – identifying commonalities, acknowledging differences.

1000-1030 Coffee/Tea Break

- Outcomes:*
- (a) ground rules established and participants feel free to share
 - (b) discussions are candid and rapport established between group
 - (c) few key expectations are identified – common and unique ones

1200-1400 Lunch

1400-1730

Session 2: Identification of issues for discussion

Objectives:

- (a) to identify key issues to be discussed in this dialogue and future ones
- (b) to identify few quick wins/low hanging fruits
- (c) to be made aware of redlines/ issues that is not ripe for discussion yet

Methodology:

- plenary briefing on identification of issues, owning the agenda and owning the process
- breakout groups (identical) two diaspora groups and two clergy groups
- debrief in plenary

Session Plan:

This session will have three parts.

Part 1 – 15 minutes (1400-1415 hrs) – Overview of the session and what we expect out of it, and instructions on breakout work, identifying note taker/presenter for the group, etc

Part 2 – 75 minutes (1415-1530 hrs) – identical group breakout, 4 groups

Part 3 – 90 minutes (1600-1730 hrs) – debrief in plenary

Suggested topics to be addressed during breakout:

- What are some of the key issues? What are the Sinhala Buddhist grievances?
- What could be some quick wins/low hanging fruits
- Are there issues where there is some agreement
- What are the issues where the differences are significant

Suggested plenary format:

- 15 minutes x 4 groups for plenary presentation and debrief
- 30 minutes discussion on issues. Clustering of issues -common ones, quick wins, short term, long term, contentious etc.
- Maybe request for a volunteer to do the recap the next morning

1530-1600

Coffee/Tea Break

Outcomes:

- (a) Key issues identified
- (b) Quick wins identified
- (c) Better understanding/appreciation of each other's concerns and viewpoints regarding each issue

1900-2000

Social hour

2000-2100

Dinner

2130-2200

debrief and planning

Day Two

Tuesday, 25 April 2023

0830-0900

Recap from previous day

0900-1100

Session 3: Vision for Sri Lanka (10-year period)

Objectives:

- (a) to get participants to envision a common future for Sri Lanka

- (b) to identify the issues that need to be addressed for this common future
- (c) to foster greater understanding between the participants on what each group perceives as a future

Methodology:

- plenary discussion

Session Plan: This session will have three parts.

Part 1 – 60 minutes (0900-1000 hrs) – Common vision for Sri Lanka

Part 2 – 45 minutes (1030-1115 hrs) – Issues that challenge the common vision from Sinhala Buddhist Perspective

Part 3 – 45 minutes (1115-1200 hrs) – Issues that challenge the common vision from Tamil Diaspora perspective

Suggested plenary questions:

- Where would you like to see Sri Lanka 10 years from now? Politically, socially, economically?
- What do you understand as peace?
- What are the potential challenges that stand in the way of the future you envision for Sri Lanka? Political, social, economic, religious

1000-1030 Coffee/Tea Break

Outcomes:

- (a) few common visions for Sri Lanka are arrived at
- (b) key issues that stand in the way of that vision are identified from both perspectives

1100-1200 Nepal's experience with the peace process

Interaction with Mr Dhaman Nath Dhungana and Mr Vidyadhar Malik

1200-1300 Lunch

1400-1730 Session 4: Vision continued, and milestones to the vision

Objectives:

- (a) to identify milestones and indicators to the vision
- (b) to identify risk and how to mitigate it
- (c) to get participants to focus on pathways to peace

Methodology:

- plenary briefing
- mixed group breakout
- debrief in plenary

Session Plan: This session will have three parts.

Part 1 – 15 minutes (1300-1315 hrs) – Overview of the session and what we expect out of it, and instructions on breakout work

Part 2 – 60 minutes (1315-1415 hrs) – mixed group breakout, 4 groups

Part 3 – 60 minutes (1415-1515 hrs) – debrief in plenary

Part 1 Plenary

- Instructions for break out group.
- Building on the visions discussed in the morning, identify key milestones
- What needs to happen before the final vision, and when does this need to happen
- Identify indicators for milestones

- Give examples

Part 2 Suggested questions for breakout

- Pick one vision to map the progress
- Identify at least 2 milestones for that vision. Key events that need to happen to achieve final vision
- Identify one or two indicators per milestone
- List one or two challenges that are likely to be encountered
- What measures can be taken to address/prevent these challenges
- This breakout requires a lot of discussion. Please time yourself to complete.

Part 3 Plenary debrief

10 minutes x 4 groups for plenary presentation and debrief

20 minutes wrap up

1515-1530

Coffee/Tea Break

Outcomes:

- road map for specific vision charted out
- milestones and indicators identified for the vision
- participants aware of processes that need to be in place for final vision

1900-2000

Social hour

2000-2100

Dinner

2130-2200

debrief and planning

Day Three

Wednesday, 26 April 2023

0830-0845

Recap from previous day

0845-1015

Session 5: What can each group contribute to the process

Objectives:

- to provide an opportunity for the participants to reflect on how they can contribute to the process
- participants gain a better understanding of each other's role in bringing about the required change
- to identify stakeholders and champions for the process

Methodology:

- plenary for instructions
- breakout groups – identical, not mixed
- debrief in plenary

Session Plan:

This session will have three parts.

Part 1 – 5 minutes (0845-0850 hrs) – Overview of session, what we expect from it, and instructions for breakout group

Part 2 – 45 minutes (0850-0935 hrs) – identical group breakout, 2 groups

Part 3 – 40 minutes (0935-1015 hrs) – debrief in plenary

Suggested topics to be addressed during breakout:

- In the vision and the pathways that were identified, what role can we play in arriving at that vision and achieving those milestones?
- What are our strengths, and how can this be used for this process?

- What can we bring to the table? Political, economic, social?
- Identify two stakeholders you will need to engage in this process, and what is your expectation from these stakeholders
- Who can we share this vision document with? Only us? Donors? Identified stakeholders?

Suggested plenary format:

10 minutes x 2 groups for debrief

20 minutes discussion on understanding the role each group can play towards the process. Key question – how does each group see the role to be played by the other group? Is there a difference between how a group self-realizes how it can contribute, and what the other group wants it to contribute?

- Outcomes:*
- (a) participants aware of the role they could play in shaping in the process
 - (b) potential champions and stakeholders identified
 - (c) understanding that cooperation and commitment required from different actors

1015-1030 Coffee/Tea Break

1030-1200 Session 6: Common vision 10 points/ Action Plan

- Objectives:*
- (a) to identify ten points that articulate the common vision that everybody can accept
 - (b) participants are able to accommodate differences and agree on common vision
 - (c) participants own the process through a consensus document

- Methodology:*
- plenary for instructions
 - breakout groups – mixed groups
 - debrief in plenary

Session Plan: This session will have three parts.

Part 1 – 5 minutes (1030-1035 hrs) – Overview of session, what we expect from it, and instructions for breakout group

Part 2 – 45 minutes (1035-1120 hrs) – mixed group breakout, 4 groups

Part 3 – 40 minutes (1120-1200 hrs) – debrief in plenary

Suggested topics to be addressed during breakout:

- What can be 1-2 key takeaways from the discussion over the past three days that can be part of the vision document.
- Having listened to everybody's view on a vision, what kind of common vision can we agree on.
- What can each group individually commit to?
- Who is the role we expect from key stakeholders?
- What can we commit to as a combined group?

Suggested plenary format:

10 minutes x 4 groups for debrief

- Outcomes:*
- (a) A draft collection of points which will form the basis of the vision document

1200-1400 Lunch

1400-1530 Session 7: Finalization of Vision Document/ Action Plan

<i>Objectives:</i>	(a) to finalize the vision document/ Action Plan (b) to create ownership of the process
<i>Methodology:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • plenary discussion
<i>Session Plan:</i>	This session will have one part
	<u>Suggested plenary format:</u>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 60 minutes to review the vision document, point by point, agree with wording, finalizing the document • 15 minutes to discuss who will have access to this document
<i>Outcomes:</i>	(a) finalization of vision document (b) greater synergy between the two groups as they agree on a common document
1530-1600	Coffee/Tea Break

1600-1700	Session 8: Review and Next Steps
<i>Objectives:</i>	(c) to review expectations and see if we have met them (d) to plan ahead
<i>Methodology:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • plenary discussion
<i>Session Plan:</i>	This session will have two parts
	<u>Part 1 Review of dialogue and expectations</u>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30 minutes plenary discussion • Review the expectations of day one – have they been achieved • Each participant to provide one key takeaway from this dialogue process • Organizationally, what was good, what can be done better
	<u>Part 2 Planning Ahead</u>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30 minutes plenary discussion • How do we take this dialogue process forward • What format should we follow - same group, or same group plus some stakeholders? • What issues should we take up for discussion? • How do we build on this vision document/action plan?
<i>Outcomes:</i>	(a) ownership of process by jointly discussion way ahead (b) review and evaluation of dialogue

1700-1730	Session 9: Wrap up
	Coordinator announcements, thank yous, and farewells
1900-2000	Social hour
2000-2100	Dinner
2130-2200	debrief

Appendix C | List of Expectations

- Build trust and confidence
- Establish cordial relationships
- Understand the grievances of the Buddhist community
- Ven. Theros will be able to act as a bridge connecting the Mahanayakas and the diaspora
- Clear understanding of each other's problems
- Preparing a roadmap and an action plan to make the process a success
- Look forward and stop being anchored to the past
- Upcountry Tamils and their issues need to be addressed during the dialogue
- Problems to be resolved through diaspora