

BUILDING A VALUE - BASED SOCIETY: CONTRIBUTING TO NON-RECURRENCE OF VIOLENCE IN FUTURE

A Facilitation Guide for Community Dialogue at Village Level

Developed by

Radhika Hettiarachchi

with Nilakshi De Silva and Marisa Fernando

April 2017

The Community Memorialisation Project, Sri Lanka

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INTRODUCTION

This facilitation guide is for the first dialogue workshop of a series of workshops

AGENDA AT A GLANCE FOR THE WORKSHOP

- 09.30 – 10.00 - Introductory Session
- 10.00 – 10.15 - Tea/Coffee
- 10.15 – 11.15 - Session One: Self
- 11.15 – 12.15 - Session Two: Other
- 12.15 – 12.45 - Lunch
- 12.45 – 01.45 - Session Three: A value-based analysis
- 01.45 – 02.45 - Session Four: A value-based society
- 02.45 – 03.00 - Feedback and wrap-up
- 03.00 – 03.15 - Tea/Coffee

1. SESSION GUIDE: INTRODUCTORY SESSION



OBJECTIVE OF THE SESSION:

To create a safe and open space for dialogue



SESSION DURATION:

30 minutes

TIP: Do not spend too much time on this session, explaining the purpose, agenda of the day and project goals as those will emerge throughout the day and we do not want to 'lead' the participants by giving them the end goal before going through the sessions. The less said about the process of the day, the better!

TIP: This is not a training exercise. As such the objective of this workshop is not to impart knowledge or develop a course of action for a particular purpose. It is entirely an exercise in facilitating the participants' views and learning.

TIP: Have the District Partner or organising institution welcome the participants as they already have a relationship with the participants, having invited them in person.

TIP: Use ice-breakers if necessary. If there are small children, give them activities in the same area but away from the sessions.

1.1 Welcome and introduction to the project

The purpose of the project is to remember our experiences, courageous acts, losses and hopes in order to deal with our past in a constructive way.

Opening ritual: Generally, this should be secular, but be open to religious or cultural practices if it is of the participant's choosing on a case by case basis. In a particularly homogeneous, religious community, if the participants wish to, the opening ritual can be a prayer or a chant. In a culturally homogeneous space it can be a traditional song or a mode of greeting that is common practice.

1.2 The goal of this workshop:

To share our experiences with each other, and think about what lessons we might be able to learn and use in our lives based on our life experiences.

1.3 Introduction of participants:

This can be in the form of each participant introducing his/her neighbour or each participant introducing themselves with their name, village and something unique about themselves. The objective is to make the group comfortable with each other's presence although most close-knit village groups will know each other quite well.

2. SESSION GUIDE: THE SELF : VISUALISING PERSONAL AND COLLECTIVE MEMORY



OBJECTIVE OF THE SESSION:

The objective here is to use these two preliminary sessions (2 and 3) as a catalyst or launching pad for the next two sessions (4 and 5). The specific objective of this session is to facilitate reflection and catharsis by helping the groups remember their personal and collective experiences of violence and share them with each other.



SESSION DURATION:

1 hour



MATERIALS:

Bristol board or flip chart paper, pens, pencils, colour pencils (but not chalk), blue tack, pins or tape or flip chart stands and coloured post-it notes.



METHODOLOGY:

Group Work

TIP: Group the participants by their village, in situations where more than one village is represented. If it is one village only, break up into a few small groups based on age, or gender as relevant to the situation.

TIP: If there are a few individuals within groups that dominate the conversation, or are by profession social mobilisers, try and pull them out of the group by engaging them in some other way, such as to scribe or support the facilitation.

2.1 Visualising experiences:

What are the incidents of war, or violence, or painful memories that your village has experienced? This might be a collective set of memories with highlights of personal experiences. Ask the groups to visualize these in any format they choose.



2.2 Sharing of experiences with each other:

Share the visuals in marketplace style, presented by one person while the others walk around the room and listen to each village experience. Let the groups share their stories, after which offer anyone from the group the opportunity to add to the story.

2.3 Emotional responses:

Ask each individual to express how they feel about their own story and collective stories by taking a coloured post-it note and writing on it how the process made one feel (i.e. frustrated, sad, hopeful, angry, courageous etc.). Paste them next to each of the visualisations – one's own as well as the other groups.

3. SESSION GUIDE:

THE OTHER – AN EXPLORATION OF OTHERS’ EXPERIENCES



OBJECTIVE OF THE SESSION:

The objective here is to use these two preliminary sessions (2 and 3) as a catalyst or launching pad for the next two sessions (4 and 5). The specific objective of this session is to facilitate empathy, compassion and understanding by being exposed to life histories of others from outside the village, ethno-religious community and the district.



SESSION DURATION:

1 hour



MATERIALS

videos, photo-essays, letters, trees of life, children’s memory maps from districts and coloured post-its.



METHODOLOGY:

Open discussion.

TIP: Briefly explain where the stories are from and that these were all voluntarily given by participants to be shared with fellow Sri Lankans, most of which are hand-written and unedited.

TIP: Be familiar with the pool of 36 stories available for the mini-exhibition so that you can select stories of relevance or difference based on the ethnicity, socio-economic status and gender of the homogeneous group. You may want to prioritise the stories of the other two districts if you wish to show the similarities or differences between or you may wish to show the differences within the same district between other ethno-religious groups’ experiences.

TIP: It is important to encourage free expression, even if it is negative, vindictive, angry or prejudiced. The purpose of having homogeneous groups with facilitators from the same ethno-religious make-up is to allow for uninhibited sharing. Do not try to have conversations about empathy or co-existence or reconciliation before or during the session, until after the emotional responses activity.

TIP: Please read the detailed facilitator guide on how to manage situations of conflict, contested narratives, and requests for transitional justice or discussions on truth.

3.1 Viewing stories:

Start with 2-3 videos in plenary and then ask the participants to walk around, read the stories (on the original print or by picking up the clipboards with the translated versions) of the stories. Support those who are unable to read the stories, and be available to answer questions.

3.2 Emotional responses:

Take another colour of post-it notes and write how reading and listening to others stories made you feel in one or two words. Paste them on the stories.

Discuss how emotions were the same or different and acknowledge that all these memories are valid to the individual, and these experiences are difficult when opening up. Discuss emotions felt by the participants, rather than the versions of the truth, specific issues arising, external governance or transitional justice related factors or personal grievances.

3.3 Acknowledgement of all suffering:

In this context it should be a secular exercise such as a minute of silence. But in some homogeneous communities where a particular faith is strong, be open to the idea of a chant or a prayer as this is one possible way to move the conversation towards 'forgiveness', 'compassion' or 'mercy' thereby diffusing tension. Be mindful, that this is not suggested or imposed by the facilitator in multi-cultural or multi-religious groups – but something that should be practiced if the community wishes to do so.

You could ask the community, how they might like to acknowledge what was said and felt.



ENDING THE FIRST HALF OF THE WORKSHOP: (CATHARSIS AND EMPATHY)

The key learning point at the close of Sessions 1 and 2 are:

- To acknowledge that suffering is various, to varying degrees but universally felt by most Sri Lankans.
- If we don't want to feel or experience the traumas we have shared in the first session or seen in the second session, and we don't want to experience violence or bear the consequences of violence, what can we as individual do to prevent it in future at a personal level?

4. SESSION GUIDE:

VALUE-BASED UNDERSTANDING OF CONFLICT



OBJECTIVE OF THE SESSION:

The objective of the second half of the day is to move from recounting the experiences of violence from the past, to what we can do to prevent it in future through creating a value-based society (sessions 4 and 5). The specific objective of session 4 is to create the background understanding of, how the loss of values affects the ability to de-escalate conflicts from becoming violent. The assumption here is that if society is not familiar with some of the reasons why or what lead to violent conflict, then it is not easy to recognise the symptoms of existing and emerging conflicts in order to de-escalate or prevent them.



SESSION DURATION:

1 hour



MATERIALS:

Flash cards or coloured paper, pens, blue tack, pins or tape, brown paper or flip chart paper to create a 'wall' for pasting the cards.



METHODOLOGY:

Group work.

TIP: Keep the session focused on values – or those characteristics that individuals can have control over as they are about accepting certain norms, principles and behaviour patterns and inculcating them into one's own life and therefore are entirely within personal control. Keep the dialogue focused on these 'personally controllable principles' rather than discussing specific unresolved or emerging issues and needs that someone else, including the Government is duty-bound to solve and as such are not within individual control.

TIP: According to the output and discussion levels of the previous session, either have the same groups or separate the groups into age-groups. This will depend on the ability of individuals to stay focused and on the amount of anger or distraction within the groups. For example, if the younger generation is angry, it maybe useful to keep them together to resolve this or in some cases this anger maybe dissipated if merged with a group of elders who may have lived through conflict and therefore able to provide a sense of hope for the future. It is up to the facilitator to ascertain the mood of the group and split them accordingly.

4.1 Introduction of values

It is important to define and differentiate between various words in Sinhala and Tamil for what 'values' mean. You may ask the plenary what is meant by 'values' but quickly set the parameters of the discussion by providing a definition of 'values' to keep the session focused. For this purpose, define 'values' as principles or standards of behaviour that one considers important in order to create a better, more peaceful and prosperous society.

4.2 Identifying the 'missing values' that leads to conflict

Once the participants are in groups, pose the question, 'what values may have been missing in society that lead to violence between Sri Lankans in the past?' Write these on the cards provided, individually.

4.3 Discussing the impact

In open forum share each groups' values as written by individuals and put up the cards in clusters at the front of the room as they are shared. Separate those that one can have individual control over and those that are outside of the individual's personal control (for example, rule of law versus respect for the rule of law).

5. SESSION GUIDE:

VISIONING A VALUE-BASED SOCIETY FOR NON-RECURRENCE OF VIOLENCE



OBJECTIVE OF THE SESSION:

The objective of the second half of the day is to move from recounting the experiences of violence from the past, to what we can do to prevent it in the future through creating a value-based society (sessions 4 and 5). The specific objective of this session is to identify the key traits of a value-based society and how one can 'practice' these values in everyday life in order to contribute to non-recurrence of violence.



SESSION DURATION:

1 hour



MATERIAL:

Flash cards, pens and blue tack, pins or tape and flip board paper, specially printed post-card take-aways.



METHODOLOGY:

Individual exercise and open forum discussion.

TIP: Make clear that the entire day of reflection of the past experiences, the emotions felt as they looked at the self or the empathy generated for the other, was leading to this point about what kind of society we want to build in the future for the next generation or the generations to come in order to resolve conflicts non-violently.

TIP: At this stage, it will be helpful to connect the past to the present, and to ask participants to also consider what conflicts or tensions currently exist in their society as they think about the values that need to be practiced to prevent violence and conflict.

TIP: In terms of transference of memory without prejudice, you may discuss how the next generation is linked to the idea of non-recurrence of violence. In effect, what key values should we pass on?

5.1 Visualising values:

Ask the participants to write down a few values on flash cards, individually, considering the values that were missing in the past, the prevailing conditions in the present that might lead to re-awakening or create new conflicts and the values that could have an impact on preventing conflict. The question might be framed as – 'In the future, what is the kind of society do you want your children to live in?' or 'In 2025, what kind of values do you want a Sri Lankan citizen to have in order to live in an equitable, just and peaceful Sri Lanka?'

As participants share the values they have identified, create a clustered visualisation. As you cluster them, some of the values that are not in the control of the individual or are responsibilities of the Government or society at large, place on a different side. Acknowledge these as important yet, as beyond the control of an individual in their daily life.

5.2 Practicing values in society:

Ask the participants to look over the value board they've created and ask the question – 'How do we practice values in everyday life?' In an open forum, discuss and link a few of these identified values to actions (for example, respecting difference by visiting and respecting others' religious sites and rites).

5.3 Circle of commitment:

Write down a simple, practical commitment to uphold one value for non-recurrence and read it out to each other in a circles. This card, specially designed as a keepsake, is to be taken home by the participants. Highlight the importance of practicing values in daily life, especially for teaching values by example to children.



ENDING THE SECOND HALF OF THE WORKSHOP: (CREATING A VALUE-BASED SOCIETY)

Before the closing, highlight that the objective of the workshop was primarily to understand the impact and cost of violence on our society and to build an understanding that while a lot of institutional and other processes are important to justice and sustainable peace, what we want to create is a groundswell of movement towards taking personal ownership for actions that we can control.

The commitments that they are taking home is therefore a symbol of this recognition, and the acknowledgement that each of us can contribute at the personal level for a better society in order to prevent violence for our children.

6. SESSION GUIDE: FEEDBACK AND WRAP-UP



OBJECTIVE OF THE SESSION:

The objective of this session is to end the day's workshop by giving participants the opportunity to provide feedback and their views on the content of the workshop.



SESSION DURATION:

15 minutes



MATERIAL:

Evaluation form, pens



METHODOLOGY:

Individual responses on printed hand out.

TIP: To avoid a feeling of discomfort for providing accurate feedback because of the presence of the facilitator, the organisers or social mobilisers should conduct this session while the facilitator leaves the room.

TIP: Please leave at least 10 minutes BEFORE the scheduled end of the workshop for participants to complete the evaluations form (so that they are not in a hurry to leave).

TIP: Please ask them to drop it off in a box or some container before they leave. Do not check the forms, read the feedback or comment on the feedback received in front of the participants (this is to help ensure that they understand that their anonymity will be protected).

6.1 Evaluations and feedback

- When you start the evaluation session, start by asking the participants to reflect back over what they did over the entire day.
- Please ask them to answer ALL the questions on the 2 pages.
- Explain the scale; that the happy face above the number 5 means their satisfaction is high while the scale decreases towards 1 and the sad face.
- Please ask them to be as honest and as open as possible as we want to replicate the workshop elsewhere and their feedback will help to change what is not working well and do something better/more useful.
- Their names are not needed (unless they want to put it). However, please indicate gender, age and division/village.
- Offer to help older participants who may have trouble filling out the form.

7. ANNEXES

7.1 DETAILED FACILITATOR GUIDE

INTRODUCTORY SESSION –	
Introducing the Facilitator	When introducing yourself, the facilitator simply shares his/her name, village or district and that they are here as facilitator. There is no need to share information about your organisation or your past work experience, particularly in peacebuilding or transitional justice.
Introduction to the workshop	<p>When introducing the project,</p> <p>DO NOT say this is about non-recurrence,</p> <p>DO NOT say this is about peacebuilding or social cohesion,</p> <p>DO NOT say this is about building understanding and empathy between communities as it may lead to structuring or influencing the direction of dialogue.</p> <p>IF QUESTIONED, this does not mean that the facilitator is required to be dishonest. The objectives can be shared truthfully if the need arises, however, it is best to avoid the overall outcomes expected simply in order to prevent 'leading' the group rather than eliciting from the group.</p> <p>DO MAKE CLEAR, if asked only, that this is not a development project, nor will it provide any specific answers to questions of disappearance or reparation or land restitution or other issues of transitional justice because we as civil society or you as a facilitator cannot responsibly provide accurate answers to questions that can only be truly answered by the Government or relevant authorities.</p> <p>DO NOT make this a training exercise. As such the objective of this workshop is not to impart knowledge or develop a course of action for a particular purpose (such as advocacy). It is entirely an exercise of facilitating the views, needs and lessons learned of the group at the workshop and to draw out their own willingness to affect changes in their lives in order to change society from the bottom-up. Therefore, refrain from 'training mode' or sharing your own opinions, lessons and beliefs. If there are questions from the audience, throw it back into the group and facilitate answers from the audience and highlight what you want to say through discussion.</p> <p>BEAR IN MIND the reason they are asked if some of them were involved in this project before is for continuity and a logical long-term engagement with 'champions' and social influencers. This is not an isolated, one-off event for 'reconciliation' but a process of thoughtful engagement with the same communities (even if some of the participants are new) over a period of time.</p>

SESSION 1: THE SELF	
Working groups visualising their experiences of violence	SHOULD DISPUTE OCCUR ABOUT VERSIONS OF TRUTH or if there are contesting narratives or disagreements about what happened, how it happened or the impact of it – it is important to first let the discussions within the groups happen, and then to intervene with the premise that ‘the absolute truth’ is not as important in a situation where there is no documentation but only a multitude of ways in which people have experienced personal truths. De-escalate any assertions of what is true and what is not, by dealing with contested narratives as perspectives or personal experiences and the feelings or emotions that these experiences have created within the person/persons rather than the incident or event in contestation.
	IF QUESTIONS PERSIST, about the link to truth and justice, it would be useful to state that there are other efforts from Government and NGOs that are about truth-telling, human rights, victims perspectives and justice - such as truth commissions, disappearance commission - that might do the work of finding absolute truth whereas the focus here at this workshop is not that. But rather, it is to provide opportunities for accepting multiple truths, particularly the perspectives of ordinary individuals and communities who are otherwise not heard.
Sharing experiences in market place	Do not allow for contested narratives to emerge at this point because resolving ‘truth’ is not the objective of the session but the emotion of catharsis or opening up the past in order to deal with the residual emotions they may bring up – the objective of which eventually, is healing.
Emotional responses	Acknowledge the emotional responses but do not delve into them. The facilitators can count how many/what type of emotions are expressed and request the Rapporteur to make a note of it during the next session when the groups are working separately.

SESSION 2: THE OTHER	
Descriptions of materials	<p>All stories are voluntarily given, sometimes anonymously where no names are visible and sometimes with names. They are presented unedited but with translations in all languages. These are only a few of the stories but there are 350 stories, which are all online and archived at the National Archives of Sri Lanka.</p> <p>Trees of life: Represents the story of one person. The roots are personal family history; the ground is where they are today; the bark is their experiences of violence; the branches their hopes; the leaves are people they value and the fruits are traits they value in themselves.</p> <p>Letters: hand-written and unedited. These are about personal or collective experiences of particular villages.</p> <p>Children’s Memory Maps: These are maps of the village drawn by children together with their elders, where the elders fill in gaps in history for the children of incidents that happened before their time.</p> <p>Videos: Interviews with individuals and groups showcasing life histories as well as their opinions on peacebuilding, justice, memorialisation and advice to the next generation about building a society of non-violence.</p> <p>Photo-essays: Life histories recounted in the form of photos with quotes from the individuals depicted.</p>
Contested narratives	<p>If the issue of contested narratives emerges here, follow the same strategy as before in focusing on the fact that ‘absolute truth’ is not the primary focus of the session but acknowledging that perceptions differ, experiences differ and the degree of suffering may differ. However, in dealing with our difficult past, there will always be the need to hear all sides of the story in order to understand the other and to realise that violent conflict has affected us all in one way or another. Therefore “EMPATHY” is the key objective in this session.</p> <p>It is absolutely important to let people talk freely about their anger if it emerges. Particularly in situations where the participants feel that they do not need to hear about the ‘other’, because what they may have experienced is far worse, or not acknowledged by the ‘other’, or the ‘other’ is particularly blamed for the pain or suffering such a community has experienced, or the impacts and repercussions of violent conflict are still felt or remain unresolved. Do not offer any advice, or position or opinion in such a situation as the objective is to not focus on difference or ascertain who was more affected than the other. If there is genuine anger and hurt, let it emerge as this is also catharsis, and it must be extracted before it can be dealt with constructively.</p> <p>When acknowledging suffering, wherever possible do it secularly. Be mindful that ethnically homogeneous groups may not always be religiously homogenous so try to encourage a minute of silence instead.</p>

Emotional responses	<p>It doesn't matter what the content is – the emotion and the ability to empathise is key in this session.</p> <p>It is important that pain and suffering is acknowledged in a form the participants are comfortable with as a joint exercise or group activity that creates a connection between the 'self' and the 'other'. Again, this should be secular as much as possible.</p>
LUNCH:	
Early departure	<p>In some cases, people may want to leave at this stage. However, in discussion with the participants, in situations where the workshop must close earlier than anticipated, you may want to carry on and finish with a late lunch.</p> <p>In such a situation, abbreviate the sessions by combining session 4 and 5 (value-based understanding of conflict and value-based visioning for the future) by completing session 4, but discussing session 5 in plenary, choosing or acknowledging the value board developed as the group speaks at the end of the session.</p>
SESSION 4: VALUE-BASED UNDERSTANDING OF CONFLICT	
Understanding values and staying focused	<p>It is important to define and differentiate between various words in Sinhala and Tamil for what values mean. You may facilitate a brief discussion on what are values or provide a definition of values to keep the session focused. The recommended definition is provided within the session plan for the section.</p> <p>Keep the dialogue focused on these 'personally controllable principles' rather than discussing specific unresolved or emerging issues and needs that someone else, including the Government is duty-bound to provide and as such is not within individual control.</p>
Issues and other concerns	<p>In cases where other issues come up in working groups that are not within personal control or cannot be considered values – for example, rule of law (which is different to 'respect' for rule of law which is a personal value), acknowledge that this was a reason that violent conflict may have happened but park it visibly but away from the personally controllable values. In cases, such as the above, you may be able to throw the question back to the audience about how rule of law could become a personal value by personalising it to fit within one's control and context such as by adding 'respecting' the rule of law.</p>

SESSION 5: VISUALISING A VALUE-BASED SOCIETY FOR NON-RECURRENCE OF VIOLENCE	
Creating vision boards in open forum	<p>Remind the group of the agreed or chosen definition of values (values as principles or standards of behaviour, of what is considered important in order to create a better, more peaceful and prosperous society).</p> <p>Bear in mind that the entire day of reflection of the past experiences, the emotions felt as they looked at the 'self' or the empathy generated for the 'other', and the realisation at the end of the session that at a very personal level, they do not want violence in their society or village, was leading to this point about what kind of society we want to build in the future for the next generation or the generations to come in order to resolve conflicts non-violently. You may want to highlight this towards the end of the session, once group work is complete.</p>
Some examples of values that may emerge or you could create conversations to elicit	<p>The following are a potential list of values we would like to elicit from the group –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A commitment to non-violence or ahimsa. - A commitment to non-violent communication or resolution of conflicts. - Tolerance for each other's differences. - An understanding of the other/cultural openness/religious openness. - A commitment to prevent communalism or racism including casual/everyday racism. - Respect for the other's space/rights/needs. - Believing in equality. - Respecting the rule of law.
Clustering and recording	As they present, remember to cluster and have the Rapporteur take down the values as well as the other issues parked on the side.

<p>Conversations about values</p>	<p>Bear in mind that we are trying to achieve an understanding that values need to be practiced in daily life in order to become ingrained in society and specifically in the next generation. Therefore, we need to break the values down to simple acts that we can practice in everyday life. For example, being angry about injustice is valid, protesting about injustice is valid, however attacking personal property or people or the other in any capacity is wrong. This is how non-violence can be 'practiced'.</p> <p>In some cases, as the pilot workshops have shown, it maybe useful to link these values to religious tenets in some groups if their primary context or ideas of good versus bad are derived from religion. In secular groups, this can be linked to cultural beliefs if it is useful for the discussion or none of these if it is irrelevant. This will have to be judged according to each group. However, try as much as possible, to keep the discussions secular.</p> <p>In terms of transference of memory without prejudice, you may discuss how the next generation is linked to the idea of non-recurrence of violence. In effect, what key values should we pass on? Perhaps highlight here again, the importance of 'practicing values' and why the commitment should be placed at home in a prominent place so that it serves as a reminder about creating a value-based society for non-recurrence of violence.</p>
<p>SESSION 6: FEEDBACK AND WRAP-UP SESSION</p>	
<p>Before closing the session, after the circle of commitment</p>	<p>End the day with the acknowledgement that we have dealt with difficult emotions, and have realised the varying degrees to which we are all affected by the cost of war and violence.</p>
<p>When wrapping up</p>	<p>Before the closing, highlight that the objective of the workshop was primarily to understand the impact and cost of violence on our society and to build an understanding that while a lot of institutional and other processes are important to just and sustainable peace, what we want to create is a groundswell of movement towards taking personal ownership for actions that we can control.</p> <p>Therefore, we would like to generate these conversations about the importance of a value-based society that each of us can contribute to, and practice in our daily lives so that we can pass this on to the next generation.</p> <p>The commitments that they are taking home is therefore a symbol of this recognition, and the acknowledgement that each of us can contribute at the personal level for a better society in order to prevent violence for our children.</p>

7.2 EVALUATION/ FEEDBACK FORM

Village Level Feedback Form

Dialogue Workshop: Community Memorialisation project

1. What is your assessment of today's workshop sessions?

Not useful Very useful Why do you think so?
 at all ☺
 ☺

Session 1: when you drew map of your experiences	1	2	3	4	5	
Session 2: when you read other's stories	1	2	3	4	5	
Session 3: when you discussed emotions and values	1	2	3	4	5	
Session 4: when you thought about what life should be like for your children	1	2	3	4	5	

2. Please write down one new thing, that you did not know before, that you learnt from today's workshop

3. Will you share what you learned today? If so, please indicate below with whom and how

Who	How

4. Many values were discussed today. Which of these values resonated most with you?

Not useful Very useful Why do you think so?
 at all ☺
 ☺

5. Overall was the workshop useful for you? Do you feel you benefitted from participating?

1	2	3	4	5	
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Not useful Very useful Why do you think so?
 at all ☺
 ☺

6. Did you feel you were able to express your thoughts freely and openly?

1	2	3	4	5	
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Please indicate the following information about you:

Gender Female Male Age DS Division

Thank you!

About the authors –

Radhika Hettiarachchi is a researcher, curator and development practitioner. She is primarily engaged in the field of peacebuilding with expertise in memorialisation and oral history, as well as the arts as a means of creating space for civil society discourse on issues of gender, security, memory justice and reconciliation. She read English and Communications Theory at York University, Canada, and holds a Masters in Development Management from the London School of Economics and Political Science, U.K.

Nilakshi De Silva is a researcher on poverty and development related issues, with a particular interest in monitoring and evaluation. She holds a Masters in Policy Analysis from the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs, Princeton University, USA.

Marisa Fernando has been working in the development field for over 20 years with a focus on community development and peace building. She is currently the Search Head of Programs at Search for Common Ground Sri Lanka with overall responsibility to ensure effectiveness and quality of all programming. She has a MA (Econ) Economics and Management of Rural Development, from the University of Manchester, UK, and a Post Graduate Diploma in Conflict Resolution and Security Studies, from the University of Bradford, UK

Acknowledgements –

Special acknowledgements feedback on content Abdul Cader Mahir and Nawaz Mohammed

With acknowledgement of field support Mohammed Sadath Mohammed Ismail, Rani Singarajah and Ainkaran Kugathanan from Search for Common Ground Sri Lanka; Thillayamma Kumarasooriyam and Subramaniam Nageshwaran from Akkaraipattu Women's Development Foundation in Ampara; Jabanathan Dalima, Kugathanan Sajeevan and Inthumani Hariharathamotharan from Viluthu Centre for Human Resources Development in Mannar; and Chaminda Jayasekera, Namal Dharshana Herath, Tharindu Srimal and Wijayananda Kadurupokuna from Prathiba Media Network in Matara

About the project –

The Community Memorialisation Project is a joint project of Search for Common Ground and The Herstories Project along with district partners - Viluthu Centre for Human Resource Development in Mannar, Prathiba Media Network in Matara and Women Development Foundation in Ampara.

- The project captures individual and shared community narratives in order to prioritise and strengthen community owned memorialisation. Its primary objective is to facilitate an environment that acknowledges and preserves multiple histories, while encouraging empathy through inter-generational transfer and inter-regional sharing of memory to support peace and reconciliation in Sri Lanka.
- Building on individual stories the project team works with the communities to share their stories and facilitate dialogue within their communities about why memorialisation is needed, why multiple narratives should co-exist, and how we remember, at the divisional level and between the participating districts. The process focuses on empathetic listening and acknowledgement.
- There is a need for a wider public engagement. This is based on web-based and social media based platforms to add, debate and engage with the stories as well as on questions of memorialisation. With the participants' permission, the project will share these life stories through a traveling exhibition, an online archive, and a physical archive at the national level, similar to its predecessor - the Herstories Project.
- The project will contribute to discourse and practice, through regular learning circles, sharing of practice notes, new processes of monitoring and evaluation tools devised for this project and recommendations for a memory policy, based on views and needs at a village or district level.

While the project will have a cathartic and empathetic impact on the participants sharing their life stories at an individual level, it will also facilitate their voices and needs to be heard, through its wide dissemination. The success of the project will be in attitudinal changes – about the need to hear and acknowledge the many personal truths that exist. At a wider level, it will contribute to how Sri Lankans memorialise and historicise our past, and to making processes of justice, truth and reconciliation inclusive.

