

SARVODAYA/NOVIB FOOD AID PROGRAMME

Report of an evaluation at the request of the
Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement (Sri Lanka) and
NOVIB (Netherlands)

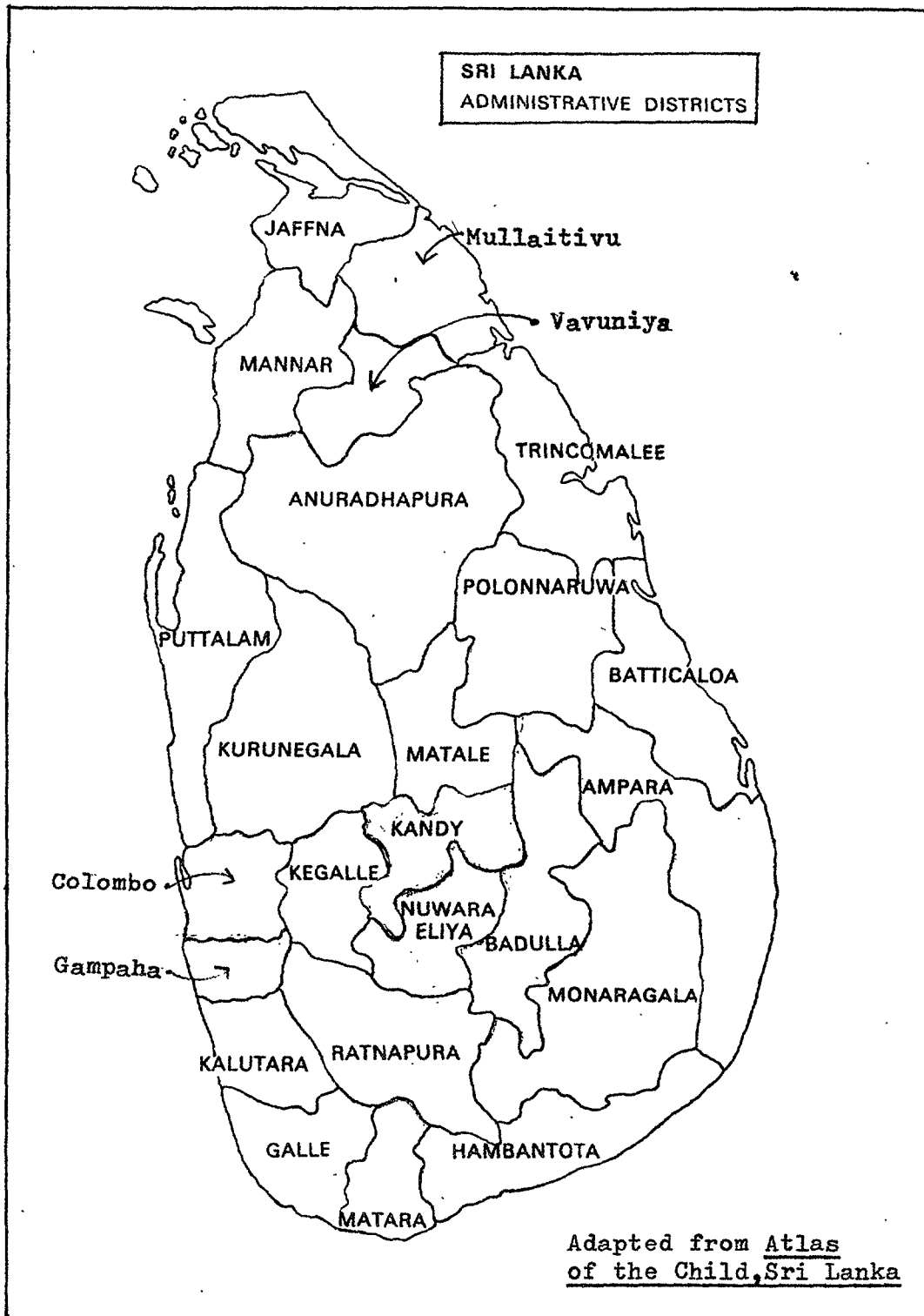
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CONTENTS

Conclusions and Recommendations	5
1. Introduction	11
2. Sri Lanka	12
3. Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement	15
4. VPO-Programme	17
5. Pre-School Programme: Brief Review	19
6. Pre-School Organization	25
7. Pre-School Training Programme	27
8. NOVIB Food Aid to Sarvodaya	31
9. Costs	33
10. Record Keeping and Recording System	35
11. Distribution of Centres, Food Issues and Recipients	37
12. The Role of the Pre-School Programme in Sarvodaya	44
13. Future Directions	48
Notes	55
Sources/Literature	57
Appendix A Distribution of Pre-School Centres by District	59
Appendix B Pre-School Centres: The Average Number of Days opened per Month and the Average Number of Recipients per Day	60
Appendix C Curriculum of Basic Training Course for Pre-School Workers	61
Appendix D Curriculum of Comprehensive Training Course for Pre-School Workers	62
Appendix E Terms of Reference	63
Appendix F List of Persons Interviewed	64
Map of Sri Lanka	4



CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Economic and nutritional conditions in Sri Lanka are such that food aid will be needed in the coming years. Sarvodaya is a widespread voluntary organization with unique means to reach the rural population. Because of its philosophy and its approach to rural development, Sarvodaya also offers one of the rare instances where food used to improve the nutrition of small children, can at the same time serve to stimulate village development. Using food aid at the Pre-School Centres not only provides children with supplementary feeding, but also supports a Sarvodaya programme that is an important entry point in the village as well as one of the mainstays of the movement. For these reasons it is important that Sarvodaya continues to receive food aid from NOVIB under the VPO-programme of the Dutch Ministry of Development Co-Operation.

On the average the Pre-School Centres are opened 16 days a month; there are about 25 children under five enrolled per Pre-School but only 17 children visit on any one day. This means that the average child visits only 10 days a month, which indicates a lack of attractiveness of the Pre-Schools. Several reasons can be suggested for this, often occurring in combination:

- (a) Poor location. Pre-School Centres are sometimes located at the village periphery, so that some children have to walk quite far;
- (b) Poor accommodation. Although the range of housing differs widely, many Pre-School Centres are accommodated in make-shift buildings;
- (c) Poor equipment and materials. Many Pre-School Centres have few pieces of furniture while in most of them there is a lack of educational materials;
- (d) Insufficiently trained workers. Most Pre-School Workers have received only a 2-week basic course, which is probably enough to train the girls how to issue foods and keep children occupied, but not enough to make them competent Pre-School Teachers;

- (e) Poor Sarvodaya Organization in the village. In certain villages Sarvodaya activities are at such a low ebb, that even the Mother's Groups hardly function;
- (f) The relatively small number of days the centres are opened may in itself contribute to low attendance;
- (g) The above factors are, of course, interwoven with the motivation of the Pre-School Workers: on the one hand her motivation will be influenced by them; on the other hand she can also play an important part in the Sarvodaya village organization, and the shaping of the Pre-School in particular.

From the point of view of distributing food aid to small children it is, firstly, necessary that the centres be kept open more days. This could be achieved by requesting Pre-School Workers to keep the centres open on Saturdays and school holidays, if only to issue food. Secondly, a larger number of recipients per centre would be desirable, although this might be judged differently from an educational perspective. But, if Sarvodaya is to substantiate its claim that the centres provide Pre-School education, more attention should be given to matters such as the provision of educational materials, and the supervision of training, while more Pre-School Workers should be enabled to follow the comprehensive training course.

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X More attention can further be given to the work circumstances
X and work satisfaction of the Pre-School Worker. Since she is
X an important hinge on which the Sarvodaya village organization
turns she should be recognized and appreciated as such.

x For one, her allowance should be guaranteed and she should not be obliged to ask individual mothers for a contribution to her income. Rather, this should be the responsibility of the Mother's Group and through this group of Sarvodaya in general. We are also of the opinion that the costs of travelling to the Gramodaya Centres, to attend monthly meetings and to collect food, should be paid for by the Sarvodaya organization. In this way, all expenses for the distribution in Sri Lanka, down to the delivery of the donated food to the villages,

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are borne by Sarvodaya. Finally, the Pre-School Centres could be given more attention as the focus of the activities of other Sarvodaya groups in the village. Both the Pre-School and other groups stand to benefit from this.

The total amount of food received by Sarvodaya in 1981 was 565,000 kg, more than half of which was donated by CARE (65%), a quarter by NOVIB (27%), the rest by the Ministry of Social Services (18%). Despite its smaller share of the total tonnage, the monetary value of the milk donated by NOVIB (Rs. 5.5 million) was larger than that of the Thripasha donated by CARE (Rs. 3.8 million). This serves to demonstrate that the milk powder is more than 3 times as expensive as Thripasha to produce and deliver to Sarvodaya. The ultimate capacity of the Thripasha programme, moreover, is much larger than that of the NOVIB food aid, and Sarvodaya should rely on Thripasha as the main source of supplementation in the future. The more so because NOVIB food aid to Sarvodaya currently far exceeds the financial limits set on VPO projects.

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Despite the large amounts of food distributed through the country, the average consumption per beneficiary is small and estimated at 500 g. Thripasha and 100 g. milk powder monthly. This supplement amounts to a mere 5% of the caloric requirements of children of that age and in order to make a significant impact on the nutrition of rural children these amounts should be increased. To enhance Thripasha consumption the Pre-School Centres have to increase their coverage: ways should be found to keep the centres open on more days and to make children attend more regularly.

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With the provision of Thripasha on a large scale NOVIB food aid should be used more selectively in the future and should be aimed at Pre-School Centres in areas where needs are greatest and where Sarvodaya appears well placed to meet these needs. To prevent the current situation from continuing - i.e. that a limited amount of food must be

distributed over too many beneficiaries - it is recommended that the total number of Pre-Schools to be covered under any single project or request to NOVIB should not exceed 600-650.

Two ways of arriving at the selection of a target population are suggested: by region and/or by programme.

Selection of target districts should occur on the basis of ecological and nutritional conditions. Because of the circumstances prevailing in the Eastern Dry Zone it is recommended that Sarvodaya submit a request for food aid to this area. This region includes the districts Amparai (E & W), Badulla, Batticaloa, Matale, Moneragala, Polonnaruwa and Hambantota. Various indicators show that the coverage of the Sarvodaya Pre-Schools is relatively high in this region.

Selection by programme is also possible: in particular concentration on the 'plantation programme' which covers about 600 creches at state plantations, where the prevalence of malnutrition among young children is known to be among the highest in the country. A request for food aid to this particular programme, however, requires that more recent information about the programme be provided and with more detail than presently available. Solutions will, furthermore have to be found regarding the coverage of adjoining (non-estate) Pre-Schools as well as the question how to limit the total number of creches and centres to the recommended number. In case a request for food aid to this particular programme is realized, no change in the present apportionment of funds is envisaged, and milk powder should continue to be the commodity donated.

Until now all funds allocated for food aid to Sarvodaya have been exclusively used to purchase and ship milk powder from the Netherlands. This is contrary to the policy followed by NOVIB with other organizations, where half or more than half the funds are used to purchase foods locally.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement in Sri Lanka has received food aid from NOVIB for on-site feeding of young children since 1974. In the 8 years since, six more applications for food aid have been approved by the Netherlands Ministry of Development Co-Operation. In 1980, Sarvodaya and NOVIB decided that an evaluation of this food aid programme and the Pre-School Programme in general was desired. The final terms of reference for this evaluation were approved in April 1982 (See Appendix E).

The appointed 2-member team collected information in two stages: in April and August 1982. Sources of information were, firstly, interviews with Sarvodaya leaders and officials; secondly, records and reports at Sarvodaya Headquarters. The team further mailed questionnaires to all District Centres and a sample of Pre-Schools; they visited eight districts in various regions of Sri Lanka, calling on two Pre-Schools in each district. A considerable amount of literature was available for consultation, including the report of an earlier evaluation of Sarvodaya (DTH/NOVIB, 1979)¹.

The present report was drafted, in-country, during the first two weeks of September. It opens with some background information on Sri Lanka and the Sarvodaya Movement. A short description is furthermore given of the VPO-programme under which the food aid is donated. The subsequent sections give information about the Pre-School Programme, its history, present status and organization as well as the training programme of Pre-School Workers. The next sections concentrate on the food aid, its costs and distribution over centres and beneficiaries. Finally, the role of the Pre-Schools in the

1. Notes with the text can be found on page 55.

Sarvodaya movement is discussed, and some suggestions are given for the future direction of the food aid programme.

We wish to thank the many members of Sarvodaya that we had the opportunity to meet for their help and their frank and forthcoming attitudes. In return, we have tried to write a factual and informative report, pointing out weaknesses with suggestions for improvements and with the future development of the Pre-School Programme and Sarvodaya at heart.

2. SRI LANKA

Sri Lanka has a total land area of 25,000 square miles and a population of 15,000,000. The country is administratively divided in 24 districts (map, p. 4). The south-west of the country and the central hill region receive abundant rainfall from the prevailing south-western monsoons and form the so-called wet zone. The east and northern part of the country, the remaining three quarters of the island, form the dry zone. The economy of the south-west region is characterized by smallholder agriculture and rubber and coconut plantations, while the hill country is dominated by tea estates. Climatically the dry zone offers the least hospitable environment and smallholder agriculture is heavily dependent on irrigation; in the non-irrigated areas chena agriculture (slash and burn) is common practice.

The population consists of two distinct linguistic groups: Sinhalese (74%) and Tamil speakers (25%). The Sinhalese have since long dominated the country politically and economically; they live mainly in the south-west of the island and the adjoining part of the dry zone to the north as well

as the east. The Sri Lanka Tamils, with 13% of the population, form a vocal minority; they inhabit the north, north-east and eastern part of the country. Indian Tamils (6%) are descendants of estate labourers brought to the country in the 19th and 20th century, and they still constitute the main labour force on the estates in the hill country. The social and economic conditions of this group have from the very beginning given grave reason for concern and they still are an underprivileged group. A third Tamil speaking group are the Moors (7%), Muslims who live scattered over the island (DCS, 1981).

In 1977 a new government came to power and introduced certain economic and financial reforms. The liberalization of the economy had the effect of accelerating economic growth but this was accompanied by growing deficits of the budget and the balance of payments. Economic forecasts for the coming years are not optimistic and the World Bank has advised the government to take drastic measures. Inflation is currently estimated at more than 20% per year. A high unemployment rate has resulted in a flow of migrant labour to the Middle East. Nearly half the population has to exist on a family income of less than Rs. 3600/= per year, the income level set to qualify for government assistance in the form of food stamps (FNPPD, 1981a).

Sri Lanka is a food dependent country, even for the provision of rice, the major staple food, imports were required during the past years. The gains made in agricultural production over the past decades have largely been offset by rapid population growth. The country regularly receives large donations of food from foreign governments, in 1977 this amounted to a value of Rs. 213 million, in 1979 to Rs. 307 million, in 1981 to Rs. 362 million.

Per capita caloric availability is estimated at between 1950 and 2150 Kcal/day. Although the distribution of food seems to be relatively even, variations in food availability do occur, such as between different regions and between different income groups. (De Mel & Jagaratnam, 1977; Gwatkin, 1979).

In 1975 a national survey was conducted of the nutritional status of young children. As in other developing countries, the age group of 12-23 months showed the highest incidence of acute malnutrition. Results further revealed that 35% of the children, aged 6-71 months, showed evidence of stunting (height-for-age below 90), which indicates past or present chronic undernutrition. Findings also showed that the percentage of stunted children was highest among children residing on estates, no less than 60%, and in the eastern dry zone, 40% or more of the children (Brink et al, 1978).

In 1974 a Food and Nutrition Policy Planning Division was established within the Ministry of Plan Implementation. Since 1979 the division has played an increasingly active role and it is ultimately expected to monitor the nutritional situation in Sri Lanka on a regular basis and advise the government on food and nutrition related policies (FNPPD, 1981b).

Nutrition Intervention Programmes on a national scale, sponsored by the government, are the food stamp scheme, the Thripasha programme, and the Pre-School biscuit programme. The food stamp scheme is directed towards the low-income groups who are provided with stamps to purchase rice, sugar, bread, dairy products and kerosene (FNPPD, 1981a). The Thripasha programme is a combined effort by CARE and the government. Corn-soya food (Thripasha) is issued to children suffering from various degrees of malnutrition, dis-

tribution occurring mainly through clinics of the Department of Health, but also through private organizations. Under the school biscuit project, also developed by CARE, biscuits are issued through the island's educational system to school-age children (Drake et al,1982).

Among the nutrition programmes carried out by non-governmental organizations, only that of the Sarvodaya Pre-Schools has a national coverage. Other programmes such as that of Redd Barna and Save the Children Fund are on a much smaller scale (Karunanayake,1982).

3. SARVODAYA SHRAMADANA MOVEMENT (SSM)

Sarvodaya is a private organization which started its first efforts at village reconstruction, as it was then called, in 1958. During this first period the movement concentrated its efforts on organizing community activities in many villages. The first concerted attempts at rural development date from 1969 with the "hundred villages development programme". By the end of 1981 the movement had become the largest non-governmental organization in Sri Lanka having spread its influence to 4000 villages all over the country, reaching people from all ethnic, religious and social strata.

With the growth of the movement, decentralization of the organization became necessary. With Head Quarters situated in Moratuwa, the organization presently operates through 26 District Centres that have a fair degree of autonomy in day-to-day affairs. These District Centres in turn delegate responsibilities to more than 200 Gramodaya Centres, which co-

ordinate the activities in the villages. At Head Quarters some 350 salaried workers are employed; at District Centres another 763 and at Gramodaya Centres 637 people receive a salary (SSM,1982a).

The basic tenet of Sarvodaya philosophy is that individual personality development is the key to community development. Economic development can only occur together with spiritual, moral, cultural and social development. The principles of social development ask for pleasant speech, constructive activity, sharing and equality among the village population. Sarvodaya places particular emphasis on the self-determination and self-reliance of the village population and the establishment of certain functional groups: the children's group (7-14 years), the youth group (15-25 years), mothers' group, farmers' or other occupational groups, and elders' group. These groups have office bearers with clearly defined tasks and are expected to meet regularly to discuss village problems and to decide on appropriate action. Pre-Schools for children aged $2\frac{1}{2}$ - 5 years also form a part of the village organization. An important role is further played by communal or Shramadana activities. These may take the form of incidental voluntary activities by a group of villagers or of a camp for some days with or without the help of outsiders. In many villages permanent Shramadana groups have now been formed who bear the responsibility of organizing these activities. In its efforts aimed at economic development of the villages, Sarvodaya encourages small-scale economic ventures by the village groups.

With its heavy emphasis on rural development Sarvodaya has made most progress in the villages but has found it more difficult to make an impact among the urban population and the labourers residing at estates. Re-

cently, however, the Sarvodaya Plantation Workers Programme seems to have gained momentum (SSM,1982b).

Sarvodaya ideology has extensively been described by the leader of the movement, Dr. Ariyaratne (n.d;1979). Further information regarding the movement is available from various publications (Kantowsky,1978; DTH/NOVIB,1979; Goulet,1981; SSM,1981a;1982b).

4. VPO-PROGRAMME

The Netherlands Ministry of Development Co-Operation channels food aid through three Dutch Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) to developing countries. This so-called VPO-programme started in 1970 and since then the NGOs have acted as intermediaries, receiving an annual allocation from the Ministry for this purpose. Initially the funds were exclusively used for the purchase and shipment of Dutch dairy products; later it became possible to deploy the funds in other ways as well.

In the course of 1979 a policy paper concerning the future of the VPO-programme was presented by the NGOs to the Ministry (VPO/GOM,1979). Subsequently, a commission was appointed to assess the feasibility of the proposals contained in this paper. The commission visited several countries in the Caribbean and West-Africa and submitted various recommendations (Damen, Kusin & Omen,1980). Following further discussions a policy document was finally agreed on by the Ministry and the three NGOs. A draft of this memorandum was available to the present authors at the time of writing.

The objective of the VPO-programme is defined as follows: to contribute to the long-term solution of the food and nutrition problems, both of a qualitative and quantitative nature, of underprivileged groups. The programme is aimed primarily at groups which are either nutritionally vulnerable (children, pregnant and lactating women etc.) or which are vulnerable for socio-economic or political reasons. The NGOs can use the allocated funds in three ways:

- (a) for the purchase and shipment of food from the Netherlands;
- (b) for the local purchase of food in the recipient country;
- (c) for payment of other activities to improve the nutritional situation of underprivileged groups.

Projects must be carried out by local organizations and require the yearly approval of the Ministry of Development Co-Operation.

The projects falling under this programme are distinguished in three categories, termed as follows:

- (a) Food for Nutrition: Projects that aim to improve the nutritional status of the target groups by means of food distribution and nutrition education;
- (b) Food for Community Development: Projects which have community development as their primary aim, and in which food aid plays a supportive role;
- (c) Food for Work: Projects in which food is issued as payment in kind in exchange for labour on community-oriented activities.

Small scale projects are generally given priority and the total expenditure on one project should in principle not surpass Dfl. 500,000 (Netherlands Guilders) a year. The maximum duration of projects has not been indicated,

but after a period of three years a renewed proposal is required together with a comprehensive progress report or project evaluation. The local organizations responsible for the distribution of food are required to furnish regular logistical and financial reports as well as progress reports.

During the financial year 1981, Dfl. 18 million was allocated to the VPO-programme. Table 1 lists the funds allocated to NOVIB during recent years, with a breakdown by type of expenditure. It may be noted that in 1981 almost 50% of the funds were used for the purchase of local foods.

Table 1.
VPO-PROGRAMME: FUNDS ALLOCATED TO NOVIB, 1978 - 1981
(Dutch Guilders¹)

Year	Total	Purchase of Dutch Produce	Purchase of Local Foods and Non-Food Expenses ²
1978	5,650,000	5,122,000	528,000
1979	5,500,000	4,935,000	565,000
1980	6,400,000	3,915,000	2,485,000
1981	6,500,000	3,434,000	3,066,000

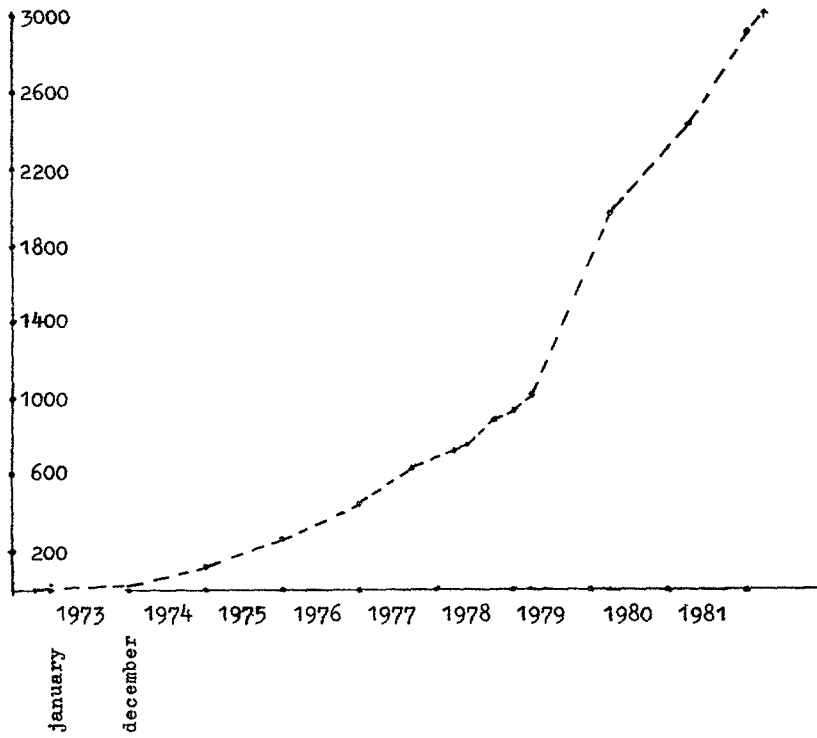
1. Dfl 1.0 = Rs 7.7

2. Non-food expenses constitute only a small part of this category

5. PRE-SCHOOL PROGRAMME: BRIEF REVIEW

In 1972, in response to a prolonged drought, Sarvodaya started the first so-called Community Kitchens. The demand for this programme soon grew, and the number of Community Kitchens increased rapidly. The aim of this programme was to stimulate village populations to take special care of nutritionally vulnerable groups, particularly young children. Initially

Figure 1 SSM : NUMBER OF PRE-SCHOOLS IN OPERATION, 1972-1982



the foods served were Leaf Kanjee (rice broth with vegetable juice), rice with curry or bread with curry and these were contributed and prepared by women and youths from the villages. Where necessary local food was supplemented with food donated from outside. NOVIB responded to a request for aid by sending a first shipment of milk powder and butter oil.

In 1973, the Ministry of Education raised school-entry age from 5 to 7 years. This decision particularly affected the rural poor, who had no opportunity of sending their children to private nursery schools. Sarvodaya realized the potential of the Community Kitchen Programme to fill this gap and combined on-site feeding with pre-school education. It is from this time onwards that the terms Community Kitchen and Pre-School are used interchangeably. From now on we will use the general term Pre-School or Pre-School Centre; and only occasionally, to emphasize the feeding activities, the term Pre-School Kitchen is used. From around 300 Pre-School Centres in 1976, the programme increased exponentially to over 3000 centres in 1982 (Figure 1). Over the past few years the annual growth in the number of Pre-Schools has been in the order of 25%.

The usual sequence of events in establishing a Pre-School is as follows. A request from a village is directed to the District Co-ordinator. He and the Pre-School Supervisor will arrange a meeting with the village population, explaining the objectives of the Sarvodaya movement. The village is requested to form a Mother's Group who, in their turn, have to select 1 or 2 girls for training as Pre-School Workers. The Pre-School starts to function as soon as the first girl has followed basic training at the District Centre and as soon as accommodation has been arranged for the

Pre-School, often in the temple hall or in an old building. Once she has started, the Pre-School Worker is also expected to do a brief survey of the child population in the village. On many occasions training cannot be arranged quickly, in that case the girl may start the Pre-School before she has taken the basic course.

Most Pre-School Workers are single girls living with their parents. They have usually passed the G.C.E. examination (O-Level) in the past couple of years, and have stayed at home before being selected as Pre-School Worker. Her usual working day starts around 7 o'clock with the cleaning of the building. Next she, or some helpful mothers, will collect water from the nearest well. The first children soon start arriving. The children are mainly kept busy with games, singing and story telling, activities that require no educational material (most Pre-Schools have virtually no such material). In some Pre-Schools the workers nevertheless try to teach the basics of reading and writing. Once or twice in the course of the morning the children are given something to eat: Thripasha (corn/soya blend) is usually given each day, while on some days milk² or Leaf Kanjee are given as well.

The group reached in this way consists of village children between 2½ and 5 years of age, without any deliberate social selection or selection by nutritional condition. Not all village children, though, are enrolled in the Pre-School but it is our impression that children of all walks of village life frequent the Pre-Schools. If there is a concentration it is probably on the middle income group. People who are better off may tend to send their children to private nursery schools, while the very poor, on the other hand, may not send their children, for example, because they cannot dress them properly (as was often mentioned).

Children are usually sent home around noon. Occasionally the Pre-School Worker will attend a meeting of the Mother's Group in the afternoon, although the frequency of these meetings differs; they should be convened once a month, but in practice are usually held less often. It is our impression though that the activities of the workers are very much limited to the Pre-School and its children. Contact with mothers appears incidental and there seems to be little occasion for nutrition education. In the villages where other Sarvodaya activities are going on, such as a Children's Group or a Shramadana Group, the Pre-School Worker may also be involved in these activities.

At this point the variation in Pre-Schools must be mentioned. Not only are there great differences between individual Pre-Schools but there are also differences in policy towards the Programme between districts. In fact, if there is one striking thing it is the tremendous variety in quality among Pre-Schools. Some Pre-Schools are housed in idyllic settings in the centre of the village, others are held in an abandoned, neglected building in the bush. Some Pre-Schools are well equiped, many have only a few pieces of furniture, but nearly all lack adequate educational materials. In some villages the Pre-Schools have a home garden, but usually this is not the case. In some villages the Pre-School Worker is very enthusiastic and has the support of many, in other villages the girl has lost her motivation and the Pre-School leads a marginal existence. In some villages the Pre-School has the strong support of other Sarvodaya groups, in other villages it is the only activity.

With the rapid growth of the programme Sarvodaya had to spend considerable efforts on training Pre-School Workers. The organization was generally able

to stay abreast of developments and keep the number of trained workers at par with the number of Pre-Schools (see also section 7). At the latest count there were 4800 Pre-School Workers of whom 16% still had to undergo their first training. The number of Pre-School Workers who have received a more comprehensive training of three months is no more than 175 (SSM,1982:57). At that time, April 1982, about half the Pre-School Workers received a monthly allowance of Rs. 100/= a month.

The sums allocated to the Pre-School Programme (i.e. Childrens Services) have followed the general growth of Sarvodaya expenditure (Table 2). In most years around 10% of the expenditure was devoted to the Pre-Schools, except for the last financial year when the percentage increased to 15.

Table 2.
SSM: TOTAL EXPENDITURE AND EXPENDITURE ON PRE-SCHOOLS
(Thousands of Rupees¹)

Year ²	Total Expenditure	Expenditure on Pre-Schools ³
1977	8,202	664 (8%)
1978	20,739	2,282 (11%)
1979	26,187	2,056 (8%)
1980	31,283	3,077 (10%)
1981	29,748	4,505 (15%)

Source: Sarvodaya Annual Financial Statements

1. Rs. 7.7 = Dfl. 1.0

2. April - March

3. The figures have been corrected for the values of the donated foods

Assuming that the number of paid Pre-School Workers was 2700, mid 1981, an estimated Rs. 3,250,000 was spent last year on allowances alone. This is one of the reasons behind the decision to discontinue the allowances

of the Pre-School Workers, as from April 1982. From that date on they no longer receive an allowance from Sarvodaya but are expected to be supported by the village population, either by voluntary contributions or by the proceeds from certain economic activities (on the subject of allowances, see further section 12, p. 46).

6. PRE-SCHOOL ORGANIZATION

Since 1979 Sarvodaya has adopted a decentralized organizational structure. This implies that routine decision making and supervision of activities among other things, are left to the District Co-ordinators. In each district there is a Pre-School Supervisor who is in charge of the Pre-School Programme and who is directly responsible to the District Co-ordinator. This Pre-School Supervisor is assisted by the Pre-School Observers who are usually stationed at Gramodaya Centres and who in their turn supervise the individual Pre-School Workers.

Usually each Supervisor is assisted by 6-9 Observers, with each Observer looking after about 15 Pre-Schools. These ratios, however, vary considerably. In one district the Supervisor was looking after 65 Pre-Schools, without the assistance of any Observers. In another district the Observers looked after some 30 Pre-Schools each, while elsewhere they were looking after only 10 Pre-Schools or less.

Supervisor and Observers meet at the monthly district meetings where they usually hold a separate Pre-School meeting for a few hours. Observers and Pre-School Workers, in their turn, meet at the monthly meetings at the

Gramodaya Centres. In one district visited the Pre-School Supervisor had made it a habit to personally visit these meetings at Gramodaya level regularly. It is our impression that this part of the system of supervision is functioning reasonably well, although Supervisors in other districts might follow the above mentioned example and also attend Pre-School meetings at Gramodaya level.

The Observers also have to visit the Pre-Schools in their area regularly but this part of the supervision seems to function less adequately. A few of the Pre-Schools visited (which were not very remote) had not been visited for several months. The limited transport facilities (most visits have to be done by bus) and the fact that many observers have to pay for these trips out of their own pocket is probably an important hindrance. Nevertheless, it is our opinion that this aspect of the supervision should be strengthened. Only by visiting Pre-Schools in her area regularly can the Observer get a thorough understanding of the problems that individual Pre-School Workers face and give them the necessary support and assistance.

Since the decentralization of all Sarvodaya activities the Children's Services Section at Head Quarters in Moratuwa has lost much of its significance. It now plays mainly a supportive role, providing the 3-month training courses, arranging monthly meetings of the Pre-School Supervisors and generally serving as a resource for the programme.

7. PRE-SCHOOL TRAINING PROGRAMME

With the expansion of the Pre-School Centres the need for workers with training in nutrition and food handling increased. A basic course of 2 weeks was first held in 1972 with 17 trainees. Within a few years this grew into a regular training programme with the establishment of the Children's Services Section at Head Quarters in Moratuwa. Furthermore, in 1973, a more comprehensive training course of 3 months was initiated in order to upgrade the workers' qualifications in Pre-School education. Since the number of workers concerned soon surpassed the capacity of the Children's Services Section, the 2-week training courses were gradually handed over to the District Centres. The few districts that are not yet able to organize their own training course (Ampara (W), Hambantota, Pollonnaruwa) rely on neighbouring districts. Since 1979 at Head Quarters, only the comprehensive course is given together with the basic course for the Colombo area.

Candidates for the basic course are generally selected by the Mother's Groups. On principle the mothers are encouraged to select a girl with G.C.E. (O-level), but this rule is relaxed when there are no candidates with that qualification. Candidates for the comprehensive 3-month course are selected from the ranks of Pre-School Workers with at least 6 months experience.

Table 3 shows the yearly number of candidates that took the basic course and the numbers that completed the comprehensive course. The latter number stands only at one seventh of the number of girls who took the 2-week basic course. The costs of training presently stands at about Rs. 15/= a day per trainee, which includes board and lodging.

Table 3.
NUMBER OF PRE-SCHOOL WORKERS TRAINED YEARLY, 1975 - 1981¹

	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	Total
Basic Course (2 weeks)	134	297	335	728	1212	1564	1183	5453
Comprehensive Course (3 months)	83	89	117	142	104	127	74	736

Source: Statements received from District Centres & Children Services Section.

1. Figures do not include the numbers trained in Batticaloa, Jaffna, Kandy, Ratnapura and Vavuniya districts from which no documentation was received.

Occasionally other agencies request Sarvodaya to train their workers. In 1980, for example, this was the case with 96 employees of 4 outside organizations. At the request of UNICEF about 500 creche attendants employed at the state plantations have, furthermore, been retrained over the past few years (see section 13, p. 52).

Both the basic and the comprehensive course are residential training programmes conducted in association with a Pre-School situated at the Centre, where a small library is also available to the trainees. The basic course covers empirical knowledge of nutrition, such as the preparation of local and donated foods. Knowledge of Pre-School activities and child health are also a part of the course which further covers the general principles of Sarvodaya philosophy and organization (A review of the curriculum is listed in Appendix C). About 60% of the time is spent on practical work, the rest on class-room activities and Shramadana activities. Family gatherings are held 3 times a day. Districts have the freedom to adapt the content of the course to suit local requirements and as reaction to the feed-back provided by the trainees.

Apart from Sarvodaya workers, officials from government departments such as health, education, agriculture and social services as well as the local bank manager take part in the teaching, on a voluntary basis. Lack of guidance of these guest speakers has resulted in considerable variation in the quality of the training. The experience and training of the Pre-School Supervisors, the first persons responsible for the courses, also differs widely. It appears that supervision of the training courses and evaluation afterwards, although very important, are presently not done systematically. Charging a small group of training instructors at Children's Services Section with that task may help to improve the quality of the training programme and to maintain its uniformity.

Follow-up training lasting 1 to 7 days is provided in the form of seminars and workshops at Gramodaya and District Centres. In 1980 and 1981 the number of Pre-School Workers that attended such workshops was 2790 and 1255 respectively.

A review of the curriculum of the 3-month course is given in Appendix D. This course covers the same topics as the 2-week training but more thoroughly and includes nutrition and Pre-School education as important topics. The course is given at Children's Services in Moratuwa Head Quarters where Sarvodaya can draw on a panel of experts that serve as guest lecturers.

Table 4 shows what has since happened with the trainees that followed the 2-week and 3-month courses. Of the trainees who took the basic course only 55% are actively working in Pre-School Centres at present. Some are employed elsewhere in Sarvodaya, others have taken a 3-month training course and about 25% of them must have left their respective jobs. The turnover

of the Workers with comprehensive training is larger, more than 50% of them are no longer working in Sarvodaya. This last group, of course, consists of the girls who have served relatively long in the movement, but for that reason it can also be expected that this heavy loss will continue to occur. Marriage - often outside the village - and employment elsewhere are the main reasons mentioned for discontinuing service with Sarvodaya.

Table 4.
TURN-OVER OF PRE-SCHOOL WORKERS

	Basic Course	Comprehensive Course
Total Number Trained ¹ , 1975-1981	5453	736
Number presently working ² in Pre-School Centres	2990 (55%)	134 (18%)
Number employed ² in other Sarvodaya activities (includes PS-Observers & PS-Supervisors)	264 (5%)	169 (23%)
Number selected for 3 month training course ¹	736 (14%)	-
Balance, PS-Workers who have left employment with Sarvodaya	1463 (27%)	433 (59%)

1. Source: Table 3, disregarding the number trained before 1975 and excluding the districts mentioned.

2. Source: SSM(1982), excluding the same districts.

At the latest count there were 3000 Pre-School Centres with some 4800 workers. Of these workers 3900 had taken the basic training course, and only 170 had followed the 3-month course (SSM,1982:57). Most Pre-Schools, possibly with the exception of the ones that started very recently, therefore avail of one worker trained for 2 weeks. Assuming an even distribution, it follows that in 40% of the cases she is the only worker

present, in 30% of the cases she has the assistance of an untrained girl, and in another 30% she is assisted by a girl who has also taken the basic course. The number of Pre-School Workers who have followed the 3-month course is small and accounts at best for 4% of the total number of Pre-School Centres. Although one worker with 2 weeks training and well supervised may be sufficient to run a feeding programme such as the present, it is evident that the programme has difficulty in living up to its other claim. If the Pre-School Centres are truly to provide Pre-School education it is necessary that Sarvodaya seriously steps up its comprehensive training programme.

8. NOVIB FOOD AID TO SARVODAYA

In 1974 the first shipments of food were sent to Sri Lanka by NOVIB. Since 1976 a request for food aid was granted each year, with the exception of 1979, owing to a breakdown in communications between Sarvodaya and NOVIB. Figure 2 graphically shows the tonnage of foods received each year. After a short period of experimenting with different foodstuffs, full cream milk powder became the single commodity shipped. It must be noted that all funds allocated were used to purchase Dutch produce, and that there was no purchase of local food. There has been an increase in the volume of milk aid but this increase has not kept pace with the growth of the number of Pre-Schools. Whereas in 1976, 45 tons of milk powder were received and distributed over about 350 Pre-Schools, in 1982, 150 tons had to be distributed over more than 3,000 Pre-Schools. This means that by 1982 each Pre-School could only receive about 50 kgs. of milk powder a year, less than half the amount received earlier on.

Figure 2 SSM : FOOD AID RECEIVED FROM NOVIB, 1974-1981 (Kg.)

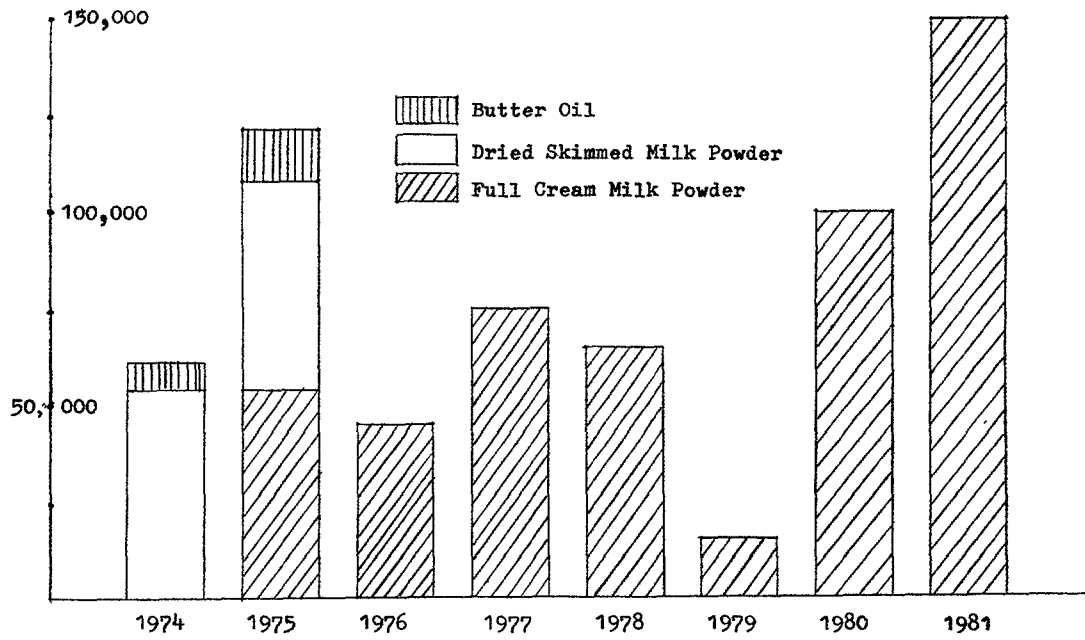
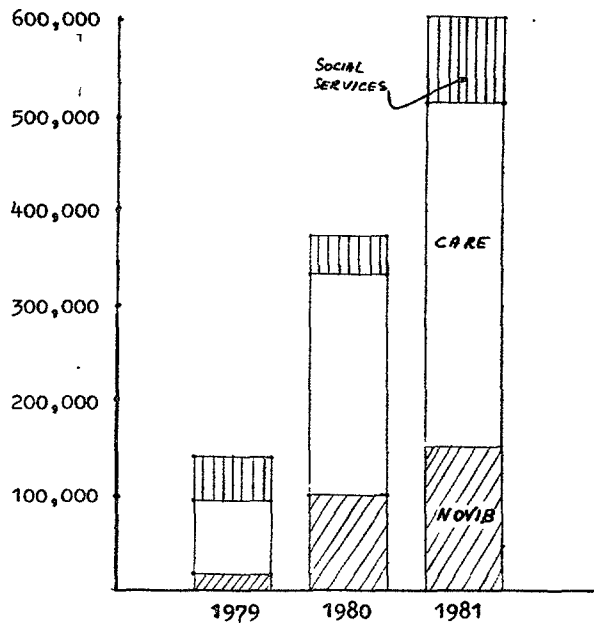


Figure 3 SSM : FOOD AID RECEIVED FROM VARIOUS ORGANIZATIONS (Kg.)



The earlier NOVIB/DTH evaluation mission, noting the rapid increase in the number of Pre-Schools, had recommended that Pre-Schools should be gradually made self-sufficient and transferred to the village council or local authorities. As regards the milk aid, it was strongly recommended that a local substitute should be found in the near future, preferably food produced by the village population itself. By and large these recommendations have by now been met although perhaps in different ways than envisaged in the report (NOVIB/DTH,1979).

The recommended self-sufficiency of the Pre-Schools has recently taken the form of discontinuation of the allowances of the Pre-School Workers. The village community is now expected to support the Pre-School Workers. As regards the local provision of food, little headway seems to have been made. In most districts there are no Pre-Schools that have stopped requesting food aid, and the number of portions of local food vs portions of outside food is about 1 vs 5 (SSM,1981b). Since 1979, the amount of food received from outside was enlarged substantially with the entry of CARE which donated Thriposha, a corn-soya blend, and which is now the largest single food donor to Sarvodaya. Furthermore, donations of butter milk and skimmed milk-powder were received from the Ministry of Social Services (Figure 3).

9. COSTS

Table 5 gives a breakdown of the costs involved in delivering the milk to beneficiaries. Four types of costs are distinguished: the purchase of goods, packaging and shipping to Sri Lanka, transport in Sri Lanka and the running of the Pre-School Programme. The various costs, apart

from the purchase of goods, involved in delivering the milk to the beneficiaries take about 20-25% of the funds. The major part of the delivery costs concern the packaging and shipping to Sri Lanka, 15-20% of the total sums in 1980 and 1981. It may also be noted that Sarvodaya contributes about 6-8% of the total costs or more than a quarter of the delivery costs which, in all, amounts to a substantial sum.

Table 5.
COSTS OF MILK AND DISTRIBUTION (Thousands of Rupees¹)

Year	Tonnage	Product Costs	Packing & Shipment	Transport in S.Lanka	Program Costs ²	Total
1980	100t.	2,482 (74%)	626 (19%)	12 (0.4%)	253 (7.5%)	3,373 (100%)
1981	150t.	5,542 (78%)	1,148 (16%)	28 (0.4%)	369 (5.2%)	7,087 (100%)

Sources: Sarvodaya Financial Statements & NOVIB accounts

1. Rs. 7.7 = Dfl. 1.0

2. Programme costs have been pegged at 8.25% of total expenditure on the Pre-School Programme; the argumentation is given in note 3, on page 55.

The cost of 1 kg. of milk powder can thus be estimated at Rs. 34/= in 1980, but has increased to Rs. 47/= in 1981, an increase mainly caused by the higher prices to purchase the goods. The costs of Rs. 47/= for 1 kg. compares with the current commercial price for imported milk powder of Rs. 50-67/= per kg, as asked by retail traders (table 6). On the other hand, Thripasha is reported to cost only Rs. 10/= per kg. (Drake et al, 1982). For comparison purposes we have also listed the current prices of some locally produced foods in table 6 and calculated the costs per 100 Kcal. It is evident that shipping milk powder is an expensive way of providing food aid, compared with Thripasha and local

staple foods such as rice and green grams. The price of donated milk powder, however, is of the same level as fresh milk.

Table 6.
PRICES AND NUTRITIONAL CONTENT OF VARIOUS FOODS¹

Food	Quantity	Costs(Rs.)	Costs(Rs.) 100 Kcal.	Protein Value per 100 Kcal.
Coconut	200g.	1.00	1.1	10.2
Green grams	1 kg.	17.50	0.5	7.2
Rice	1 kg.	5.50	0.2	2.0
Milk, cow's	1 pint	2.75	0.7	4.8
Milk powder, full (donated)	1 kg.	47.25	1.0	5.2
Milk powder, full (commercial)	1 packet	19.90-26.90	1.0-1.4	5.2
Thriposha	750g.	7.9	0.3	5.3

1. Prices in Galle, September 1982.

10. RECORD KEEPING AND REPORTING SYSTEM

Pre-School Workers keep various records in plain school books. One contains a list of children enrolled in the Pre-School which also serves as the attendance register. Records are further maintained of the daily issues of food, separately listing milk, Thriposha, Leaf Kanjee and other foods. Some Pre-School Workers keep a daily logbook of special events, while some also keep a record with vital information regarding each child.

The information regarding the number of days the Pre-School was opened, the number of children attending and the number of different food por-

tions issued are collated monthly and handed to the Pre-School Observer or the Gramodaya Co-ordinator. Each Gramodaya Centre aggregates the figures for the Pre-School in that area and sends them on to the District Centre, where the figures are aggregated every three months and submitted to the Central Recording Section at Head Quarters. This recording system functions in such a way that at each stage only additions have to be performed, but it appears to lack any built-in cross-checks. Nevertheless, it is our impression that the records are generally kept faithfully at each of the levels described.

We would like to remark, though, that the practice of presenting the total aggregated numbers in the yearly reports does not give a good impression of what actually happens at the individual Pre-School or with the individual child. It would be useful if the Central Recording System regularly calculated for each district certain indicators for the average Pre-School and the average beneficiary. This would make the figures easier to understand and might make them more useful.

As regards the stock keeping of foods, it must be mentioned that most Pre-School Workers only record the portions issued daily but do not keep a regular stock balance, which makes it difficult to check issues against receipts. This would not necessarily be unacceptable if the Gramodaya Centres or District Centres had other means to do such checks. This, however, is often not the case. In fact, in about half the districts visited even the district stores did not keep any regular stock balance of the milk. This is unfortunate and stock keeping at District and Gramodaya Centres should be improved. That it is possible to operate a sound system of store keeping without great efforts is shown by the fact that the stock records for Thripasha were generally

in better order and that in one district visited even the Pre-School Workers kept an exact daily stock balance of the foods in their store. The Central Auditing section could play an active role in improving store records, by issuing standard guidelines and periodically checking the stores and store registers at all levels. We were given to understand that they have recently started doing so.

Reporting from Sarvodaya to NOVIB has been minimal over the years, consisting of little more than confirmations that shipments had been received. Both logistical reports as to how the food aid was distributed, as well as progress reports of a more general nature have been lacking. It must be pointed out at the same time, though, that neither NOVIB nor the Ministry of Development Co-Operation has shown great curiosity or desire to receive such information. It must also be mentioned that Sarvodaya officials were by and large unaware of the VPO-Programme, its existence, the opportunities it offers, its restrictions and requirements. It would seem that communication between the partners can be improved.

11. DISTRIBUTION OF CENTRES, FOOD ISSUES AND RECIPIENTS

Different indicators can be used to reflect the distribution of food aid by Sarvodaya throughout the country. The first is the number of Pre-School Centres in different regions and districts (Table 7 & Appendix A). About half the Pre-School Centres are situated in the Western Region while in Jaffna there were less than 100 centres in existence in April 1981. This difference has little meaning because

the population in the regions differs likewise. Calculating the number of Pre-School Centres per unit population gives insight in the relative distribution. Nationally, there are about 1.65 centres per 10,000 people; there are relatively many centres in the North-Central and the Eastern Region and few in the Jaffna region. Districts with a particularly high number are Pollonnaruwa, Batticaloa and Galle, relatively low is the number in Jaffna/Mannar district and Trincomalee.

Table 7.
PRE-SCHOOL CENTRES BY REGION¹

Region	Population	Pre-School Centres	PS-Centres per 10,000 Population
Western	8,065,445	1,297	1.6
Hill Country	2,648,849	455	1.7
North-Central	1,600,709	341	2.1
Eastern	1,423,530	269	1.9
Jaffna	1,111,468	82	0.7
Total, Sri Lanka	14,850,001	2,444	1.65

1. Detailed information is listed in Appendix A.

A further indicator of the services provided is the number of days the Pre-School Centres are opened each month. In most districts it is the practice to close the centres on Saturdays, Sundays, public holidays as well as school holidays, which means that the number soon drops to about 16 days a month, although there is variation across districts. In Anuradhapura and Hambantota centres were open an average of 13 days a month during the first half of 1981, on the other hand, in Batticaloa this was 19 days and in Vavuniya, 26 days (Table 8 & Appendix B).

Table 8.
PRE-SCHOOL CENTRES: THE AVERAGE NUMBER OF DAYS OPENED PER MONTH AND THE AVERAGE NUMBER OF RECIPIENTS PER DAY¹

Region	Pre-School Centres	Days Opened/ Month/ Centre	Pre-School Children/ Day/ Centre	Older Children & Adults/ Day/ Centre
Western	1,297	15.7	15.7	3.1
Hill Country	455	16.2	16.5	4.0
North-Central	341	14.5	14.8	2.0
Eastern	269	16.1	24.5	2.8
Jaffna	82	18.0	22.9	0.3
Total, Sri Lanka	2,444	15.8	17.3	2.9

1. Detailed information is listed in Appendix B.

A more detailed indicator of services is the average number of people fed at a centre i.e. the number of recipients on the days the centre is opened. For all centres, together, this daily figure stands at 17 pre-school children and 3 older children and adults (table 8). The analysis and discussion will further concentrate on the pre-school children, the group at which the programme primarily aims⁴. With a daily average of 12 children attendance is low in Chilaw, Kurunegala and Trincomalee, but relatively high in Batticaloa and Jaffna where 33 and 25 children reported daily (Appendix B).

It must be pointed out that the total number of children enrolled in the Pre-Schools is higher than the daily attendance. This is because individual children do not attend each day the centre is opened. The total number of beneficiaries, children who receive food through the Pre-School, is therefore higher than the average number of 17 recipients per day. Nationally, the average number of children enrolled

per Pre-School Centre is estimated at 25⁵. This means that the total number of beneficiaries roughly amounts to 1.55 x the average number of recipients. Assuming that this ratio is the same for the different regions, table 9 lists estimates of the number of beneficiaries for the five regions of the country. This figure is highest in the Eastern Region with 38 children per centre and lowest in the North-Central Region with 23 children who receive food more or less frequently at their local Pre-School Centre.

Table 9.
PRE-SCHOOL CENTRES: THE AVERAGE DAILY NUMBER OF RECIPIENTS
AND THE AVERAGE NUMBER OF BENEFICIARIES PER CENTRE

Region	Pre-School Children/ Day/ Centre	Total Pre-School Beneficiaries/ Centre
Western	15.7	24.3
Hill Country	16.5	25.6
North-Central	14.8	22.9
Eastern	24.5	38.0
Jaffna	22.9	35.5
Total, Sri Lanka	17.3	26.8

As regards the amounts of food issued, Sarvodaya reporting is based on the number of portions, as explained earlier on. If one child in the course of a year receives a glass of milk on 100 days, this adds 100 to the count of the number of milk portions issued. If on the same occasions the child is also given Thripasha, the same number is added to the Thripasha count. Sarvodaya reports often present the total number of portions that are issued for whatever period is under

review, but such figures need conversion to become meaningful. We have, first, calculated the average amount of milk and Thriposha issued per centre, each month (Table 10).

Table 10.

AMOUNTS OF FOOD ISSUED PER MONTH AND AVERAGE CONSUMPTION PER BENEFICIARY

Region	Pre-School Centres	Milk(kg)/Month/ ¹ Centre	Thriposha (kg)/Month/ ¹ Centre	Milk(grg)/Month/ ¹ Benefic.	Thriposha(grg)/Month/ ¹ Beneficiary
Western	1,297	1.9	12.9	78g	444g
Hill Country	455	2.5	19.0	98g	598g
North-Central	341	2.4	11.6	105g	445g
Eastern	269	3.5	21.6	92g	510g
Jaffna	179	5.7	13.9	161g	386g
Total, Sri Lanka	2,444	2.4	14.9	90g	476g

1. Source: SSM(1981b).

During the period on which these calculations are based, April-September 1981 (SSM,1981b), an average of 1.9 kg of milk powder was issued in the centres in the Western Region each month. In the Jaffna region this figure was much higher, 5.7 kgs per centre, but the average number of beneficiaries per centre here was considerably higher, something which needs to be taken into account. For that purpose the average amount of milk and Thriposha consumed by beneficiaries each month was also calculated (Table 10). The previously noted differences between the regions remain although they have become smaller. In the Western region a child received an estimated 80 grs. of milk each month, while in Jaffna this was 160 grs.

More important than these regional differences is the fact that, according to these calculations, the average amount of milk received by bene-

ficiaries is only 90 grams. It must be pointed out, though, that there is a discrepancy between these figures and the amounts of food received by Sarvodaya. At the above calculated rate of 2.4 kg. a month, the 2444 centres have issued about 70 tons of milk powder over a period of one year, but 100 tons were donated by NOVIB in 1980. Part of this food may have been kept as a reserve, although 30% seems a rather high percentage. We can offer no further explanation for this discrepancy.

Assuming that average consumption per beneficiary is about 100 grs. of milk powder a month, this means that each child receives only 500 Kcal. and 26 grs. of protein from this source. This is only 1% of the monthly caloric requirement of a child of that age and about 4% of its protein requirement.

Apart from the milk, the children also receive Thriposha and the returns for the first half year of 1981 (SSM,1981b) show that each beneficiary received about 475 grs; which is far below the target of 1500 grs. a month, that CARE has set for this programme^{6,7}. The nutritional content of this amount of Thriposha would be in the order of 1800 Kcal. and 95 grs. of protein. This, in turn would account for about 4% of the monthly caloric and 14% of the monthly protein requirements.

The conclusion must be that the amounts of food beneficiaries receive through this programme are disappointingly small. It must be feared that the impact of this supplement on the nutritional state of the child will be minimal, particularly if mothers regard the food as a substitute for the morning meals, as some will undoubtedly be tempted to do.

This state of affairs requires improvement and we recommend that serious efforts should be made to ensure that beneficiaries receive larger amounts of food. It must be pointed out immediately, that the reasons for the low rations differ. As regards the milk, there is simply not enough of it. Even if all 150 tons presently donated by NOVIB were issued in the course of the year the individual child could only receive an average of 150 grs. a month. The low consumption of Thriposha, on the other hand, finds its main cause in the fact that the centres are open only 16 days a month and that only 16 out of 25 children attend daily. This means that each child receives food only 10 days a month, on average.

To increase Thriposha consumption requires improved functioning of the Pre-School Centres, if the principle of on-site feeding is not to be abandoned. To increase milk consumption, if this is wanted, would require other measures as well.

Functioning could be improved by keeping the centres open for more days, for example by not closing down on Saturdays and/or during the school holidays. A more rigorous measure would be to keep the centres open all week but this would require at least 2 Pre-School Workers per centre so that they can relieve each other. Another possibility is to open the centres briefly on the days that the Pre-Schools are closed, to feed the children.

Milk consumption of all children could theoretically be increased by larger donations from NOVIB. This, however, would require a massive increase beyond the limits, however tentative, imposed on the VPO-programme. More importantly since the milk is so expensive compared with Thriposha

and locally produced food, the relative costs would be high.

Milk consumption of individual children can be increased by no longer distributing the milk powder to all Pre-School Centres but by concentrating this aid on certain kinds of centres instead. Concentration on Pre-Schools that have recently started or on Pre-Schools that do not yet receive Thriposha, has been suggested from various sides. Past experience, however, has learned that it is difficult to stop issuing milk after a certain period. Using milk as a temporary measure before Thriposha is introduced is not an attractive alternative either.

We favour concentration on certain districts where needs are greatest and on one particular programme, that of the estates (see below, section 13)

In the present setting we deem the possibility of concentrating on children that are in poor nutritional state slight. This would not only require that the Pre-School Workers have means to assess the nutritional condition of individual children (this could possibly be arranged, and might be useful anyway). But giving some children milk, others not, might well be interpreted by parents as favouring children from certain families, potentially introducing the divisions that Sarvodaya wishes to overcome by its development philosophy.

12. THE ROLE OF THE PRE-SCHOOL PROGRAMME WITHIN SARVODAYA

The Pre-School Programme takes an important place in the movement. According to the standard description of the development of Sarvodaya in the

village, after a Shramadana camp has been held, the Pre-School is one of the first activities to be established together with the formation of a mother's group. Whether and when the other groups follow varies widely from village to village. On many occasions, however, the Pre-School is the first activity requested by the village. Since it offers an easy introduction for Sarvodaya, Pre-Schools are often started without a preceding Shramadana Camp although some incidental Shramadana activity may take place such as cleaning an old building, as future accommodation for the Pre-School. The importance of the Pre-School Programme for the movement is indeed a matter of discussion, and the authors of a recent annual report thought it necessary to remark that "Sarvodaya entry to a village is not only via the pre-school as some tend to believe" (SSM,1981a:44). This is true: out of the 4050 Sarvodaya villages existent in April 1982, only 3000 listed Pre-Schools with the accompanying Mother's Group. Nevertheless, this number still surpasses all other activities, such as Children's Groups (2800); Shramadana Groups (2400), Youth Groups (1800) and Farmers Groups (267). Nobody can deny the importance of the Pre-School Programme for the movement, if only because of the large number of Pre-School Workers, 4800, of whom 3100 were on the pay-roll, compared with the 1400 paid staff at Gramodaya and Districts Centres.

The role of the Pre-Schools tends to differ by district. In some districts they are clearly used as the main entry to the village in the hope that other Sarvodaya activities will duly follow. In a few districts, however, this practice is discouraged because of poor results in the sense that the other activities did not follow as envisaged. In these districts the District Staff prefers to make a serious start with Sarvodaya activities before a Pre-School is opened, although persistent requests from the

villagers for a Pre-School are not denied. In these districts the Shramadana groups usually outnumber the Pre-Schools (Anuradhapura, Badulla, Polonnaruwa, Vavuniya). On the other hand, Pre-Schools far outnumber the Shramadana groups in the districts Amparai (E), Colombo (E & W), Kurunegala and Nuwara-Eliya.

Apart from the weight the Pre-Schools carry by their sheer number, they are also important in another respect. The Pre-School is the only tangible, daily recurring Sarvodaya activity in the village, and as such may well play an important function to keep the lamp burning in times when other activities are at a low ebb. How important this role is, is difficult to assess but it should not be underestimated. The degree of success in preserving the Sarvodaya spirit differs, of course, widely. In fact there are a number of villages where little else remains of Sarvodaya than the Pre-School. These Pre-Schools often lead a sorry existence, sometimes the Mother's Group is not even meeting anymore, and they are only kept alive by the persistence of the Pre-School Worker and perhaps a few active mothers.

The existence of such marginal Pre-Schools in a number of villages is one of the reasons given by Sarvodaya leaders for the decision that the allowances of Pre-School Workers will no longer be paid by the central organization but, as from April 1982, are the responsibility of the village itself. By placing the responsibility for raising allowances on the village population it is expected that soon only the viable Pre-Schools will remain. Since then payment to the Pre-School Workers in some villages has actually increased, but the general impression is that most Pre-School workers now receive only a fraction of the earlier allowance or go without

any remuneration at all. As a consequence, a large number of them have left the service during the last few months and more Pre-Schools have closed down than before. However, many of the girls continue their work with dedication. Nevertheless, it is our impression that the full impact of this decision will still have to make itself felt.

There are further problems in connection with this new system of raising allowances which need serious consideration. Several incidences were mentioned where, upon request for a financial contribution, some of the poorer mothers kept their children at home the following days. It was also stressed that certain villages are so poor that the people cannot possibly afford to pay a Pre-School worker. In such cases, the stated policy of Sarvodaya is to stimulate small-scale economic activities by the Mother's Group or the Youth Group from which the Pre-School Worker can be paid. Small loans are made available for this purpose, usually about Rs. 500/=. This loan should also prove a stimulus for village development, the avowed aim of the movement. It is our impression, though, that this policy is not implemented uniformly and systematically in all districts. Furthermore, no separate fund has been reserved for such purposes.

Sarvodaya would certainly do well to stimulate the village organizations in starting medium-scale economic ventures but this would require much larger capital inputs. A group of Sarvodaya workers experienced in project handling should guide and monitor these projects to ensure their success. However, we are informed that a similar programme was launched by Sarvodaya a few years ago, but was not successful. Such a programme can only be undertaken with due care and consideration and will not bear fruit overnight. In the meantime other ways should be contrived to ensure the income of the workers at the viable Pre-Schools.

13. FUTURE DIRECTIONS

The information presented in the previous sections contained several salient points. Firstly, that the average beneficiary receives a relatively small food supplement, and that only one-fifth of this supplement consists of milk powder, the rest of Thriposha. Secondly, that milk powder is a relatively expensive food supplement. For these reasons, and also because the CARE-Thriposha programme has greater resources in Sri Lanka than the NOVIB food programme, Sarvodaya should rely on CARE as its main supplier nationally. NOVIB food aid should preferably be used in addition to Thriposha, and should also be used more selectively. To reduce costs and to use the NOVIB aid more instrumentally it is suggested that in the future considerable amounts of foods are to be purchased locally and that the target population is to be restricted in size.

Food Purchasing Scheme

During the years that Sarvodaya has received food aid from NOVIB it exclusively received donations in kind. No funds were donated for the purchase of local foods although this is possible under the rules of the VPO-programme. It is to be recommended that Sarvodaya, like organizations elsewhere, is given the opportunity to purchase food locally which could bring a reduction in costs as the calculations in section 9 show.

Sarvodaya, as an organization, has the potential to handle purchases of food on a large scale. The responsibility for such purchases as well as the responsibility for transport and storage should preferably lie with the District Centres to avoid procedural and logistical complications.

Workers at the District Centres are moreover likely to be familiar with the kind of food crops that can be cultivated locally, where and when. It is furthermore envisaged that under such a scheme Sarvodaya could enter into agreements with individual farmers or village groups to purchase forecoming crops and could even extend loans to start production. Such a food purchasing scheme will have the additional benefit of promoting rural development by stimulating food production in the villages concerned. Such a scheme would further give ample opportunity for the agricultural training of farmers as well as the training of Sarvodaya workers in food marketing and management.

Special attention should be given to storage. In tropical countries large quantities of foods are regularly destroyed by rodents, insects and fungi. A successful purchasing scheme will require that adequate grain stores are constructed at the District Centres concerned.

To avoid misunderstandings, it must be pointed out that there is no reason why food meant for certain Pre-School Centres should be purchased exclusively from within the districts where the Centres are situated. In fact, if the suggestion given below for concentration on the Eastern Dry Zone is followed, it may not be possible to purchase enough food locally. In that case food may well have to be purchased in other districts with a possible food surplus.

To give the Sarvodaya organization time to gain the necessary experience, it is recommended that a start be made with local food purchases in one district in the course of 1983.

It is not suggested, however, that the provision of milk powder is discon-

tinued completely. Milk powder will have to serve as a necessary safeguard in case of shortfalls in local production and can also be used in case of emergencies.

Ultimately the aim should be that after a period of 3-4 years, about 50-60% of the allocated funds are used for local food purchases; that 35-40% of the funds are used for milk powder to be shipped from the Netherlands, and that 5-10% is reserved for non-food expenses.

The non-food expenses should preferably be reserved to cover the petty expenses of the Pre-School Centres (which may include minor improvements in housing and equipment). They should not be used to cover other expenses of the Sarvodaya movement or overhead costs, for which other funds are donated by NOVIB, with the possible exception of the construction of improved stores at the District Centres concerned.

Target Size: 600-650 Pre-School Centres

Together with reductions in costs as a result of purchases of local foods, the NOVIB aid will also have to be used more selectively to have any impact on the nutrition of the beneficiaries. It was already mentioned that individual selection of children on the basis of their nutritional condition is an unlikely proposition. Rather selection will have to occur by centre, and selection of suitable centres can be done according to geographical area or according to programme. If the aim of the supplementation is set at the equivalent of 1 ounce of milk powder per beneficiary per day (present issue), it can be estimated that the maximum number of Pre-School Centres falling under a single request should not exceed 600-

650 centres, so as to remain within VPO financial limits.

Target Area: Eastern Dry Zone

Selection by geographical area should take into account the ecology of the region and the nutritional status of the child population. As described earlier Sri Lanka can be divided into three ecological regions: the wet zone in the South-West; the hill country in the South-Central region; and the dry zone in the rest of the country. The population of the dry zone is generally confronted with the most adverse living circumstances but since this zone covers three quarters of the island it can not serve as the sole criterion for selection of a target area.

A further selection is possible on the basis of the nutritional status of the child population. The latest national figures date from 1975 (Brink et al, 1978). In three areas of the dry zone the percentage of children, aged 6-72 months, showing evidence of recent or past chronic undernutrition was higher than elsewhere in the dry zone, near 40% or even more. These areas cover the following Sarvodaya districts: Amparai (E), Amparai (W), Badulla, Batticaloa, Matale, Moneragala and Polonnaruwa (while Hambantota should in all probability also be included in this group). At present these districts together have a total of 651 Pre-School Centres. The composition of the population in this region is similar to the general distribution of ethnic groups in the country.

It further appears that the Pre-School Programme functions relatively well in these districts as is demonstrated by the three indicators of coverage that were presented earlier on: number of Pre-Schools per 10,000 popula-

tion (Appendix A), the average number of days opened per month and the average number of children per day (Appendix B).

Target Programme: Plantations

The previously mentioned survey (Brink et al, 1978) also found that almost 60% of the children in the age range 6-72 months living on estates showed evidence of past or present undernutrition, a much higher percentage than elsewhere in the rural areas. This group of children also forms a possible target for NOVIB food aid, and the so-called Plantation Programme of Sarvodaya offers a way to reach this group. This programme is the continuation of a project started by UNICEF to provide creches for the children of workers on estates. Now that the initial phases of this project, the construction of buildings, the training of creche workers, and the immunization of children, have been completed the support by UNICEF will be withdrawn.

At present some 600 creches are in operation in 7 'estate districts': Badulla, Galle, Kalutara, Kandy, Matale, Nuwara Elyia and Ratnapura. Creche attendants are being paid Rs. 450/= a month by the plantations concerned. The initial training given to these girls, however, was found wanting and in 1979 Sarvodaya was requested to retrain them. This has now been completed, and the girls are, de facto, working under the supervision of Sarvodaya staff. These chreches function very much like Pre-Schools elsewhere. About 100 creches receive NOVIB milk aid as a remnant of an older Estate Programme, since defaulted. The remaining 500 creches for the moment receive milk donated by the Department of Social Services.

Detailed information concerning this programme was not available at the time of writing and before a request for food aid to this particular programme can be submitted, some questions have to be resolved. There is firstly the matter of the children at the Pre-Schools in villages situated between estates, a group whose nutritional status reportedly is not any better than that of the children on the estates, a group which does not fall under the plantation programme. It is, however, not possible to cover the pre-schools in these districts as well because the total number of creches and centres in the 7 'estate districts' reaches 1500, far above the number recommended earlier on. On the other hand, the Pre-Schools in Badulla and Matale would already fall under a programme aimed at the Eastern Dry Zone and the plantation creches in these two districts could conceivably fall under the same programme. It is, of course, possible to make a further selection i.e. to select those 'estate districts' where the incidence of undernutrition is highest and where the Pre-School Programme functions well. In that case Kandy district would be a likely candidate.

Conclusion

If the above suggestions regarding the selection of certain target populations are acceptable to Sarvodaya and NOVIB, it is recommended that two separate requests be drawn up: one for the Eastern Dry Zone and one for the Plantation Programme. A request for aid aimed at the Pre-School Centres in the Eastern Dry Zone could further include a food purchasing scheme as outlined above, while a reservation should also be made for non-food expenses. In the case of a request for the Plantation Programme the two latter developments are not envisaged, donations in this case should continue in the form of milk powder.

NOTES

1. In the course of 1981 Sarvodaya started an evaluation of performance over the past 10 years, and detailed information was collected about the Pre-Schools and their daily operations. Regretfully, this information was not available at the time of writing this report.
2. In one district, Jaffna, milk was taken home in small packets, which is against instructions.
3. In calculating programme costs it has been assumed that one-third of the Pre-School Programme activities are taken up by food distribution. Since the milk constitutes only 25% of the total amount of food distributed through the Pre-Schools (figure 3, p. 32) it is reasonable to assume 8.25% of the total programme costs as that of the milk distribution.
The figures of the costs of the Pre-School Programme were taken from the Sarvodaya Yearly Financial Statements, minus transport costs and minus the value of the donated milk.
4. For the older children and adults no roll is kept and given this absence of information there is little that can be said about this groups of recipients.
5. Estimate made on the basis of information collected from the mailed questionnaire sent out by the authors and on the basis of the annual report the year 1980 (SSM, 1981). This estimate was further confirmed by preliminary information from the internal Sarvodaya evaluation mentioned earlier (Personal communication, De Wilde).
6. Milk is only issued to the children, but Thripasha is given to the children as well as the other recipients that frequent the Centres, The Thripasha consumption figures for the young children have been adjusted accordingly.
7. This estimate of Thripasha consumption is based on the returns of the centres and tallies quite well with another estimate that can be made. We have noted that the Pre-School Centres are open 15.8 days a month on average and that 17.2 out of 25 children enrolled, or 65%, attend daily. This means that the average child will attend 10.2 days a month. Assuming that it receives Thripasha on each of these days, consumption will be about 510 grs., which fits quite well with the other estimate of 475 grs.
This also increases our confidence in the estimates for milk consumption which are also based on the returns of the centres. Also, because the standard instruction to Pre-School Workers is to give Thripasha 5x a week and milk 2x a week, in portions of 50 grs. and 28 grs. (1 oz) respectively. Our impression is that this instruction is generally followed. Thus, a Thripasha consumption of 510 grs. would indicate that beneficiaries receive 100 grs. of milk powder each month, which is close to our initial estimate of 90 grs.

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Appendix A.

DISTRIBUTION OF PRE-SCHOOL CENTRES BY DISTRICT

	Population ¹	Pre-School Centres ²	PS-Centres per 10,000 Population
WESTERN REGION			
Colombo	1,698,322	188	1.1
Galle	814,579	212	2.6
Gampaha	1,389,490	87	0.6
Kalutara	827,189	191	2.3
Kegalle	682,411	135	2.0
Kurunegala	1,212,755	273	2.3
Matara	644,231	96	1.5
Ratnapura	796,468	115	1.4
Total for Region	8,065,445	1,297	1.6
HILL COUNTRY			
Badulla	642,893	140	2.2
Kandy	1,126,296	186	1.7
Matale	357,441	38	1.1
Nuwara-Eliya	522,219	91	1.7
Total for Region	2,648,849	455	1.7
NORTH-CENTRAL REGION			
Anuradhapura	587,822	121	2.1
Pollonnaruwa	262,753	80	3.0
Puttalam	493,344	107	2.2
Trincomalee	256,790	33	1.3
Total for Region	1,600,709	341	2.1
EASTERN REGION			
Amparai	388,786	76	2.0
Batticaloa	330,899	91	2.8
Hambantota	424,102	62	1.5
Monaragala	279,743	40	1.4
Total for Region	1,423,530	269	1.9
JAFFNA REGION			
Jaffna/Mannar	938,052	51	0.5
Vavuniya/Mullativu	173,416	31	1.8
Total for Region	1,111,468	82	0.7
TOTAL FOR SRI LANKA	14,850,001	2444	1.65

1. Source: DCS, 1982:1

2. Source: SSM, 1981a.

Appendix B.

PRE-SCHOOL CENTRES: THE AVERAGE NUMBER OF DAYS OPENED PER MONTH AND THE AVERAGE NUMBER OF RECIPIENTS PER DAY¹

	Pre-School Centres	Days Opened/ Month/ Centre	Pre-School Children/ Day/ Centre	Older Children & Adults/ Day/ Centre
WESTERN REGION				
Colombo (W)	106	16.4	20.6	2.8
Colombo (E)	82	17.3	15.1	2.9
Galle	212	13.8	18.1	4.5
Gampaha	87	16.2	17.4	1.1
Kalutara (N)	61	16.2	17.2	2.3
Kalutara (S)	130	16.4	16.2	3.0
Kegalle	135	16.3	16.5	5.6
Kurunegala	273	15.4	11.9	1.4
Matara	96	16.3	16.1	3.9
Ratnapura	115	15.2	13.1	4.5
Total for Region	1,297	15.7	15.7	3.1
HILL COUNTRY				
Badulla	140	18.5	18.0	2.8
Kandy	186	16.0	16.6	2.7
Matale	38	15.8	17.4	4.0
Nuwara-Eliya	91	14.1	14.1	7.4
Total for Region	455	16.2	16.5	4.0
NORTH-CENTRAL REGION				
Anuradhapura	121	13.1	17.4	1.8
Pollonnaruwa	80	14.6	17.2	3.1
Puttalam	43	13.7	14.7	1.4
Chilaw	64	15.3	11.7	0.9
Trincomalee	33	16.1	12.1	3.0
Total for Region	341	14.5	14.8	2.0
EASTERN REGION				
Ampara (E)	34	15.7	22.9	2.5
Ampara (W)	42	14.8	14.0	6.3
Batticaloa	91	19.1	33.1	1.8
Hambantota	62	13.5	14.7	3.4
Monaragala	40	13.8	18.7	2.6
Total for Region	269	16.1	24.5	2.8
JAFFNA REGION				
Jaffna/Mannar	51	14.6	25.1	0.5
Vavuniya/Mullaitivu	31	26.4	20.0	0.0
Total for Region	82	18.0	22.9	0.3
TOTAL FOR SRI LANKA	2444	15.8	17.3	2.9

1. Source: SSM (1981b).

Appendix C.

CURRICULUM OF BASIC TRAINING COURSE FOR PRE-SCHOOL WORKERS
(2 week duration)

1. Sarvodaya Philosophy
 - Principles and concepts
 - Cultural and historical justification
 - Shramadana
 - Organization of village groups
 - Shantisena (Village Vigilance and first aid unit)
2. Growth and Development of the Child
3. Pre-School Kitchen
 - Principles
 - Organization
 - Food preparation
 - Management
4. Home Gardening
5. Child Health
 - Recognition of a sick child
 - Childhood illnesses and causes
 - Prevention of illnesses
 - Malnutrition (recognition/causes/prevention/monitoring)
 - Teaching Health Habits to Children
6. Pre-School Activities
 - Story telling
 - Songs and dances
 - Group play
 - Introduction to Educational Material
7. Record Keeping and Reporting

TIME ALLOCATION TO DIFFERENT SUBJECTS

1. Sarvodaya philosophy and principles	20%
2. Child development	10%
3. Community Kitchen	10%
4. Home Gardening	10%
5. Child Health	25%
6. Pre-School Activities	15%
7. Records and Reports	5%
8. Miscellaneous	5%

ROUTINE ACTIVITIES DURING COURSE

Weekdays: Early Morning	Family gathering
7 a.m. - 12 Noon	Practical work in the Pre-School and Kitchen
12 Noon - 12.30 p.m.	Family gathering
1.30 p.m.- 5.30 p.m.	4 Lectures
6.00 p.m.- 7.30 p.m.	Family gathering
Weekends: Shramadana Activities	

Appendix D.
CURRICULUM OF COMPREHENSIVE TRAINING COURSE FOR PRE-SCHOOL WORKERS
(3 month duration)

1. Sarvodaya Philosophy

- Origin and development of Sarvodaya
- Principles and Objectives of Sarvodaya
- Village problems and search for solutions
- Sarvodaya approach to Community Development
- Sarvodaya concept of national development
- Leadership qualities according to Sarvodaya
- Understanding Sarvodaya and Sarvodaya worker
- Sarvodaya Shramadana groups

2. Nutrition

- Principles
- Cultural food pattern and food habits
- Requirements
- Balanced Diet & Low Cost Balanced Diet
- Malnutrition - manifestation
- Malnutrition - causes
- Malnutrition - management and prevention

3. Health

- Health and Ill-Health
- Environmental Hygiene
- Personal Hygiene
- Accidents and First Aid
- Community Nursing
- Health Education
- Community Survey (Health Survey)
- Child Development & Growth
- Communicable Diseases

4. Pre-School Education

- Child Psychology
- Children's Songs
- Story Telling
- Play and Games
- Dancing and Eurhythmics
- Play-material
- Educational Activities
- Management of Pre-School

5. Special Activities

- Home Gardening
- Community Shop Programme

Appendix E.
TERMS OF REFERENCE

Initial terms of reference for a "joint evaluation study of the food aid programme of the Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement - Sri Lanka to which NOVIB contributes" were formulated in early 1980. "Comments on the terms of reference", were submitted by Ruberu & Hoorweg, the team invited to do the study, in January 1982. Sarvodaya and NOVIB subsequently agreed that the evaluation should cover the following aspects.

1. Background information on:
 - a. the health and nutritional situation in Sri Lanka; and
 - b. that of the target group in particular;
 - c. the place of the SSM programme among other nutrition programmes in Sri Lanka;
 - d. the place of NOVIB food aid to SSM among that of other donors to SSM and Sri Lanka in general.

2. Logistics and Operational Aspects of the Programme
 - a. reporting and planning at NOVIB.
 - b. reporting and planning at SSM;
 - c. programme and distribution statistics;
 - d. characteristics of the recipients/participants;
 - e. composition of aid package and meals prepared at centres;
 - f. training of programme workers.

3. Effects of the programme
 - a. impact on health and nutritional status of participating children;
 - b. the role of the programme in the development of SSM in general, and the organization of the villages in particular.

In May a progress report was furthermore submitted by the evaluation team suggesting that the impact study (mentioned under 3a) should be given an independent status since it required a longer time period than initially envisaged. The team further agreed to submit a draft report on the other, remaining aspects by September 15.

Appendix F.
LIST OF PERSONS INTERVIEWED

Ms. Sunanda Paranagama	Pre-School Worker	Bopitiya Village
Ms. C. Hewage	Pre-School Worker	Sirikandura Village
Mr. N.M. Danapala	District Co-ordinator	Kalutara District
Ms. J. Pushpakanthi	Pre-School Supervisor	Kalutara District
Mr. S. Gunnapala	District Co-ordinator	Nuwara-Eliya District
Ms. K.G. Balamenike	Pre-School Supervisor	Nuwara-Eliya District
Ms. H. Harinta Violet Silva	Pre-School Worker	Gaminipura Village
Ms. M. Kumarihamy	Pre-School Worker	Gaminipura Village
Ms. I.P. Edirisinghe	Pre-School Worker	Magastota Village
Mrs. T.B. Karunawathie	Pre-School Worker	Mangala Oya Village
Ms. A. Nandani Fernando	Pre-School Worker	Uhana-Tissapura Village
Mr. S. Udagedera	District Co-ordinator	Amparai District (E)
Mrs. N. Udagedera	Pre-School Supervisor	Amparai District (E)
Mr. H. Samdeen	District Co-ordinator	Batticaloa District
Mrs. N. Samdeen	Pre-School Supervisor	Batticaloa District
Ms. K. Thangeswari	Pre-School Worker	Karnappankini Village
Ms. K. Inesethirum	Pre-School Worker	Amirthagali Village
Ms. R. Basnayake	Pre-School Supervisor	Anuradhapura District
Ms. C. de Silva	Pre-School Supervisor	Anuradhapura District
Mr. H.K. Navaratne	District Co-ordinator	Anuradhapura District
Ms. S.J. Bisomenike	Pre-School Worker	Divulwewa Village
Ms. S. Elpitiya	Pre-School Worker	Kalettewa Village
Mr. T.G. Karunapala	District Co-ordinator	Vavuniya District
Ms. K. Siriyawathie	Pre-School Worker	Mahakachchikudi Village
Ms. K. Ponnammal	Pre-School Worker	Kulavisuttan Village
Ms. P. Yamuna	Assistant District Co-ordinator	Jaffna District

Ms. S. Pathma	Pre-School Supervisor	Jaffna District
Mrs. A. Jenova	Pre-School Worker	Uyarappulam Village
Ms. T. Umakanthah	Pre-School Worker	Sinnamadu Village
Mr. T.M.K. Nissanka	District Co-ordinator	Kurunegala District
Mrs. K. Wijesinghe	Pre-School Supervisor	Kurunegala District
Ms. N. Weerasinghe	Pre-School Worker	Weerambuwa Village
Ms. S. Marasinghe	Pre-School Worker	Kumbukgahamulla Village
Dr. A.T. Ariyaratne	President SSM	
Mrs. S. Rajasuriya	Vice-President, SSM	
Mr. K.P.L. Perera	Financial Secretary, SSM	
Ms. K. Tillakaratne	Ag. Head Children's Services, SSM	
Mrs. L. Jayasekera	Ag. Head Children's Services and Co-ordinator, Plantation Services, SSM	
Mr. M.M.A. Perera	Store Keeper (Food), SSM	
Mr. Rohantha	Recording Section, SSM	
Mr. Wimalasena	Co-ordinator (Thriposha Programme in SSM)	
Mrs. B.D. de Mel	Nutritionist	CARE, Sri Lanka
Mr. F. Davis	Director	CARE, Sri Lanka
Ms. N. Egoda Arachchi	Assistant Director	Dept. of Social Services - Colombo
Mrs. G.V. Iterson	Nutritionist	NOVIB - Netherlands
Mrs. B. Ambags	Head, VPO-Programme	Ministry of Development Co-operation - Netherlands
Mr. E. Boer	Second Secretary	Royal Netherlands Embassy - Colombo.