



CARITAS SRI LANKA – SEDEC

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE VOLUNTEER TASK FORCE

PREAMBLE:

Caritas Sri Lanka-SEDEC is the National Secretariat for the Catholic National Commission for Justice, Peace and Human Development of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Sri Lanka and is a Member Organization affiliated to Caritas Internationalis, a confederation of 162 Catholic relief, development, and social service organizations present in 200 countries and territories.

Caritas Sri Lanka – SEDEC was founded in 1968 by a pioneering and visionary priest, Father Joe Fernando. The acronym SEDEC, as it was initially known, stands for Social and Economic Development Centre and is a variant of the Hebrew word SEDEQ, meaning justice and righteousness.

SEDEC, has today emerged positively as one of the foremost humanitarian organizations in the country, respected and recognized by the country's Government as strong ally and force especially in times of national crisis. Caritas Sri Lanka – SEDEC bears witness to the teachings of Jesus Christ, embracing the Gospel values and the Social Doctrine of the Holy Catholic Church, in its work with the poor and the needy, irrespective of caste, creed and religion, through a network of 13 Diocesan Centres located in the 12 Dioceses of Sri Lanka.

SEDEC's current strategic priorities focus on Integral Human Development, Social Justice & Sustainable Peace and Disaster Risk Management while interventions such as Sustainable Agriculture & Food Security, Safe Labour Migration make up the portfolio of projects implemented by the organization.

With Sri Lanka gaining a growing reputation for a 'middle income' country, international donors do not consider Sri Lanka a priority country for aid assistance, thereby creating a challenging context for accessing and mobilizing financial resources for poverty reduction, development and humanitarian needs which are still prevalent in many parts in the country. Due to the lack of resources, Caritas Sri Lanka – SEDEC is compelled to operate with minimum strategic management & administrative costs which has in turn forced SEDEC to minimize its paid employee cadre and other organizational needs such as branding & positioning of the organization and its work for greater visibility among the general public.

In view of the foregoing the Organization aspires to establish a 'VOLUNTEER TASK FORCE' from among committed Catholics, both from the Religious and the laity. This task force could serve the organization as a 'shadow workforce' and add value to effectively delivery its services, while being cost-effective.

TERMS OF REFERENCE:

The following Terms of Reference will guide the implementation of the Caritas Sri Lanka – SEDEC 'Volunteer Task Force':

1. **LOCATION:** The National Centre (NC) and each Diocesan Centre (DC) will establish a Volunteer Task Force (VTF) under the direction of the respective Directors.
2. **SIZE & COMPOSITION:** The VTF will comprise of between 10 – 15 members in each location and will have a diversity of gender, age, race, ethnicity and fields of expertise and professions.
3. **FAITH ORIENTATION:** The VTF members should be primarily Catholic. However, if individuals belonging to other religions are considered they should be willing to uphold the values and traditions of the Catholic faith.

4. **ROLE:** The role of the Volunteer Task Force shall be:
 - Be messengers of God’s love & mercy through the work of Caritas
 - Promote the Vision, Mission and Goals of Caritas Sri Lanka
 - Provide professional expertise to the National/Diocesan Directors
 - Build networks between Caritas and their respective communities, Church/Parish, Government/non-government sector, the Private sector and other professional groups
 - Help raise funds and other resources
 - Join project teams to support the work of Caritas by engaging in field activities such as in during humanitarian crisis and disaster situations at short notice
 - Serve as advocates and be a voice in seeking justice on behalf of the poor, marginalized and the vulnerable
 - Give of their time, talent & treasure whenever possible
 - Take part in other organizational activities by invitation
5. **REMUNERATION:** Members of the VTF are purely ‘voluntary’ and will not receive any form of financial remuneration.
6. **MISSION ORIENTATION:** The Management of Caritas Sri Lanka – SEDEC will provide awareness and orientation on key aspects of Caritas mission at the beginning and throughout the tenure of every volunteer.
7. **MEETINGS:** The VTF will hold a meeting annually of all volunteers for the purpose of felicitation and fellowship at each location.
8. **STRUCTURE:** The VTF will appoint a Task Force Lead for a mutually agreed period of time and will liaise & coordinate activities of the VTF. The National/Diocesan Directors on their part will appoint a Coordinator from their respective staff to interact with the VTF Lead for purposes of coordination.
9. **TENURE:** Members of the VTF may serve for any number of years of their choice and may end their membership mutually and at their discretion.
10. **MEMBER SUCCESSION:** Members leaving the VTF will be replaced with new members to maintain the size of the VTF.
11. **LETTER OF UNDERSTANDING:** Each member of the VTF will be expected to sign a Letter of Understanding (LOA) at the time of appointment.
12. **CODE OF CONDUCT:** Members of the VTF will be expected to commit to the Code of Conduct at the time of appointment.
13. **TERMINATION:** The National/Diocesan Director will have the sole discretion to terminate the membership of any member of the VTF due to any act of misconduct or incompatibility which may be deemed as damaging the good name & reputation of Caritas Sri Lanka – SEDEC.
14. **DISPUTE RESOLUTION:** All disputes arising between the Management and member/s of the VTF will be settled amicably through discussion in the spirit Christian brotherhood.

DATE: August 9, 2017