

# **Promoting Media Professionalism, Independence and Accountability in Sri Lanka**

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**Sida Evaluation 06/50**

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## List of Abbreviations

BBC	British Broadcasting Cooperation
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CFA	Cease Fire Agreement
DANIDA	Danish International Development Agency
DKR	Danish Kroners
DG	Director General
FMM	Free Media Movement
Fojo	Institute for Further Education of Journalists
GOSL	Government of Sri Lanka
INGO	International Non-governmental organization
LTTE	Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MRTC	Media Resource Training Centre
NORAD	Norwegian International Development Agency
PCCSL	Press Complaints Commission of Sri Lanka
Sida	Swedish International Development Agency
SLCJ	Sri Lanka College of Journalism
SLFI	Sri Lanka Foundation Institute
SLPI	Sri Lanka Press Institute
TOR	Terms of Reference
ToT	Training of Trainers
UNDP	United National Development Programme
UNF	United National Front
UPFA	United People's Freedom Alliance

## Executive Summary

This is an evaluation of the project “Promoting Professionalism, Independence and Accountability in Sri Lanka” under the Sri Lanka Press Institute, SLPI. SLPI has two major departments: the Press Complaints Commission of Sri Lanka, PCCSL, and the Sri Lanka College of Journalism, SLCJ. PCCSL is a self-regulatory body for press ethics, while SLCJ is running a one-year diploma course in journalism and a number of short term mid-career courses for working journalists.

The major funding of the SLPI has come from Sida and Norad for the period 2003–2006. This has been supplemented by funding from DANIDA towards the end of this period. The Institute for Further Education of Journalists, Fojo, has been the Swedish partner to SLPI to support institutional capacity building.

The objective of the evaluation is to assess the implementation strategy of the project and how it has helped to meet the specific project objectives, as well as to assess the impact and relevance of the SLPI, the PCC and the SLCJ. The evaluation is future oriented, and produces concrete recommendations based on lessons learnt from the first two to three years of activities for a possible continuation of the funding. The evaluation took place in Colombo in February 2006.

The setting up of SLPI is a result of the coming together of three stake holders – Newspaper Society, Editors’ Guild and Free Media Movement. The Newspaper Society is an association of owners of newspapers. The Editors Guild brings together editors of some of the mainstream newspapers. Free Media Movement is a network of journalists which has been campaigning on issues of media freedom and rights of journalists.

The concept of the SLPI incorporates all three aspects reflected in the discussions on media reform in Sri Lanka. These are, training and strengthening professionalism of the journalism trade, setting standards for professional journalism and advocacy for reforms in the legal and regulatory framework so that media can operate without institutional barriers.

During a short duration of less than three years SLPI has achieved a lot. The institute is up and running. Most of the practical aspects of setting up an institute have been achieved. In addition, a whole new section for the training of TV and radio journalists which was not on the original plan has been established. Most journalists we met agreed about the concept of self-regulation and commended the SLPI for pioneering the concept. The courses conducted by the College and Fojo have acceptance within the media industry.

Despite these achievements, SLPI has been going through a certain degree of turmoil in recent times, mainly linked to management issues. Hence the organisation has entered a period where it needs to sort out these issues and consolidate itself. The up-coming new three year proposal has to cover many of the institutional development elements as well as programmatic aspects. It should give a clear vision of where the institution will be at the end of the next three years; identify goals and targets; establish a clear programme of work inclusive of cross-cutting issues and rights based approach.

SLPI is incorporated under the Companies Act No.17 of 1982 as a non-profit company. The board of SLPI consists of representatives of Newspaper Society, Editors’ Guild and Free Media Movement. There is a need to consider a formula for rotation of board members so that there is a greater participation of members of the stakeholder organisations within the board.

Increasing the number of members of SLPI has been a long standing discussion within SLPI, and the incorporation of new members should be carried out as soon as possible, including members from the electronic media industry.

At present the three units of the institute operate in relative isolation of each other. The independent registration of the units could lead to further distance between units. Hence during the next phase much more effort is needed to work together under an overall SLPI identity, with improved internal and external communications.

Currently the administrative and financial functions are highly centralised within the SLPI. There is a need to devolve these functions to SLCJ and PCC, and establish a management team consisting of DG, CEO SLCJ, CEO PCC, the Advocacy adviser and representative of Fojo for the day to day running of the organisation. This would allow the board to focus on overall policy and strategy matters, leaving day to day management to the management team.

One of the major tasks of SLPI is to conduct advocacy on media freedom etc, which is one of the few activities that has not been implemented. However activities of PCCSL and SLCJ include certain degree of advocacy. SLPI needs to rethink its entire advocacy strategy holistically and include all three units in this work. In this context publicity and awareness building around PCC, the ethical code and the concept of self-regulation are a priority.

In the original proposal there was an idea of achieving a certain degree of financial sustainability within the first three years, which has been too ambitious. The new proposal should be accompanied by a better strategy of financial sustainability, exploring a number of strategies such as generating income by providing of various types of services, identifying new and innovative fund raising strategies, working towards an endowment grant, looking for sponsorship of individual activities, etc.

It is important to recognise that a strategy for financial viability of a non-profit organisation cannot be conceptualised purely by adding income generating activities. SLPI needs to develop an overall financial concept suitable for a non-profit organisation, while at the same time striving towards long term financial sustainability. This should be given a priority in the new proposal. SLPI needs to get external assistance in this area.

For the College, although with a somewhat slow start, the last two years have been fairly successful. A Diploma course on entry-level is well on its way to being established, and for the first time in Sri Lanka a journalist training institute can provide education for both the print and TV/radio sectors. SLCJ and Fojo have implemented 22 different mid-career courses for active journalists, and both journalists and College students testify that they have gained awareness, knowledge and skills. The specific objective of producing trained journalists that can contribute to improved quality and standards in journalism is being achieved. SLCJ has become a recognized journalist training partner integrated with the media industry.

For the future, the SLCJ needs to consolidate its core activities and put more effort on promotion and networking and turn the College into a meeting point for students and journalists. Setting up an Alumni Club, mentorship among former students, production of newsletter, workshops on media issues etc, are some of the activities that can be considered. In this work the Media Resource Centre at SLPI could play an important role. The establishment of an Advisory Board consisting of representatives from both print and electronic media would be useful for many activities, as well as giving credit to SLPI as a whole.

The program on mid-career courses needs to consider having a smaller selection of courses, but more follow-up courses. It needs to give greater emphasis on Training of Trainers, involve editors and sub-editors in the training, and establish mechanisms for following-up the impact and results of the training in the next phase.

Both the Diploma course and the mid-career courses need to mainstream cross-cutting issues in the respective programs to a greater extent. Particular importance should be given to working with PCCSL and introducing the Code of Practice for journalists.

The media industry has put forward some short-term needs for SLCJ to consider incorporating in its program for the coming years. These include in-house training at media organizations, training of provincial journalists, and bridging new techniques with new functions, such as web journalists, which is a trade that does not exist in Sri Lanka today.

It is already evident that SLCJ attracts various donor projects, both on long-term and short-term basis. The College should develop a strategy for how to deal with potential projects, take the lead and look at projects from SLCJ perspective and not the other way round. Donors and potential projects should be co-ordinated much better and make sure that there is no duplication and overlapping of activities. There are several interesting possibilities for the SLCJ to expand its contacts. Examples are Media Resource Training Centre in Jaffna and the new Media Production and Resource Centres on the east and south coast about to be set up by Internews to support local radio journalism. FLICT and CPA are potential local partners.

Fojo has been a valuable partner for the institute: a technical adviser to the programmes, contributed to the management aspects, mediated between diverse interests in the board, and liaised with the donors. In the future Fojo should continue to advice, assist and monitor funds, but take on a more strategic role with regular back-stopping inputs. For the immediate period Fojo should have an advisory function to the board.

The concept of self regulation of standards of journalism by journalists themselves is a novel concept for Sri Lanka. In order to make this self-regulation a success a number of things have to happen. First journalists have to accept it and sign up for the Code of Practice; second, the public has to know about it; and third, the entire mechanism has to deliver satisfactory results so that both journalists and public have confidence in it.

Hence what PCCSL has set out to do was a tall order. Given this background and the numerous difficulties that PCCSL has faced in terms of staff and budget, what has been achieved is commendable. There is almost universal acceptance of the notion of self-regulation within the journalist community. There has been a slow process of dissemination of the idea within the public. PCCSL has received complaints, and the newspapers have responded to the interventions of the PCCSL.

PCCSL is incorporated under the Companies Act No. 17 of 1982. It is run by a board of directors nominated by the SLPI. The current situation is that the same individuals sit in the boards of both SLPI and PCCSL. There is provision for 50 members of the Commission in the article. At present there are no additional members other than those in the board.

Currently there is discussion about increasing the membership. Those who become members will have to sign up to the Code of Practice which will obviously lead to a greater degree of legitimacy of this instrument. However, according to the articles the Board has the power to decide on rights of members, including their voting rights. Probably this will have to change once new members are recruited. Therefore the team recommends that PCCSL consider amending its Articles of Association giving the right to the members to elect the board. This can result in a greater diversity of representation in the board, and a greater degree of legitimacy for the organisation.

The Arbitration Council is an important element of the self-regulation exercise. Currently there is a council of 11 members with personalities that enjoy credibility and acceptance in society. As is the case in many such institutions, not all members of the Council can be expected to be equally active. However if the PCCSL can ensure that at all times there are at least five members who are active and committed to this mechanism it can be sustained.

Currently there is a committee appointed with the objective of revising the Code of Practice. This task should be completed in time for the new proposal. The ideal is for it to be ready along with the recruit-

ment of new members and to be accepted through a participatory process where members play an active part.

Publicity and awareness building is a critical aspect for the success of the PCCSL. In the immediate future this needs to be given priority because awareness about the Code even among the journalists is very low. However publicity and the advocacy strategy of PCCSL should be a part of the overall advocacy strategy of SLPI. It should be planned in close collaboration with the advocacy officer of SLPI. It should be adequately budgeted and in planning it PCCSL can make use of the data from ‘the complaints tracker’ software and findings from any other studies available (e.g. the base line survey).

Filling the existing vacancies of the PCCSL should be given a priority, once the recruitment at the level of SLPI is completed. One of the activities that did not get attention during the first phase was staff training in mediation techniques. This has to be strengthened in the next phase.

The complaints tracker software that has been installed at the PCCSL is an extremely valuable tool, not only for just recoding the data on complaints and follow up, but also for analysing trends. This can be important for monitoring the entire mechanism of self-evaluation and taking appropriate steps in planning PCCSL work.

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Background

This is an evaluation of the project “Promoting Professionalism, Independence and Accountability in Sri Lanka” under the Sri Lanka Press Institute, SLPI. The institute was formally registered in 2003 by the Newspaper Society (compromising owners of major publishing houses, both state and private), Editor’s Guild (compromising editors of newspapers), and the Free Media Movement (an association of journalists) with the objective of strengthening journalistic independence and quality.

SLPI has two major departments: the Press Complaints Commission of Sri Lanka, PCCSL, and the Sri Lanka College of Journalism, SLCJ. PCCSL is a self-regulatory body for press ethics, while SLCJ is running a one-year course diploma course in journalism and a number of short term mid-career courses for working journalists.

After a three-year project proposal was submitted to Sweden and Norway in 2003, the major funding of the SLPI has come from Sida and Norad for the period 2003–2006. During the same period the Institute for Further Education of Journalists, Fojo, has been the Swedish partner to SLPI to support institutional capacity building in the implementation, under a MoU with Sida and Norad.

A third Scandinavian donor, DANIDA, has for the period September 2005-December 2006, entered an agreement with SLPI to establish a TV and radio training unit for journalists. For the same period Fojo has an agreement with DANIDA to provide consultancy services for the new unit.

## 1.2 The Assignment

The agreement between SLPI, Sida and Norad specifies that an evaluation shall be undertaken during 2006. The scope and the focus of this assignment are to evaluate the implementation strategy of the project and how it has helped to meet the specific project objectives.

Among the issues to be covered in the evaluation are:

- An assessment of the implementation of planned activities in relation to agreed indicators as expressed in the work plan of 2004 and 2005.
- An assessment of the organizational structure and the constituency among the founding organizations of the institute.
- A discussion on possible future scenarios for the institute and possible future partners.
- An evaluation of the financial sustainability of the institute.
- An assessment and analyses of the role of Fojo in the project.

The evaluation shall also take into consideration the cultural and political implications of setting up a new institution within the Sri Lankan context.

A third area is to assess to what extent the project has been inclusive of poverty and right based approaches and a gender perspective.

Furthermore the evaluation will be future-oriented and provide recommendations based on the first two years activities, as well as the recent developments in the media sector and current political trends. The recommendations will have a short to midterm perspective, and form a part of the new project

proposal. The outcome of the evaluation will be the point of departure for discussions between Sida/Norad and other stakeholders for a possible second phase of the project.

The full Terms of References are attached as Appendix 1.

### **1.3 Methodology**

This evaluation is based on a desk analysis of project reports and documents, including trainer reports, and existing studies on media in Sri Lanka. Extensive discussions and interviews were held with Sida HQ and the Swedish and Norwegian Embassies in Colombo, project staff in Sri Lanka of SLPI and Board members, Fojo representative in Colombo, and Fojo Project Manager in Kalmar, teachers and trainers of the college, staff of the Press Complaints Commission, representatives of the founding organizations, other donors implementing media projects in Sri Lanka, representatives from print and electronic media from Tamil, Sinhala, and English media, students and active journalists. A list of the people met is attached as Appendix 2.

The Evaluation team consists of Mr. Sunil Bastian and Ms. Madeleine Elmqvist and the evaluation took place in Colombo from February 13 to February 24, 2006.

### **1.4 The Report**

The report starts with a section on the evaluated intervention: history, organization and stakeholders. This second chapter also includes a brief overview of the media landscape and the political context, and other initiatives in the media sector. Chapter three covers the findings and discussion from the empirical material, mainly interviews, group discussions and field visits, and the conclusions to be drawn. Chapter four provides a number of recommendations for a possible future support of the project.

## **2. The Sri Lanka Press Institute, SLPI**

### **2.1 Background**

The beginnings of the SLPI can be traced back to a discussion on the status and quality of the media in Sri Lanka which began in the middle of nineties. At this time, a number of individuals and organisations were concerned with the status of the media. Certainly the political crisis faced by the Sri Lankan society in the form of conflicts both in the North/East and the South of the country and the role played by media in these was an important background to this debate. Generally, strengthening the training aspects of journalists was seen as an answer to these problems. One of the first outcomes of these discussions was the appointment of a committee headed by Dr. Gamini Corea in 1993 in order to set up a media training institute. This was followed by another committee headed by Mr. Victor Gunawardena, a former journalist, with the same objective. The GOSL proposal for setting up a journalist training institute which was formulated in 2001 had a link with these committees set up in the mid-nineties.

Parallel to this there was a process initiated by several organisations directly linked to the media industry and civil society organisations concerned with media freedom focusing their attention on the legal and regulatory framework within which the media operates, and a code of ethics or social responsibility of journalists. The Colombo Declaration on Media Freedom and Social Responsibility was a major

outcome of this process. It was adopted at a symposium on Media Freedom and Social Responsibility held in 1998. The symposium was jointly organised by the Sri Lanka Working Journalists Association, Free Media Movement, Editors Guild, Newspaper Association of Sri Lanka together with the World Association of Newspapers and Centre for Policy Alternatives. Free Media Movement, Editors Guild, and Newspaper Association of Sri Lanka adopted the declaration, while the Working Journalists Association deferred their acceptance to a decision by their Executive Committee.

The Colombo Declaration covers institutional reforms that need to be taken into account in any discussion of media freedom in Sri Lanka. It critically reviewed constitutional provisions for media freedom, existing newspaper and press laws, how emergency regulation affect media freedom, necessary reforms for public broadcasting service and specific issues that affect the industry such as the high cost of newsprint. Finally it had a section titled Responsibilities of Media Institutions and Personnel – Voluntary Code of Ethics, which set out guidelines for journalist practice. The Colombo Declaration was an important starting point of the formation of the SLPI.

The concept of the SLPI incorporates all three aspects reflected in the discussion on media reforms in Sri Lanka. These are, training and strengthening professionalism of the journalism trade, setting standards for professional journalism and advocacy for reforms so that media can operate without institutional barriers. The SLPI, SLCJ and PCCSL together represent this concept inclusive of all three aspects.

The Colombo Declaration brought together the three main stakeholders, Free Media Movement, Editors Guild and Newspaper Society, who form the Board of the SLPI. Free Media Movement is a network of journalists which has been campaigning for some time on issues of media freedom and rights of journalists. The Editors Guild brings together editors of some of the mainstream newspapers. The Newspaper Society is an association of owners of newspapers. At one level it can be argued that these are stakeholders with diverse and sometimes even contradictory interests. But at another level it is also true that the conditions in the media and problems faced by the journalist profession have brought them together. The Colombo Declaration is an event that reflects this coming together. Setting up SLPI is an attempt on the part of these stakeholders to set up an institute from scratch and make it work. Sometimes the diversity of interests might make this look a very difficult task. But the common interests that brought them together in the first place should provide the motivation to make SLPI a success. This evaluation is an account of how this has been achieved and challenges faced during the last three years.

Sida's involvement in funding journalism training pre-dates the establishment of SLPI. Sida had been funding a journalism training programme through the Sri Lanka Foundation Institute in 2000 and 2001. Fojo, the partner of SLPI at present, was the implementer of this programme as well. In October 2001 GOSL approached Sida seeking funding to set up a journalist training institute. It was to be managed by a Board appointed by the government. This did not find favour with Sida. The change of government in December 2001 revived this idea in a new form. The UNF government proposed an institutions managed by a Board consisting of members of the Free Media Movement, Editors Guild and Newspaper Society. The body was to be registered under the Companies Act and to operate independently.

This is an unusual experience for securing funding for what is essentially a non-governmental organisation. In fact what happened was the government of the day was requesting funds from Sida from the bi-lateral co-operation funds to set up an institution that will be run like any other civil society organisation. Not only that, the government also agreed to provide premises to house this new institution. There is no doubt this unusual arrangement in setting up SLPI came about because of the enthusiasm and support of the then prime minister for this project.

Most of the work to set up SLPI was carried out in 2003. In January and March 2003 SLPI and PCCSL were registered separately under the Companies Act. In May a draft proposal was submitted to Sida. The final proposal was submitted in September 2003 and Sida took the final decision in November 2003. In the meantime Fojo, which was to become the key technical advisor to SLPI, came to Sri Lanka on its first preparatory mission in May 2003. This was followed by another mission in September 2003. This resulted in a separate agreement with Fojo to provide technical assistance and advisory service.

According to the proposal of SLPI the objective of SLPI is to develop 'A group of trained journalists demonstrating the highest quality, commitment and standards of professionalism'. This is to be done through the principal outcome of the project which is 'A fully operational print media-training institute established leading to the improvement in quality of journalism in the country'. Currently these objectives and outcomes have been extended to cover TV and radio as well.

On the side of Sida, this proposal also coincided with Sida's interest in promoting democratic governance in Sri Lanka. Strengthening democratic institutions was also seen as a way of making a contribution to resolving the long standing conflict in Sri Lanka. In 2002, the government, led by the same prime minister who supported setting up SLPI, signed a Cease Fire Agreement with the LTTE paving the way for negotiations. Many donors, including Sida, seized this opportunity to support various initiatives that can strengthen the peace process. Supporting SLPI was a part of this strategy.

It is these factors which probably explain why Sida decided to fund the setting up of SLPI from scratch in the year 2003. Funding an institutions right from the beginning is an unusual event for donors. In the case of SLPI, Sida carried out an Initial Assessment in June 2003 and Full Assessment in October 2003. The first tranche of funding was agreed for the years 2004–2006. Apart from certain sections in the Full Assessment, there have not been any other detailed appraisals and feasibility studies before funding SLPI. In the context of the peace process and with the support from the government SLPI looked an attractive project. Given the political climate it was also important to make timely decisions on funding the SLPI. These factors probably explain the speed with which final decisions were taken to fund SLPI.

## **2.2 Media Landscape and Donor Support to Media**

This section looks at the media landscape and donor support to media development in Sri Lanka. Given the scope of the evaluation there is little space for an exhaustive analysis of these issues. The objective is much more modest. Our analysis will attempt to point out some of most strategic issues that need to be kept in mind in the analysis of the Sri Lankan media. The last section will make a few key observations about the current experience of donor support in the sector.

In making these comments about the media landscape and donor support, we shall keep in mind the development that has taken place since the Sida/NORAD decision to fund SLPI. The analysis presented in the Full Assessment of Sida carried out in June 2003 is taken as a reflection of the concerns and issues Sida/NORAD had when this funding decision was taken.

### **Media landscape**

The beginnings of modern media in Sri Lanka go back to the colonial period. Although a notion of an 'independent media' is freely used, a closer look at the media institutions right from the beginning shows that there were ideological and material interests behind the operation of these bodies. Hence during the colonial period the interests of the plantation capital, indigenous capital, independence movement, and vernacular intelligentsia have played an important role in development of the newspaper. These currents have transformed themselves into political and nationalist interests in the post-colonial period.

Therefore it is very difficult to understand the media as a mere instrument of transfer of information to the public. It is much easier to explain the behaviour of media both as a means of transferring information and as a political actor in its own rights. Into this dual role one has to add the fact that a significant section of media in Sri Lanka is controlled by the state, and there is a tendency by the regime in power to use state owned media for its own political ends. This has been the case whichever political party has been in power.

As a result of these actors the media has been a factor both in partisan political battles as well as the conflict that has plagued Sri Lanka for more than two decades. Many of the debates and attempts at media reforms have been undertaken within this overall context. Needless to say it is a complex task, the success of which is contingent of many contextual factors.

These particular characteristics of Sri Lanka should not lead only to negative conclusions about the role of media. On the contrary, the very political roles that the media has played have resulted in positive contributions in some areas. For example, there is no doubt the media was a major force in the anti-colonial struggle. Often media plays a role in highlighting issues of poverty, neglect by authorities and corruption. The literary columns in the vernacular media have been a key vehicle for the local literary intelligentsia.

In addition there are a number of specific issues that are often mentioned when it comes to media reforms. These are, reforms in the legal and regulatory framework, improvement of professional standards of journalists, grievances of journalists with regard to their pay and working conditions, limitations in the management structures of media institutions, safety of journalists in the context of the political violence and conflict, and problems faced by the industry due to factors like high cost of newsprint and limitations in the advertising budgets. These issues are relevant whether the media institutions are state owned or private owned. They continue to be relevant even today. It is due to this complex set of problems faced by the media that those who have been campaigning for reforms highlights a range of issues that cover reforms in the legal and regulatory framework, skills training and ethical standards.

As mentioned in section 2.1, the establishment of SLPI received strong support from the UNF government in general and prime minister in particular. There was also a climate that gave hope to the possibility of reforms in the legal and regulatory framework within which media functioned. At the time of this evaluation the UNF government is no longer in power. Sri Lanka has witnessed both a general election and a presidential election that have consolidated the power of the United People's Freedom Alliance (UPFA), which controls both the parliament and the presidency.

As a result of these political developments the agenda for media reforms initiated under the UNF government has taken a back seat. There is very little talk of going ahead with The Freedom of Information Act which received cabinet approval under the UNF government. Nor is there any indication of progress in any of the reforms identified under the Colombo Declaration. In contrast the political climate seems to have polarized the government owned and private media to a greater degree. This means politicisation of the media on the basis of party politics continues to be a major issue.

To a certain extent these political developments have given rise to apprehension that media freedom will be much more under threat under this regime than before. However looking at the past history it is difficult to make sweeping conclusions of how regime change will affect media freedom one way or the other. There can be minor changes. However the basic structural issues raised above remain the same. Media has been restricted under different regimes. State media has been used for partisan political purposes under different regimes. It is difficult to see qualitative shifts on these issues due to recent regime change.

In contrast, a major concern that has emerged in recent times is the safety of journalists both due to the escalation of violence in the North/East and political rivalries. As some of the analysts of the limitations of the CFA have pointed out, although the CFA has silenced big guns the small guns are still working, sometimes overtime. The CFA is unable to deal with some of the complications arising out of internal conflicts where identity politics play a significant role. In the context of the escalation of violence, journalists have been at the receiving end of the violence perpetrated by various armed actors.

On the positive side there have been several initiatives organised by civil society actors with the objective of furthering an agenda of media reform. An important event that needs to be noted in this regard is the adoption of a Media Charter in September 2005 by four associations that bring journalists together. These are the Federation of Media Employees Trade Unions, Sri Lanka Working Journalists Association, Sri Lanka Tamil Media Alliance, Sri Lanka Muslim Media Forum and Free Media Movement. The charter was finalised at a conference facilitated by the Media Unit of the Centre for Policy Alternatives and International Federation of Journalists. Twenty nine organisations representing regional journalist also took part in the conference. This event seems to be a continuation of the debate begun in 1998 that resulted in the Colombo Declaration. Two of the key organisations that took part in the process that gave birth to the Colombo Declaration have been key actors in this new initiative. They have been joined by journalists from the regions and journalists representing main ethnic groups. Hence it is an important forum that brings together the journalist community.

### **Donor support**

Much of the current discussion on donor support to media focus on initiatives after the CFA of 2002. However it is important to remember that there are examples of media support which pre-date these initiatives. Some of the examples are training at SLFI supported by Sida, setting up Sri Lankan Television Training Institute with German funding, funding of an alternative radical newspaper Yuktia by NOVIB and activities of the World View Foundation. There are also many other examples of scattered funding for media productions.

The motivation for some of these earlier funding efforts was similar to current concerns like strengthening democratic development and making a contribution to conflict resolution. Many of these assumptions are made much more on ideological grounds rather than on the basis of any substantial research that has made these connections. In addition to these motivations, there were also other concerns like supporting media development in a developing country in order to counter domination by global media controlled by multinationals.

Signing of the CFA certainly brought in more funding and more external actors for media development. This was a part and parcel of the euphoria that engulfed the entire aid community. There were high expectations on the peace process, some even believing things will move in a unilinear fashion towards peace. There were of course the usual agency interests that sought to be a part of the scene and to be a part of a possible success story.

The politics of the peace process itself as well politics in the South have given rise to a much more realistic assessment of the peace process. There are also a few evaluations of media initiatives raising more questions than answers. The debates that are going on among those who are engaged in these activities are also raising some fundamental issues with regard to funding for media development. To end this section we shall highlight some of these issues.

– Some of the evaluations of funding for media training have pointed out the limitations of individual training. The usual picture is, the focus on individual training can improve skills of an individual but there is very little impact on institutions. Institutional barriers make it difficult for individuals to practice what they learn.

This is not a new conclusion for projects that have focused on training. In many other areas of funding individual training has not resulted in much of an impact. This leads to the question of tackling institutions. In the field of development for example, there are many examples of institutional reforms through donor funding. In the case of media this means tackling institutional issues of private sector media houses and state owned media institutions. There are very little prospects for this kind of initiative.

– Some of the donor funded projects have embarked on setting up media training institutions. Evaluation of MRTTC has characterised some of the problems faced in setting up new institutions as ‘teething problems’. However on a closer look they can be analysed as problems that crop in setting up institutions. It is one thing to have an idea of starting institutions. But it is another thing to make this work. In the latter task numerous problems crop up especially when the institute brings together different interest groups (the word stakeholders often hide these contradictions). These difficulties should not be underestimated.

– Quite a lot of funding on media reforms is directed towards civil society organisations that champion media reforms. However there are limits to what can be achieved through these organisations. The experience of some donors is that there are very few good projects that can be funded through this channel. This points to the need to review the entire concept of civil society being a principal channel of social transformation, which is a dominant ideology among donors.

Civil society includes contradictory social forces. The role of some of them is actually detrimental to democratic development and peace. This includes sections of the media as well. In addition, historical experiences shows that civil cannot be effective without an effective state and changes in the political society. The experience of the Sri Lanka peace process and the role of civil society in it clearly demonstrate this. Donors need take these issues in supporting civil society.

– When it comes to technical support from outside agencies, strategies to internalise the inputs within Sri Lankan organisations is still a problem. Unless these issues are addressed it is difficult to ensure sustainable impact from external technical support.

– Although there is always talk of donor co-ordination it never seems to happen. This seems to be the situation in media funding as well. The example of Sida and NORAD co-operation in the case of SLPI is an exception to the rule. In addition, the entry of various types of organisations in search of consultancy contracts makes co-ordination even more difficult. This has been a common problem in the field of development and it seems to affect media development as well.

– In general, there is a need have a much more realistic assessment of what can be achieved through external interventions whether through funding or technical assistance. This does mean donors cannot carry out specific interventions like setting up institutions such as in the case of SLPI. But whether this will lead to the larger objective of developing a democratic media will depend on many other internal factors. Much depends on local processes and availability of political space for such reforms, and that ability of donors to spot these and ensure timely interventions.

These are old debates in the field of development. In assessing the impact of donor interventions in the field of development, evaluations has progressed from analysing what goes on inside projects to discussions on institutionalisation, sustainability and local ownership and finally impact assessment. Methodologies used in some of the impact assessments do not begin with the project, but with the changes that has taken place in the context during the period when the project has operated. Then it tries to see the links between these changes in the context and the project interventions. These are carried out more as research studies rather than classical evaluations. Sometimes these studies are undertaken after a lapse of one or two years after the project has been completed. This gives better sense of what has been sustained. Donor interventions on peace building and democratic development can learn from these methodologies.

## 3. Findings, Discussions and Conclusions

### 3.1 Sri Lanka Press Institute, SLPI

SLPI was formally established in 2003. 2006 will see the end of its first phase of funding. Hence the project that has been evaluated is *less than three years old*. During these three years a new institution has been established right from the beginning. This involves many practical aspects like renting out premises, buying equipment, hiring staff, establishing basic procedures, etc. SLPI has not only carried out these but has implemented most of the activities under programmes.

The fundamental concept on which SLPI was founded included three elements, all related to media development in Sri Lanka. These were, training so as to improve skills of journalists, setting standards for professional behaviour through a code of ethics or practice, and advocacy for reforms of the legal and regulatory framework within which journalists operate. As we have explained in the background and history that led to the formation of SLPI, all these three elements came together in the establishment of the SLPI.

In the case of PCCSL the notion of self regulation was a totally new concept for Sri Lanka. Hence PCCSL not only had to establish its mechanisms, but also to propagate the idea of self regulation. This has taken place. The College has established a diploma course and a mid-career course. These courses are up and running. There is an improvement in the courses from the first round to the second.

Therefore during a short duration of less than three years SLPI has achieved a lot. The institute is up and running. Most of the practical aspects of setting up an institute have been achieved. In addition, a whole new section for the training of TV and radio journalists which was not on the original plan has been accomplished. Most journalists we met agreed about the concept of self-regulation and commended the SLPI for pioneering the concept. The courses conducted by the College and Fojo have an acceptance within the media industry.

Despite these achievements, SLPI has been going through a certain degree of turmoil in recent times. The principal reason for this is linked to management issues. A number of key staff has left the organisation. There is a certain degree of frustration and discontent among the current staff. There are problems about the relationship between the staff and the Board. The staff feels that this relationship is too hierarchical and the management style of the Board is top-down. Hence the organisation has entered a period where it needs to sort out these issues and *consolidate* itself. This has to happen quickly because the SLPI has to prepare a new proposal for funding in the course of this year and begin to implement it. If it does not consolidate itself quickly there will not be a positive environment to implement the new proposal.

#### 3.1.1 The constituency

SLPI has been formed by the coming together of three organisations, Newspaper Society, Editors' Guild and Free Media Movement (FMM). Newspaper Society brings together owners of newspapers, Editors' Guild, editors of leading newspapers and FMM, journalists and social activists campaigning for media freedom and rights of journalists. The team did not have time to go into details about the functioning of each of these organisations. Editors Guild brings together editors of most private sector newspapers. Similarly in the Newspaper Society owners of private sector print media are active.

However the constituency of the SLPI is much wider than the membership of these organisations. The immediate constituency of the SLPI is the individuals and organisations directly linked to the media industry. They might not necessarily be members of any of the founder organisations of SLPI.

Primarily this includes journalists and associations of journalists. When the Colombo Declaration was formulated Working Journalists Association was a part of the process. Currently there is a renewed discussion with them about joining the SLPI. There are also other journalist associations such as Federation of Media Employees Trade Unions, Sri Lanka Tamil Media Alliance, Sri Lanka Muslim Media Forum and numerous media associations in the regions.

The wider constituency of SLPI includes the various organisations working on democratic and media freedoms and the general public. The question of media freedoms concerns many organisations active in Sri Lanka. Since media is a critical factor in deciding public perceptions in a highly polarised and politicised society like Sri Lanka, its improvement is always a public concern.

Hence any long term impact of SLPI work will be seen within these constituencies. The overall objectives of the institute and the areas of work that SLPI has chosen to engage in need to impact on these constituencies. Currently it is difficult to make conclusions about the nature of this impact. What one can say is SLPI has successfully established itself within these constituencies. Its activities are seen as making a useful contribution in improving skills of journalists and in setting standards of the journalist profession. The latter has an impact on the relationship between the wider public and the media. This is important for the immediate constituency of the SLPI as well as the wider constituency.

Of course SLPI has a long way to go in furthering this impact on its constituencies. Some of the recommendations of this report, such as the expansion of membership of SLPI and PCCSL, will help to deepen the legitimacy of the institute within the immediate constituency. Further improvements of these aspects will depend on the success of each of the activities of SLPI. Certainly SLPI will have to strive for these improvements.

While SLPI in the course of its work will have to try and expand its membership and try to improve its impact on the constituencies, it is also important to remember that in a plural society with diverse interests such as Sri Lanka, SLPI cannot hope to represent all the constituencies related to media nor can it hope to be the only organisations that will work on subjects that SLPI is concerned with. In short SLPI is bound to be one of several. What it can hope to achieve is to carve out a niche for itself through the quality of its programmes and commitment to values of media freedom.

### **3.1.2 The concept**

The team believes that the original *concept* of SLPI combining skills development, standard setting and advocacy is not only relevant but also critical for the future of the institute. All three elements are important in furthering media development in Sri Lanka. They mutually reinforce each other. Therefore SLPI needs to sustain and continue with this concept. As we shall elaborate later this has some relevance for the current discussion on separate registration for the three units.

While the idea to establish an institution combining all these three elements of media development is valid, it also makes the task of making such an institution work complex. What is more this is an attempt to set up such an organisation right from scratch. This makes the task even more complex. However, despite the complexity of the task, the preparatory steps have been weak. What we have is draft proposal, final proposal, Full Assessment on the part of Sida and a decision to fund. There are no detailed appraisals, feasibility studies and risk analysis. Quite a lot has been expected from Fojo, the technical adviser, not only in the area of training, which is its forte, but also in the management aspects of setting up an institution.

In these circumstances *the new three year proposal* which should be finalised somewhere this year has to cover many of the institutional development elements as well as programmatic aspects. The important institutional development issues will be highlighted in this evaluation. Hopefully the new proposal will give a clear vision of where the institution will be at the end of the next three years; identify goals and targets; establish a clear programme of work; work out a concrete strategy for completing recommendations of this report.

The team recommends professional external help in formulating the new three year proposal. While the institution is strong with regard to the subject of media support, it needs outside support in formulating the new proposal. Person/s skilled in process planning and formulating proposals for civil society organisations could be engaged for this task.

### 3.1.3 The board

Currently SLPI and PCCSL are *registered separately*. The rationale has been to ensure the independence of PCCSL and to ensure that the body can use the title ‘Sri Lanka’ as a part of its name. This is considered important by the board in order to obtain recognition in the country. At present there is a consideration of the College also being registered separately. The reasoning for this step is similar.

While the team understand the desire for the title ‘Sri Lanka’ as part of the name of various units of SLPI, it is important to be alive to the danger of independent registrations leading to a distance between the units and a final parting of ways. Currently units operate in relative isolation of each other. The activities and outputs of units are identified as being their own. In the course of our interviews it became clear that unit identity is much more important. Persons interviewed spoke much more as a representative of either College or PCCSL. Sometimes there were even complaints about each other.

In this process what is left out is the SLPI. It is desirable that all the work of the institute to has an overall SLPI identity, and units work within it. Obviously credit and recognition should be given to the work of each unit while maintaining this overall SLPI identity.

If the College is also going to be registered separately there is a need to institute strong management mechanisms that will force the units to work together. Some of the recommendations of this report (joint management team, a holistic advocacy strategy, greater communication between units, etc) will go a long way in achieving this. Donors should be aware of this need and take necessary steps to keep the institute intact.

The *board* of SLPI consists of representatives of FMM, the Editor’s Guild and the Newspaper Society. Currently there is a discussion of the Working Journalists Association becoming a member. This would mean the board has to have representation from this organisation as well.

In actual fact the composition of the board is a coming together of diverse interests. While members work together as board members when it comes to SLPI, outside the organisation they play roles that can have contradictory interests. Even the language factor has the potential of becoming a divisive element within the board. It is the common interests in improving the media that has brought these diverse groups together. However it is one thing for diverse groups to get together for an event like the formulation of the Colombo Declaration, but quite another thing to start and run a viable institute.

Given this context it is commendable that so much has been done by the board in this short period. Fojo has contributed significantly in this process. However the board should be aware of difficulties that can arise due to the diversity of interests. But every effort should be made to work together. It is not that the diversity of interests has an adverse impact at present. But the board should be alive to these problems.

It is difficult for the team to give concrete suggestions on how to manage these issues. Probably the first principle is to institute participatory methods of managements within the institute to a greater degree. Secondly, getting involved in concrete work along with the staff members as a team is another suggestion that can be made. The formulation of the new three year proposal can be utilised for this purpose. The board should view this as a creative multilingual participatory exercise that should provide a clear vision for the organisation for the next three years.

Fojo has been a valuable partner for the institute. It has played a number of roles. It has been a technical adviser to the programmes; contributed to the management aspects; mediated between diverse

interests in the board; and liaised with the donors. Given the current situation in the organisation and the need for SLPI to consolidate itself, Fojo could in this process play a useful advisory role. The team recommends that the Resident Representative of Fojo should be incorporated as an advisor to the board, at least until the end of his current contract runs out in December 2006. In the next phase Fojo should provide regular back-stopping inputs after a schedule agreed with SLPI over the project period.

Currently there is no formula for the rotation of board members. In the long run this can lead to a situation where the same members represent the organisations in the board over a long period. This can not only undermine the credibility of the organisation, but also prevent SLPI from using talents available in the organisations represented in the board. Hence the team recommends introducing a formula for the rotation of board members.

Increasing the number of members has been a long standing discussion within SLPI. This has been accepted in principle but the implementation has been delayed. The Articles of Association provide for a maximum of 50 members. Incorporation of new members should be carried out as soon as possible. The implementation of the new proposal should be by an organisation that has an increased membership, including members from the broadcasting business.

As explained to the team by the board members, during this phase of the project the board had to get involved in day to day management of the institute due to problems with the staff. Building a full time staff with necessary skills has not been an easy task for SLPI. Steps have now been taken to fill some of the key positions, and the board should resume its normal duty of focusing on policy. Day to day management should be devolved to the units in the manner described below.

#### **3.1.4 The structure**

Right from the beginning the *organisational structure* has been designed in such a way that finance and administration aspects have been highly centralised within SLPI. CEOs' of the units have had very little power even to make decisions on very small matters. This has led to frustrations, misunderstandings and sometimes staff leaving the organisation.

This has to be rectified as soon as possible by devolving decision making powers to CEOs' of PCCSL and SLCJ. The new structure should have the following characteristics:

- Administrative and financial procedures in place
- Administrative and financial decision making devolved to the CEOs' of units on the basis of procedures and budgets
- CEOs' becoming holders of their budgets with clear budget lines for programmes
- Units operating as cost centres with financial accountability

The board operates on the basis of usual management instruments like the annual work plan, annual budget and regular reviews. The board has to focus on policy issues with the CEOs of the SLCJ and PCCSL being encouraged to participate in the Board meetings.

The *instruments of management* that have been established from the start have had two objectives in mind – operations of the board, and the relationship between the board and donors. What has been missing from the start is an instrument that would have allowed the heads of units to work as a team and be responsible for day to day running of the institution. This is a major lacuna in the existing structure.

SLPI need to establish a management team consisting of DG, CEO SLCJ, CEO PCCSL, Advocacy officer and representative of Fojo. Once the administrative and financial powers are devolved in the manner recommended above, this team will become the most important management unit for the day to day running of the organisation. The team has noted that currently there are weekly meet-

ings of this team. What is suggested is to enhance the power to take decisions to this meeting so that this team can operate as a proper management team.

Poor *communication between units* has been a major problem within SLPI. Many of the misunderstandings within the organisation and frustrations can be overcome by improving internal communication strategies. This is also essential for keeping the cohesiveness of the organisation, since units are bound to operate with certain degree of autonomy. SLPI has to review its existing methods of internal communication and try to identify new mechanisms to enhance it. Some of the other recommendations such as the establishment of a new management team to run day to day business or planning a joint advocacy strategy (see below) should improve this. However if it is necessary the organisation should hire a special communications officer to be housed at SLPI.

In recent past the organisation has been weakened by the resignation of a number of key staff. Currently there are *vacancies in key positions*. PCCSL is the unit that has been mostly affected. PCCSL does not have a CEO, and the efforts to fill the post for the last six months have not been successful. It has also lost Complaints officer covering English media. His legal skills have also been important for the unit. Director General's term will end at the end of March.

Currently SLPI is taking steps to fill these vacancies. A new DG will assume office from April. Since the choice is within the institute he brings in considerable experience. A new post in charge of advocacy has also been created. The person taking over is an experienced campaigner and a civil society activist for media freedom. These steps have certainly strengthened the institute. Next in line are the vacancies at PCCSL.

It is a truism to say that the success of SLPI will depend on its capacity to hire competent staff and keep them in the organisation for a reasonable period. The inability to achieve this is a major problem faced by many civil society organisations. The task has become even more difficult because there is a vibrant labour market in the civil society sector. Tsunami funds have aggravated the situation by creating many jobs with better salaries. Many local NGOs have lost staff to international organisations. There are staff members in SLPI who can compete in this labour market. Hence civil society organisations are forced to constantly review their salary structure and benchmark it against possible competitors. This should cover standard benefits like medical insurance, transport allowances, incentive bonuses, etc

SLPI has to review its *salary structure and other benefits*. In the current structure there is too much of a gap between the top end and the bottom end. The best time to do this is when the budgets are drawn up for the new proposal. In other words the new budget should reflect a revised salary structure. This salary structure should at least be competitive with that of comparable local civil society organisations.

### **3.1.5 Financial sustainability**

In the original proposal there was an idea of achieving a certain degree of financial sustainability within the first three years. In hindsight the objective of achieving financial sustainability within three years has been highly ambitious. At the end of three years SLPI has not progressed very much in this direction although there are several proposals.

The discussion at SLPI in reaching the goal of financial sustainability has focused on three issues.

– Support from GOSL in the form of premises. There was a promise of this at the time of the UNF government. But this did not materialise after change of government. At present SLPI rents out premises but uses them productively. Its decision not to hire outside facilities for its programmes like the mid-career course has contributed to this.

- Contribution from the industry. This has also not materialised to the extent expected. Industry argues that this will depend on the profitability of the industry.
- Various ideas of generating additional income making use of the facilities of SLPI.

In Sri Lanka support from GOSL for civil society organisations very often has political overtones. The directions and policies of the organisation also tend to get politicised in terms of party politics. There are such examples in Sri Lanka. These trends are unlikely to change in the future. Hence if any future regime decides to support SLPI in the form of a building, it can be a double edged sword. While it will ease the budgetary burden of SLPI, it can mean getting too close to the regime in power. SLPI needs to keep this mind if this opportunity arises.

There is certainly room for expanding the contribution from the industry. In the next phase this could be given a greater priority with proper targets. Of course the facilities in the institute can be utilised for income generation. But this has to be planned carefully, because it has implications for the overall functioning of the institute as well.

In the next phase the issue of financial viability has to be put on a much firmer footing. The next three year proposal should be accompanied by a better strategy of financial sustainability. SLPI has to explore a number of strategies such as generating income by provision of various types of services, identifying new and innovative fund raising strategies, working towards an endowment grant, looking for sponsorship of individual activities, etc. These are strategies used by the non-profit sector. This is normally done through formulation of a financial concept that includes a number of sources of funds.

The overall financial concept of a non-profit organisation has to take into account a number of questions. It is not only a matter of finding new sources of income. The manner in which finances are secured has to fit in with the overall mandate of the organisation and its vision. Organisations that have developed successful financial concepts have taken into account factors such as the balance between income generation and programme work, donor dependency both in terms overall dependency and number of donors on which organisation is depending, staff policies and strategy to keep a core staff, etc. Finally, it must be remembered even in developed countries non-profit organisations always depend on endowments, sponsorship and other benefactors. This is bound to be the situation in a developing country like Sri Lanka as well.

When formulating the next proposal SLPI needs to get the support of an expert who has experience of financial strategies for non-profit organisations in order to formulate an appropriate financial concept. The objective should be to develop an overall financial concept which allows the organisation to take a few more steps towards financial sustainability.

In the coming years, SLPI will depend on donor funds, and the interest among donors for working with an established institution is growing. In this context it is quite possible that SLPI will attract more funds. Hence the issue can be availability of opportunities to attract funds rather than absence of funds. Since in the immediate future SLPI needs to consolidate itself, a certain degree of understanding among the donors that the institute should not expand too fast will be important.

### **3.1.6 Advocacy**

In its original structure SLPI was to be the main unit engaged in *advocacy*. What is meant by advocacy here is lobbying and campaigning for reforms of the legal and statutory framework within which media operates. There is a general agreement among the stakeholders that this has not happened to the extent planned. The primary reason for this has been the lack of staff and inexperience of the DG in the media field.

However it is important to remember that there is a certain amount of advocacy that has been going on through the activities of the two units. Advocating and popularising the notion of self-regulation has been a major function of PCCSL. The College, through its training programme, advocates certain standards of behaviour on the part of journalists. Even in future this is bound to happen.

Hence SLPI needs to rethink its entire advocacy strategy holistically. It is an area where all three units of the organisation have to come together. It has to be planned together recognising the contributions made by each unit. Budgets for advocacy have to be allocated accordingly. Probably it will be an area which will help to break the relative isolation in which units work at present.

As we have mentioned in section 2.1 the establishment of SLPI received strong backing from the UNF government. This relationship has changes because the UNF is no longer in power. The *relationship between SLPI and GOSL* is now very similar to any other civil society organisation.

Although these developments created a certain amount of concern, it can also be taken as a blessing in disguise. If the UNF had continued in power, and if SLPI became far too close to the regime, its legitimacy as a civil society organisation would have suffered. The challenge at present is how to work as a civil society organisation maintaining its independence, while relating to the current government wherever possible. There are no clear formulas for this task. Implementing this in a politically sensitive topic like media is fraught with danger. The only comment that the team can make is that in the task of advocating media reforms, relating to the current regime, networking and building coalitions for this task across the political spectrum will be an essential element. SLPI need to develop strategies for this purpose in the next phase.

## **3.2 Press Complaints Commission of Sri Lanka, PCCSL**

### **3.2.1 The concept**

The *concept* of self regulation of standards of journalism by journalists themselves is a novel concept for Sri Lanka. Since the establishment of the Press Council in 1973 by the government, the practice was for the Press Council to regulate how the media behaved. This always gave opportunities for the government to interfere with the press. There have been a number of occasions where this has adversely affected press freedom.

In order to make this self-regulation a success a number of things have to happen. First journalists have to accept it and sign up for the Code of Practice; second, the public has to know about it; and third, the entire mechanism has to deliver satisfactory results so that both journalists and public have confidence in it.

Hence what PCCSL has set out to do was a tall order. Given this background and the numerous difficulties that PCCSL has faced in terms of staff and budget, what has been achieved is commendable. There is almost universal acceptance of the notion of self-regulation within the journalist community. Almost all the journalists that the team spoke to accepted that this is better than subjecting them to the Press Council. There has been a slow process of dissemination of the idea within the public. PCCSL has received complaints, and the newspapers have responded to the interventions of the PCCSL.

However, as we shall discuss below, there is much more room for improvement and a long way to go. UK PCC, on which the formation of the Sri Lankan counterpart was modelled, receives close to 3000 complaints annually. Sri Lankan PCCSL received 267 from October 2003 to December 2004 and 112 in 2005. Journalists are still to become members of the PCCSL. PCCSL has to continue its publicity and advocacy work.

### 3.3.2 The board

PCCSL is incorporated under the Companies Act No. 17 of 1982. It is run by a *board* of directors nominated by the SLPI. There is provision for 50 *members* of the Commission in the article. However, according to the articles the Board has the power to decide on rights of members, including their voting rights.

The current situation is that the same individuals sit in the boards of both SLPI and PCCSL. There are no additional members other than those in the board. Recruitment of journalists to become members of the Commission is an essential element for the success of the notion of self-regulation. Once they become members they are obliged to abide by the Code of Practice. It is because of this reason that there has been a discussion on recruiting new members. Currently there is a discussion to draw up criteria for membership and a procedure for admitting new members.

However once the members are recruited the anomaly in the Articles of Association where members do not have the right to elect the board is bound to come up for discussion. It is difficult to foresee a situation where many journalists are ready to be members without these rights. Absence of these rights for the members can undermine the legitimacy of the PCCSL and undermine the whole exercise. Therefore the team recommends that PCCSL consider amending its Articles of Association giving the right to the members to elect the board. This can result in a greater diversity of representation in the board, and a greater degree of legitimacy for the organisation.

### 3.2.3 The council

The arbitration *Council* is an important element of the self-regulation exercise. When complaints cannot be resolved through reconciliation or mediation, arbitration is carried out by three members of the council. The legal basis for the arbitration is the Arbitration Act No. 11 of 1995. Currently there is a council of 11 members with personalities that enjoy credibility and acceptance in society. This has been an important reason for the success of the work of the PCCSL. In such a controversial matter like the behaviour of the press, PCCSL will have to ensure that Council always consists of such personalities.

As it is the case in many such institutions not all members of the Council can be expected to be equally active. However if the PCCSL can ensure that at all times there are at least five members who are active and committed to this mechanism it can be sustained. PCCSL should consider this as a strategy to ensure an active Council.

### 3.2.4 The code

The *Code of Practice* and *Rules and Complaints Procedure* are the two instruments that set the framework for the complaints and establish the process by which the public can direct complaints respectively. In its preamble, the Code of Practice of the Editors Guild of Sri Lanka states that ‘this code of practice which is binding on all Press institutions and journalists, aims to ensure that the print medium in Sri Lanka is free and responsible and sensitive to the needs and expectations of its readers, while maintaining the highest standards of journalism’. It consists of eight sections covering accurate reporting, corrections and apologies, opportunity to reply, confidential sources, general reporting and writing, privacy, harassment and subterfuge and dignity. Rules and Complaints procedures cover process of entertaining complaints, evidence, the award, correction or change of award, enforcement, and interpretation of the code and who can speak on behalf of the PCCSL.

These instruments have been established and are functioning. PCCSL has also been changing and adjusting them depending on experience. Currently there is a committee appointed with the objective of revising the Code of Practice. This is in line with the Code of Practice itself, which states ‘The Editors Guild shall review the provisions of this Code from time to time, but not less than once each year’. This task should be completed in time for the new proposal. The ideal is for it to be ready along with the recruitment of new members and to be accepted through a participatory process where members play an active part.

### 3.2.5 Publicity and awareness building

Right from the beginning PCCSL has been extremely active in giving *publicity* to PCCSL and popularising the concept of self-regulation. This has been done even without a proper budget. As a result at the beginning the PCCSL was the better known unit of SLPI. These activities received a drawback due to the resignation of the CEO. However Fojo has stepped in fill the gap and the planned work has been completed. PCCSL should be commended for these achievements despite the difficulties they faced.

The publicity and awareness building is a critical aspect for the success of the PCCSL. In immediate future this needs to be given priority because awareness about the Code even among the journalists is very low. The baseline survey undertaken shows that only 10% of the journalists surveyed knew about the Code of Practice. This is a result from a limited sample. Hence this situation can be much worse. In planning new activities in publicity and awareness building there is room for improvement of this work on the basis of past experience. The following recommendations should be taken into account in improving the publicity and advocacy strategy of the PCCSL.

- Publicity and advocacy strategy of PCCSL should be a part of the overall advocacy strategy of SLPI. It should be planned in close collaboration with the advocacy officer of SLPI
- It should be adequately budgeted
- In planning the advocacy strategy PCCSL can make use of the data from ‘the complaints tracker’ software and findings from any other studies available (e.g. The base line survey) This data could be of value in targeting and strategising advocacy and publicity activities.
- Some of the staff of PCCSL have writing talents and they regularly contribute to the press. This should be seen in a positive light and used for advocacy purposes

### 3.2.6 The PCCSL office

The *vacancies* created by the resignation of the staff is the single most worrying issue for the proper functioning of PCCSL. When PCCSL had its full strength there was a CEO, two complaints officers and a consultant. Now the staff strength is reduced to just two people. The CEO resigned in August 2005. There has been no CEO for the past six months. In these circumstances Fojo has stepped in to help. It is this factor which helped the PCCSL to complete its planned activities. Filling the existing vacancies of the PCCSL should be given a priority. Once the recruitment at the level of SLPI is completed, filling the vacancies at PCCSL should be the next task.

In the first phase of the project there were plans for *training of staff* and interested council members on mediation techniques. This has not been implemented. The study tour to South Africa was the principal activity undertaken. However one of the participants of the study tour has already left the PCCSL. Hence whatever experience gained has been lost to the PCCSL. In the next phase of the project training aspects of the PCCSL staff have to be placed on a better footing. It has to be budgeted properly and means of achieving it established.

The *complaints* tracker software that has been installed at the PCCSL is an extremely valuable tool, not only for just recoding the data on complaints and follow up but also analysing the trends. This can be an important mechanism for monitoring the entire mechanism of self-evaluation and taking appropriate steps in planning PCCSL work. Probably a review of how this software is used in other countries such as UK will help the PCCSL to strengthen this work.

PCCSL received 267 complaints between October 2003 and December 2004. In 2005 it was reduced to 112. This is a worrying trend. It reflects a certain degree of ineffectiveness of the PCCSL. Perhaps the weakening of the PCCSL activities due to staff resignations had a role to play in this trend. PCCSL should try to rectify this situation in 2006.

Data for 2005 show some interesting trends. In 2005, 34 complaints were received against Sinhala dailies, 21 English dailies and 8 Tamil dailies. When it comes to weeklies 34 were against Sinhala weeklies, 2 against English and 3 against Tamil. It is interesting to note that Sinhala weeklies score as high as Sinhala dailies, although the former newspapers come out only once week. When it comes to type of violations the category of accurate reporting was the highest, accounting for 54% of violations. Sources of complaints varied. But what is interesting is complaints from the public (27%) were as high as complaints from government officials (26%). The figures for the outcome of the complaints procedure are also interesting. 49 out of 112 complaints or 44% were settled through conciliation. This is a good indicator that the mechanism is working, 4 went for mediation and 6 for arbitration. In the case of 26 out of 112 (23%) complainants did not respond and proceed with the complaint. There were 4 cases where the editor did not respond and another 7 where the editor stood by the story.

### 3.3 Sri Lankan College of Journalism

The Sri Lanka College of Journalism, SLCJ, was established with the broad objective of furthering democracy and independent thinking through the development of journalism and the integration of the media industry. SLCJ has two core functions: to provide a one-year diploma course at entry level and short courses for further training of journalists, so called mid-career courses.

Most journalists in Sri Lanka have received no formal training, either at entry level or as working journalists and there is a growing need for practical journalism training. The most evident problem in the media is the lack of the adherence to internationally recognised basic standards of accuracy, impartiality and responsibility. Overall, there remains a very high level of partisanship, little attempt to distinguish facts from opinions, little analytical journalism or investigative reporting. Over the years there have been some irregular training courses and seminars conducted by for example the Free Media Movement, but most training has been theoretical at educational institutions such as the Colombo University.

#### 3.3.1 Diploma course

*SLCJ is a new concept in Sri Lanka* – to teach journalism to young students, trying to establish journalism as a profession. SLCJ tries to draw together a media culture which stresses learning on the job and mass communication courses at university which encourages a more reflective approach to media.

Already from the start in 2003 there has been a good participatory process in designing and setting up the curriculum of the Diploma course between Sri Lankan journalists and lectures and a Curriculum Advisor provided by Fojo in October 2003, and the first batch of students started in May 2004.

Although there is a great need for journalist training, initially it has been *difficult to recruit students* due to high fees and uncertainty of the quality of education provided by the college. According to the project document there should be 30 students on the course, Sinhala, Tamil and English, but the first year saw 22 graduates out of 28 enrolled. The Diploma course has also battled with low attendance rate and low motivation among the students, but this has gradually progressed during the second year due to improved curriculum, better trained lectures through staff training provided by Fojo advisor, and a growing reputation of the College. Today SLCJ runs its third diploma course with a high attendance, and with a TV and radio unit. This is the first time in Sri Lanka that a journalist training institute can provide an education for both print and TV/radio sectors. It is also the first time that the print section has enrolment above target, 32 students, and 27 students (target 25) for the new electronic section.

This development indicates that the College may well be on its way to establish its Diploma course among students. To further enhance increased applications and thereby a wider entrance selection to the Diploma course, the College should do *more promotion* and work directly with a-level schools to inform about the education on journalism, or invite representatives from the school for meetings and study tour. Graduated students could also be included in the promotion as a kind of a peer campaign.

In the beginning SLCJ had difficulties with its management, but eventually the old leadership was replaced and the College and Fojo now has a well *functioning organization* with good routines such as weekly staff meetings to discuss and evaluate the curriculum of the Diploma course, constantly upgrading it, with inputs also from the students.

When the evaluation team met with newly *graduated* students from the second year Diploma course it was clear that to most part these students had gained *awareness, knowledge and skills* in a number of areas, along with a boost in confidence. The curriculum covers a lot of topics and the students felt that it was relevant and interesting, and provided them with the practical skills they had sought for.

The methodology that SLCJ uses is a relatively new model in Sri Lanka and is built on interactivity between students and lectures, learn-by-doing, different from the usual spoon feeding exercises. One of the expectations prior to starting was to get a job within the media and all the students of this batch had received jobs, some of them better paid than expected. There was even a student who got a job within television, although her diploma focused on print.

It remains to be seen how many of these students *will stay in the business*, as more than half of the first batch left the media sector after a while to work with private business or with NGO's, many of them with tsunami-related projects. In general there is a shift within the labour market and media is one of the sectors losing out to other sectors due to poor salaries and lack of human resource management. The fact that the College has a well functioning internship component, where the students spend all in all six weeks at media organization has provided some of them with mentors and good relations already, hopefully paving the way for entering a rather tough job sector, particularly for women.

Of the graduates we met most came from around Colombo, very few from the countryside. SLCJ could look at providing scholarships with board and lodging for students from the North or other parts of the island as the opportunities for journalist education and training in the provinces are basically none and the need is great. Another possibility would be to try and influence newspapers in particular to sponsor students from outside Colombo. Today more and more newspapers have supplements from the provinces, and there is a commercial interest in improving the quality of provincial journalists.

### **3.3.2 Mid-career courses**

SLCJ and Fojo offer *short term courses* running over five days to active journalists for further training. The first course started in 2004 and by mid 2006 there will have been 22 different courses, including two follow up courses, duly implemented *according to work plan*. Initially Fojo took all responsibility for the courses, as well as having only Swedish trainers, but since 2005 the responsibility has gradually been shifted to College, and today there is one Swedish trainer and one Sri Lankan co-trainer on each course. The coordinator of the College handles preparations with Swedish trainers, contacts with the Fojo office in Sweden, advertising and promotion of courses, selection of participants and co-trainers, and all practical arrangements and follows up activities. In terms of capacity building and transfer of knowledge it is of course crucial that the Sri Lankan partner is in charge, but it would be more sustainable for the College to widen the circle of persons handling the courses, as it is always risky that the institutional memory lies within one person.

At first the courses were selected by Fojo, covering topics like Health and social reporting, Page layout and sub-editing, Reporting on the National economy etc. In 2005 a new strategy was applied where the College has had a *consultative process* with representatives of the media: business, owners, editors and journalists to establish the needs for training. Basically the media asks for skills based courses within areas such as info graphics, photojournalism, on-line journalism, reporting sports, writing news scripts for radio and TV. With the new TV and radio unit at the College more technical courses within this sector will be added during this spring.

The concept behind this strategy is to move away from donor defined programs and courses, usually conflict reporting and management, and establish the College as an institution for the industry and its needs, and a provider of good *quality technical courses within niche areas*. The courses are characterised by interactive learning and with an ambition to mainstream discussions around ethics, press freedom, impartiality, gender etc within the topic of learning. A further discussion around cross-cutting issues and activities at SLPI will be discussed in 3.4.

When talking to former participants of these courses, there is a common opinion that they have been *relevant, applicable and looked at the need of the audiences*. And judging from the evaluation forms filled in after each training session, the journalists have gained both awareness and skills. Both Fojo trainers and Sri Lankan co-trainers get high marks by the course participants, and some of the Sri Lankan trainers have used the pedagogical way of working in other educational institutions such as the University of Colombo, adding more practical features and inter-active learning.

As mentioned previously in this report, experience shows that most training only provide knowledge and skills on a personal level, as the structures of hierarchy makes it very difficult for trained staff to share their new competence with colleagues, unless in an informal way. The impression we got from talking to journalists is that most of them, unless they have a higher position at the working place, they *have little opportunities both applying their new skills* within a wider circle, or to provide in-house training to colleagues.

Although one of the major achievements of the College is to bring about an acceptance and appreciation of the concept of training and trainers within the media sector, many editors and gate keepers constitute the principal blockage to better journalistic practise. In the consultative process with the industry regarding the selection of courses, the College should push for a higher commitment among the media in providing in-house training opportunities for trained staff, as well as requiring Swedish trainers to produce proper hand-outs after each course, today only provided on ad hoc basis.

The College should increasingly involve more *editors and sub-editors* in the courses to promote the effects of the training of the staff. So far the College has had one course on newsroom management, which had a positive outcome. Experience shows though that it is difficult to approach the top management, as the idea of training and new knowledge is not really embedded within this group, and therefore difficult to attract. The college needs to find a strategy for this, maybe teaming up with other providers of media courses such as BBC or Internews. Similar journalist training projects in other countries show that no change will come about unless all sectors of the media are involved, especially the senior management and owners.

The *selection of participants* for training could also benefit from a serious discussion with the editors, as some media organizations may send less qualified staff for training to make sure that the work of the newsroom will not suffer from absent top journalists. One of the journalists the team met had been on three different mid-career courses. Again, the advocacy role of the three entities that constitutes SLPI is crucial in this respect. Trying to influence owners and editors on overall media issues and the code of ethics will surely have an impact of the mid-career courses as well as the diploma courses in terms of raising their status.

In the work plan it says that the College should do *follow up exercises* two months after each course to determine the impact of the training in the work places. This has not been realised due to time constraints, and there is no real knowledge of the impact of the courses, except for anecdotal evidence. In the next phase of the project a proper follow-up mechanism should be identified and specified in the budget, as this is a complicated and difficult task which requires time and money. One possibility could be for the Resource Centre at the College to do content evaluation as a research project, perhaps in cooperation with students on the Diploma course or together with an experience research institution such as the Centre for Policy Alternatives, CPA.

It is obvious that SLCJ together with Fojo have introduced new ideas on training, and the BBC project – Bridging the Divide – will in its second phase go from broad technical skills to more thematic courses, which shows that the College strategy is relevant. The College is also first to have courses without offering any extra benefits such as per diem. There is though a need for a clear plan for the coming years, as providing one course one time is in the long run quite expensive and not sustainable enough, as you need new trainers and co-trainers for each course and you don't build trainer capacity that way.

The College should look at the possibility of having *a smaller selection of mid-career courses* and instead introduce more follow-up courses. That system would allow Swedish trainers to come for two weeks and do one basic course and one follow up course, which has also been asked for by former participants. As it takes time to build capacity and confidence former participants would benefit from having several courses on the same topic over a longer period. This would in the long run have more impact at the working places in terms of in-house training possibilities and perhaps give more opportunities to influence on the gate-keepers.

*Training of co-trainers*, which is a basic requirement for any training project has suffered in the first phase. Actually, it is not even part of the work plan, which only covers training of permanent staff of the Diploma course. When the lectures of the College had training with the Curriculum advisor from Sweden, Sri Lankan co-trainers from the mid-career courses were also invited. Because of time constraints and obligation at their ordinary working places, only a few could participate.

In the second phase of the project, ToT must be re-enforced, otherwise risking that the whole concept of mid-career courses will continue to depend entirely on Swedish trainers. One option could be to have week-end ToT courses, which time wise would be better for these very busy co-trainers. The College could also look at the possibility of employing permanent trainers with pedagogical skills that could work with the mid-career courses on certain topics. There is also room for building the capacity of Swedish trainers on Sri Lankan media and culture. Offering preparatory courses and trainer seminars at the Fojo head office for Swedish trainers could be one avenue in this direction.

### **3.3.3 The development of the college**

The Diploma course and the mid-career courses have provided *good synergy effects*. Co-trainers from the short courses come in as guest lectures providing the necessary input from the business. The lectures of the College get training of trainers through the BBC training project, which can be useful for the Fojo short term courses in replacing Swedish trainers.

The College has set up a new radio and TV unit, which benefits both students and journalists. SLCJ is certainly on its way to fulfil its *specific objective*: to produce trained journalists that can contribute to increased quality, commitment and standards of journalism in a feasible way.

During the past years, the College has been busy both with core business as well as organizing workshops on disaster reporting for journalists in eight Tsunami-stricken provinces on behalf of UNDP. Actually, one could say that SLCJ has been overloaded as the number of staff has not increased in relation to the activities. This is probably the reason for the College not being able to take care and follow up all the students and journalists that have passed through the facilities since the start. SLPI together with the College needs to review the staffing needs and employ more permanent staff, with a staff motivation scheme.

The College should become a *meeting point*, a social forum, giving ownership to the students and journalists. Several of the people we met and interviewed pointed out that SLCJ is about to become more of an institution than a college. Today the College is primarily viewed as a learning facility. It lacks the soul of a college meaning there should be more extra-curriculum activities, a place you want to return to in the evening, not only for studies, but for also for exchange of ideas and get-together activities among students and journalists.

For the coming years the College must consolidate its activities and take better care of the great *potential network* of graduates and active journalists. As the graduated students pointed out: “We need the College to keep the spirit of the Diploma course. We need to be able to meet former students to keep contact in this tough business”. Same thoughts were put through by the active journalists, and they would like to see monthly meetings for example. Colombo has no active Press Club and the College has all the possibilities of becoming that important venue for the media industry. SLCJ should make better use of its website, set up an Alumni Club for graduates, use old students as mentors, and invite more active journalists as guest lectures, start the production of a newsletter as previously planned etc.

In this context the *Media Resource Centre* could play a role as a focal point for students and journalists. The Resource Centre is a part of SLPI, but is housed within the facilities of the College. Currently it is more of a traditional library for Diploma students and mid-career journalists with fairly well stocked resources, but still with a need to be up-graded in terms of media literature, subscriptions on newspapers, magazines, and access to online databases and reference sites. Today the future function of the Centre is a bit unclear. There have been proposals to identify it as a separate unit, having its own cost structure with a number of possible future sources of revenues.<sup>1</sup>

The evaluation team believes that the first step in testing the potential of the Centre could be to use it as meeting place for students and journalists, and as an organizer of media related events, in addition to the tasks already in place. We have already mentioned that it could also do media research related to the mid-term courses, and obviously be an important input in any research connected to future advocacy. The Centre could also become a connecting Colombo facility for the Media Resource Centres to be established under the new Internews project.

In any case, an expansion of the Media Resource Centre needs to be done prudently, making sure that there is adequate staff and budget for taking on more duties. The proposed Communication officer could for example be based at the Centre, working with an Alumni Club, other networking, websites, newsletter, events and workshops.

By taking care of its network, the College and SLPI as a whole will not only continue build bridges between students and journalists from different language groups and ethnicity, but also between different sectors of the media: traditionally print journalists have little contact with colleagues from the electronic media.

One idea that has been proposed is to set up an honorary *Advisory Board* of active Sri Lankan journalists, among them members of the Foreign Correspondent Club, to support the College in various ways and give credibility to its activities, which we support. Considering that there have been doubts in the electronic media business whether SLPI/College, which so far primarily has been seen as a representative of the print media, can handle training for TV and radio, it is urgent that the Advisory Board also have representatives from the electronic media.

The College needs to focus on its *core business*, diploma and short courses, quality rather than quantity, to keep the momentum going. In two years time, staff at the College hopes that the media industry will be willing to pay for sending participants to mid-career courses. The Swedish trainers, who have an excellent reputation among the Sri Lankan media, have together with Sri Lankan staff made it possible for the College to become a landmark in journalist training over a short period.

However, during this coming two-year period it is crucial for the College to develop local trainer capacity for the mid-career courses, and thereby keep the costs down. Today the weekly cost for one

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<sup>1</sup> For additional information please see Sustainability Proposal for SLPI.

participant, if 16 in the group, is roughly around 1.100 USD, and it is not reasonable to think that the Sri Lankan media is willing to make that investment considering the low wages among journalists.<sup>2</sup>

Our strongest recommendation for SLPI is to consolidate itself and not take on too many new activities for the coming years. *When meeting with representatives of the media industry some long-term and short-term needs were discussed.* On a long-term basis the institutional efforts to raise the standards of mainstream media are seen as very important and fulfilling a neglected need. For more senior journalists the possibility of a post-graduate qualification in affiliation with a reputable university would be of interest.

On a short-term basis the team came across following ideas that can be considered by the College:

- *In-house training at media organizations.* The decision-makers at newspapers are interested in improving the standards, quality and output of their media products and producers. They are interested and willing to pay for in-house training provided by Swedish and Sri Lankan trainers that can deliver on-the job training and training modules that cover photography, layout, copy editing, advanced management etc: training that would work within the structures of a media organization, rather than sending individual journalists for short-term courses. In the next project proposal for SLPI we recommend that in-house training on a smaller scale, perhaps as a pilot activity, is included. Fojo surely has a lot of experience of this from other countries, and can provide the input necessary.
- *More English trained journalists.* For the English newspapers as well as for the broadcasting industry it is a problem to find journalists that can write good English journalistic outputs. We have already proposed that the College should increase its promotion to A-level institutions and thereby try to increase the intake to the English stream at the Diploma course. The College has also provided a mid-career course in English aimed at journalists with little knowledge of English. Obviously there is a need to improve reporting in English, and one possibility could be to also offer mid-career courses specifically aimed at English writing journalists, such as advanced news writing.
- *Training of provincial journalists.* As previously mentioned there is a commercial interest among media for better trained provincial journalists as the news coverage outside Colombo is increasing with weekly supplements to various newspapers. Previously the College has had UNDP-workshops in the provinces, which has been a rewarding but time consuming activities. Instead the College could offer courses to provincial journalists in Colombo, sponsored by their media organizations, as a start.
- *Introducing new techniques.* The trade of web journalists does not exist in Sri Lanka as the technical side is taken care of by technicians and the content by journalists. There is a need within media to try and bridge this gap, as web based journalism is a growing sector. This division of tasks, which is a structural issue within the media and thereby not so easy to overcome, could be addressed through mid-career courses where the requirement for selection is that journalists have a better knowledge of the technical side of on-line journalism, and could take on training on both technique and content.
- *Meet the emerging diversity within the media.* Today media is becoming more and more diverse. Radio and television have websites and magazines, on-line newspapers have tee and radio, mobile phones give access to radio, tee and Internet etc. This scenario needs to be considered when approaching participants for future mid-career courses, as there is a need for example

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<sup>2</sup> During the evaluation we asked for the actual cost for one student at the Diploma course, to see how feasible it would be to run the Diploma course without donor contribution, and how reasonable it is that the course could cover its own costs. The College could not provide that exact cost.

among radio journalists to be able to write for a magazine, or for an on-line journalist to do radio programs.

- *Continue to have close contact with the industry.* The consultative process already in place for the mid-career courses is very important to adapt to the changing environment and be able to meet the needs of the media industry, including the broadcasting industry, which has the biggest impact on the audience. In this context the proposed Advisory Board of the College as well as follow-up activities of the internships of the College students at media organizations will also provide the necessary input and understanding to develop the services of the College.

It is already evident that SLCJ attracts various donor projects; both on long-term and short-term basis, and the College should already now make a strategy for how to deal with potential projects, take the lead and look at projects from SLCJ perspective and not the other way round. The set up of the new TV and radio unit is a good example of how a donor can put pressure on an institution, and while the unit today is a great advantage for the College, this work took a lot of energy, while other activities suffered.

Instead donors and potential projects should cooperate and make sure that there is no duplication and overlapping of activities. There are several interesting possibilities for the SLCJ to step by step connect to the Media Resource Training Centre in Jaffna, the new Media Production and Resource Centres on the east and south coast about to be set up by Internews to support local radio journalism. FLICT and CPA are potential local partners.

Fojo, which has already played an important role in advising and assisting the College should continue with this and provide advice on other donor initiatives, to make sure that the College can absorb new projects.

### 3.4 Cross-cutting Issues

#### 3.4.1 Poverty reduction, human rights, gender and conflict management

The goal of the Swedish development cooperation with Sri Lanka is to promote development which is characterised by peace and democracy, including sustainable economic development, which benefits the poor. Among the priorities are to promote a culture of democracy in the media.<sup>3</sup>

In the Memo from the Swedish Embassy, which assessed the project document, it is pointed out the importance of addressing throughout (especially in the training courses of SLCJ) *cross-cutting issues* as journalist reporting on poverty, gender equality, environment, HR/Democracy and child rights, HIV/AIDS and conflict prevention, and other means by which the SLPI can address them.<sup>4</sup>

The mid-career courses have seen a mix of topics, some of the more evident in terms of covering cross-cutting issues, other less. Since the introduction of specialised niche courses, as a result of the consultative process with the media industry, the requirements on the Swedish trainers have increased to try and cover everything during a five days course.

There are some good examples that this is quite possible to do. The course on Reporting on Sports for example includes areas such as gender, ethics, social reporting and politics. The course on Reporting for the Young audience covers children's rights, civic journalism, ethics and standards, gender and diversity.

In general including cross-cutting issues is done on ad hoc basis, and very much up to the individual Swedish trainer. For future the mid-career courses would benefit from more explicit discussion with trainers on how cross-cutting issues can be included in all courses, and also made visible in the trainer reports.

<sup>3</sup> Country strategy for development cooperation with Sri Lanka 2003–2007, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Sweden

<sup>4</sup> Embassy of Sweden, Colombo, Assessment Memo 2003

During the first two years of setting up SLPI, there has been no *gender* mainstreaming of the activities within the three entities, although there has been a good effort to make sure that there is a gender balance among the participants on the mid-career courses and Diploma course. An overall plan for gender mainstreaming within the whole of SLPI would be useful, looking also at the need for the internal structure and working methods of the three institutes themselves to include gender, as suggested in the Assessment Memo from the Embassy.

The current Diploma course holds three sessions, with topics such as Women in media and their role, and Development journalism and women's issues. The objectives are to provide an insight and to introduce students to sensitive areas of reporting concerning women. This will provide the students with certain awareness on gender, but no technical skills. Learning and using a gender framework can equip journalists and editors with ways to quickly spot when a story has glaring gaps in terms of who is not speaking, which perspectives have been overlooked. It is urgent that future journalists are more aware of the different needs of women and men, and can reflect this in the media coverage.

The College has also had sessions on children's rights and discussions around poverty and the Millennium Development Goals for Sri Lanka, and this third year of Diploma course will see increased number of sessions on the importance of the ethical code.

Initially the mid-career courses had some cooperation with the PCC on the *ethical code*, and representatives from the office held some lectures. This cooperation between two entities of the same institution stopped after a short while, which is unfortunate. Statistics show that only half of all journalists taking part in a survey were aware of a professional code of practice and less than 10% of them had a copy or had received training on the code. Actually, just over half of the journalists were aware of the fact that the media institutions had accepted the Sri Lankan code of ethics from PCC.<sup>5</sup> A session on the Code of ethics should be compulsory in all mid-career courses, as well as mainstreaming the issues that the code covers throughout the courses.

PCC on the other hand has had numerous successful workshops for journalist and media, and has made an important contribution in building awareness on the Code of ethics.

Some criticism has been put forward to SLPI for not including any discussions, courses or session on *conflict management/reporting*, particularly as the debate around peace and conflict were the base for the establishment of institute among the founding organizations.

For the mid-career courses it has been a clear choice not to work with conflict reporting as a way of bridging the divide between the heavily entrenched media, the given choice for so many other workshops and seminars offered in Sri Lanka.

Although a very important subject, the evaluation team would argue that the path that the College has chosen for the mid-career course, trying to improve professionalism and cooperation through different topics, may well lead to a closer ties and understanding between various media and ethnic groups of journalists in other areas of reporting.

Advocacy on legislation and structures that promote transparency, diversity and freedom of expression is vital to work towards more stability in society. As noted already, the advocacy component of SLPI has not been realised during the first two years, and once this work starts, it may in the long run lead to less tension within the media.

*Poverty reduction*, the main goal of all development work, should be seen as multi-dimensional, since both social, economic, political and environmental dimensions, as well as peace and conflict resolution, must be viewed in an integrated manner. Poverty is thereby not only defined as lack of material resources, but also as a lack of power and choice, where democratic and human rights aspects of poverty interact with the material dimension.

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<sup>5</sup> On the road to peace, 2005

From a poverty reduction standpoint deprived and vulnerable groups often lack visibility and voice to enable them to define and influence policy priorities and access resources. A more independent and professional media is a crucial component in this context, and an important plank in poverty reduction, good governance and promotion of openness and human rights. This is in line with the overall development objective of this project: to create and nurture an informed and discerning public that is committed to pluralistic and democratic ideals through the development of a competent, professional, independent and accountable media.

Considering that the institute has been running for only a short period, and the development objective is long-term, it should still be pointed out that SLPI has taken steps towards a more professional media, which in the long run can contribute to increased access to information and participation of the public and pave the way for a more informed debate on issues of concern. Staff at SLPI, particularly at the College, may need to build its capacity on cross-cutting issues, particularly on issues around non-discrimination and vulnerable groups. FLICT and CPA could be such partners, providing lectures and co-trainers with awareness and knowledge on ethnicity and gender.

### **3.4.2 A rights based approach**

For the next phase of the project, there should be a serious effort to bring together all potential forces of the institute in a clear strategy to promote cross cutting issues and rights *based approach*, which is fundamental for the development of the media and its audiences, the indirect beneficiaries of the project. This strategy should also be reflected in work plans and indicators, and reports, such as Annual reports and trainer reports.

A rights-based approach to development is a conceptual framework for the process of human development that is normatively based on international human rights standards and operationally directed to promoting and protecting human rights. Essentially, a rights-based approach integrates the norms, standards and principles of the international human rights system into the plans, policies and processes of development. The principles include equality and equity, accountability, empowerment and participation. A rights based approach tries to develop strategies to build the capacities of both duty-holders (government, authorities etc) to fulfil their obligations, and claim-holders (the public, vulnerable groups etc) to claim their rights.

The media (as part of civil society) has a key role in helping to apply right based approaches. It both benefits from the guarantees of human rights (notably freedom of expression) and has the power to impact on human rights more generally (positively and negatively). Rights based approaches review both the nature of State regulation of the media and the media's own human rights responsibilities and freedoms.

As we pointed out in the second chapter of this evaluation, the Colombo Declaration was an important starting point of the formation of the SLPI, looking at the legal and regulatory framework within which the media operates, and a code of ethics and the social responsibility of journalists. The Declaration as such has a strong component of rights based approaches, as it covers both the duty-holders and the claim-holders.

A rights-based approach should therefore not be donor-driven approach within SLPI, but rather a well-integrated part of the whole SLPI concept of training and strengthening professionalism of the journalism trade, setting standards for professional journalism, and advocacy for reforms so that media can operate without institutional barriers.

It is not hard to find examples applicable to a rights based approach in practise for SLPI. Advocacy for pushing the Freedom of Information Bill before the Parliament to try and influence duty-holders to fulfil their obligations is one way, and at the same time raise awareness among students at the Diploma course of what rights are not being respected, protected or fulfilled. Restriction on access to govern-

ment held information – often of vital importance to the lives of ordinary people and the need for journalists to give a voice to claim-holders and to build motivation and capacity for taking action in this context would correspond to the advocacy efforts. Awareness could also be built among journalists on the mid-career courses that a Freedom of Information Bill would promote transparency and accountability and enable the journalists to work more freely.

One of the comments that were put forward during the evaluation was that the students at the College learn about significant issues such as poverty and the Millennium Development Goals, gender etc, but that this knowledge is only asked by parts of the media industry. How should the young journalists deal with this? In all its efforts to meet the needs of the media industry, it is still important for SLPI to remember its roots and try to maintain a balance between commercial interests and future financial sustainability and the important role media plays in promoting good governance and human rights.

## 4. Recommendations

### SLPI

#### The concept

- The institute must consolidate itself to be able create a positive environment for the next project phase.
- The concept of SLPI is built on three elements: training, setting ethic standards and advocacy. The institute needs to sustain and continue with this concept in furthering media in Sri Lanka.
- SLPI need to develop a new proposal for the next phase. The new project document should give a clear vision of where the institute will be at the end of the next three years with identified goals and targets; establishment of a clear programme of work, and a strategy for completing the recommendations of this report. The new proposal should also include a strategy to promote cross-cutting issues, such as poverty reduction, human rights, gender and a rights-based approach.
- SLPI need external support to develop the new proposal. There should be emphasis on participatory methods of planning in developing the new proposal.

#### The board

- Currently SLPI and PCCSL are registered separately, and there is also a consideration to do the same with College. If the College is also going to be registered separately there is a need to institute strong management mechanisms that will force the units to work together. Some of the recommendations of this report (joint management team, a holistic advocacy strategy, greater communication between units, etc) will go a long way in achieving this. Donors should be aware of this need and take necessary steps to keep the institute intact.
- The Board should provide a clear vision for the organization in the new project document and see it as a possibility of further team building within the Board.
- There should be a formula for rotation of board members, to provide the possibility of introducing new board members available in the organization.
- Increasing the number of members has been a long standing discussion within SLPI. This is also a requirement by the donors. Incorporation of new members should be carried out as soon as possible, including members from the broadcasting business.

- Now that some of the key management positions have been filled the board should focus on policy issues and not on day to day management.

### **The structure**

- Finance and administration has so far been highly centralised within SLPI. This has to be rectified as soon as possible by devolving decision making powers to the CEO's of PCCSL and SLCJ. The new structure should have the following characteristics:
  - Administrative and financial procedures in place
  - Administrative and financial decision making devolved to the CEOs' of units on the basis of procedures and budgets
  - CEOs' becoming holders of their budgets with clear budget lines for programmes
  - Units operating as cost centres with financial accountability
- In regards to management, SLPI need to introduce an instrument which will allow the heads of the units to work as a team and be responsible for the daily work, SLPI should establish a management team consisting of DG, CEO SLCJ, CEO PPC, Advocacy officer and representative of Fojo. This team should have the power to take decisions on the day-to-day running of the organisation.
- Improvement of the internal and external communication as well as advocacy is urgent and provisions should be taken to hire a communication officer to be housed at SLPI.
- The labour market is changing and more jobs are available. To keep good staff at the institute, SLPI has to review its salary structure and other benefits. This needs to be done at the time of formulating the new proposal.

### **Financial sustainability**

- The next three year proposal should be accompanied by a better strategy of financial sustainability. SLPI has to explore a number of strategies such as generating income by provision of various types of services, also from the industry, identifying new and innovative fund raising strategies, working towards an endowment grant, looking for sponsorship of individual activities, etc. These are strategies used by the non-profit sector. This is normally done through formulation of a financial concept that includes a number of sources funds. This should allow the organisation to carry out its mandate while at the same time working towards long term sustainability.
- When formulating the next proposal SLPI needs to get the support of an expert who has experience of financial strategies for non-profit organisations in order to formulate an appropriate financial concept.

### **Advocacy**

- SLPI needs to rethink its entire advocacy strategy holistically, where all three units of the organization come together as one. It has to be planned recognising the contribution by each unit, with budgets allocated for advocacy accordingly. Communication tools such as website, brochures etc should be in place.
- SLPI need to develop strategies for advocacy: including research, goal formulations, and stakeholders' analysis, networking and building coalitions with partners, etc, in the next project phase.
- SLPI need to strengthen its strategies to relate to the GOSL during the next phase.

## **PCCSL**

### **The Board and membership**

- Currently there is a discussion to draw up criteria for membership and a procedure for admitting new members. There is provision for 50 members. Recruiting new members will strengthen the commitment of journalists to the Code of Practice. This should be given priority. The implementation of the new project proposal should be by an organization that has an increased membership.
- Currently the board of PCCSL is appointed by SLPI. At present same personalities sit in both board. PCCSL should consider amending its Articles of Association giving the right to the members to elect the board. This can result in a greater diversity of representation in the board, and a greater degree of legitimacy for the organisation.

### **The Council**

- PCCSL should ensure that there are at least five active and committed members in the Council to maintain the momentum of the Council, and its work with the Arbitration Act.

### **The Code**

- The Code of Practice need to be reviewed by the Editors Guild in time for the new project proposal. The ideal is for it to be ready along with the recruitment of new members and to be accepted through a participatory process.

### **Publicity and awareness building**

- Publicity and advocacy strategy of PCCSL should be a part of the overall advocacy strategy of SLPI and a priority for PCC. It should be planned in close collaboration with the advocacy officer of SLPI.
  - It should be adequately budgeted
  - In planning the advocacy strategy PCCSL can make use of the data from ‘the complaints tracker’ software and findings from any other studies available (e.g. the base line survey) This data could be of value in targeting and strategising advocacy and publicity activities.
  - Some of the staff of PCCSL has writing talents and they regularly contribute to the press. This should be seen in a positive light and used for advocacy purposes.

### **The PCCSL office**

- Staff training has to be implemented and better planned, with a proper budget.
- The complaints tracker software at the PCCSL office is a valuable tool for data and analysis. A review of how this software is used in other countries such as UK will strengthen the work of PCCSL.
- Now that vacancies at the SLPI have been filled, priority should be given to the filling vacancies at PCCSL.

## **SLCJ**

### **Common issues for the College**

- The College needs to consolidate its activities and focus on the core business: Diploma and short term courses. As a pilot activity, in-house training on a commercial basis could be provided to the media industry.

- Training of provincial journalist on a smaller scale is another suggestion from the media industry. In general, the College needs to consider the needs of the media industry, but in a short term perspective also recognize the need of the College not to take on too many new activities.
- The College should be a meeting point and a social forum, giving ownership to students and active journalists. It needs take care of the goodwill gained during the past years. Otherwise it risks becoming an institution without connection to the students and journalists taking part in the activities.
- The Media Resource Centre could be that focal point and be responsible for an Alumni Club, newsletter, seminars and workshops, mentorship with former students etc to maintain the network. The Centre could also do media research related to advocacy. The proposed Communication Office could be based at the Centre.
- An honorary Advisory Board should be established, consisting of prominent Sri Lankan journalist from both print and electronic media who could provide input and credibility on the activities of the College.
- There are already several donors/potential partners interested in working with and connecting to SLPI, especially the College: DANIDA, Internews, and BBC. Among local partners, MRTTC, FLICT and CPA have expressed interest in cooperation on mutual issues. As we already said, SLPI should consolidate itself and its three entities. In this process also the College needs to have a clear idea how to prioritize among potential projects and how it can absorb new activities.
- Lectures and co-trainers need to build capacity and awareness on cross-cutting issues. Seminars and workshops with local organizations such as FLICT and CPA could be one possibility.

### **The diploma course**

- To further enhance increased applications and thereby a wider entrance selection to the Diploma course, the College should do more promotion and work directly with a-level schools to inform about the education on journalism, or invite representatives from the school for meetings and study tour. Graduated students could also be included in the promotion as a kind of a peer campaign.
- SLCJ should look at the possibility of providing scholarships with board and lodging for students in the provinces, to make sure that the Diploma is more accessible.
- SLCJ should try and influence the media industry in providing similar scholarship for the same reason.
- The College needs to re-enforce its gender component and provide more technical skills to the students in using a gender framework as future journalists.
- SLPI need to invest more in human resources at the College and employ additional staff to keep the momentum for the Diploma course and strive to make it better. Previously the staff has been overloaded with work, which in the long run may lead to vacancies.

### **Mid-career courses**

- The College should establish a team for organizing the short-term courses: the Coordinator is responsible, but should work closer with co-trainers and lectures. The proposed Advisory Board could also play a role in proposing participants, new co-trainers, and new areas of training.
- There should be higher requirements on the media providing participants for training. Partly to make sure that the staff selected for training is relevant, partly to guarantee that after training there is a commitment from the editors and gate-keepers for in-house- training.

- Proper hand-outs should be produced by all Swedish trainers to facilitate in-house training by former participants.
- More training or workshops for editors and sub-editors on advanced newsroom management. No change will come about unless all sectors of media are involved.
- In the next phase a functioning follow-up mechanism for measuring the impact of the training at work places should be implemented and budgeted for.
- The Resource Centre, possibly together with CPA accustomed to media monitoring, could have a joint project on following up the impact of the training. Another possibility is to have Diploma students do research as a specific task.
- The College needs to consider having less number of mid-career courses in the future, with more follow-up courses instead. This would build capacity and confidence among participants and have a bigger impact at the working places.
- There is a need for a proper plan for conducting training of trainers in the next phase. Today the College is too dependent on Swedish trainers. The College could also look at the possibility of employing permanent staff with pedagogical skills that could work with mid-career courses on certain topics.
- Introduce preparatory courses and trainer seminars for Swedish trainers at the Fojo head office in Sweden for increased knowledge and awareness on Sri Lankan media, culture and cross-cutting issues.

## **Fojo**

- Fojo has been a valuable partner for the institute. It has played a number of roles. It has been a technical adviser to the programmes; contributed to the management aspects; mediated between diverse interests in the board; and liaised with the donors. The team recommends the following for Fojo:
  1. For the immediate future, the contract of Fojo's representative at SLPI should be extended at least until the end of 2006.
  2. In the possible next phase of the project Fojo should continue with its role in advising, assisting and monitoring funds.
  3. In the next phase Fojo should take on a more strategic role, and less day to day business. We recommend that after the end of the on-going and extended contract, Fojo should not have a permanent advisor placed in Colombo, but regular back-stopping inputs after a schedule agreed with SLPI over the next project period.
  4. Fojo should be represented on the management board, and hopefully this work can start immediately. If necessary the ToR of the Fojo representative needs to be revised.
  5. The team recommends that the Resident Representative of Fojo should be incorporated as an adviser to the board, at least until the end of his current contract runs out in December 2006. In the next phase Fojo should provide regular back-stopping inputs after a schedule agreed with SLPI over the project period.
  6. Fojo should have a leading role in donor/partner coordination at SLPI. Fojo possess unique experience in assisting in the set up of the institute and has good knowledge of the needs and absorption capacity of SLPI.

7. Fojo should continue to provide Swedish trainers for the mid-career program, and act as an advisor to SLCJ in strategizing the selection of courses, number of courses, provide TOT courses for College lectures and co-trainers.
8. For the next phase and for the new project document, Fojo should also consider what additional consultancy inputs might be necessary to support SLPI: for the finance department, for organizational structure, curriculum advisor etc. This can either be international consultants provided through Fojo, or local consultants.

## **Sida/NORAD**

- Sida and NORAD should give support to SLPI in formulating the new project document and provide external help. While the institution is strong with regard to the subject of media support, it needs outside support in formulating the new proposal. Person/s skilled in process planning and formulating proposals for civil society organisations could be engaged for this task.
- When formulating the next proposal SLPI needs to get the support of an expert who has experience of financial strategies for non-profit organisations in order to formulate an appropriate financial concept. The objective should be to develop an overall financial concept which allows the organisation to take a few more steps towards financial sustainability.
- In the coming years, SLPI will depend on donor funds, and the interest among donors for working with an established institution is growing. But SLPI needs to consolidate itself, and in this context, a certain degree of understanding among the donors that the institute should not expand too fast will be important.
- Today there are double administration procedures for Sida and NORAD, which creates too much work for both organizations. Sida and NORAD should consider having a basket funding in the next phase.
- The next possible phase of the project will be important for SLPI and its entities. To follow the progress and outcome of recommendations suggested in this report, we suggest that a new evaluation should be undertaken Mid-term through the next phase.

# Appendix 1. Terms of Reference

## 1. Background

The Sri Lanka Press Institute, SLPI, was set up in January 2004 by the Editor's Guild, The Newspaper Society of Sri Lanka and the Free Media Movement with the objective to promote professional journalism in Sri Lanka. SLPI has two major departments: the Press Complaints Commission of Sri Lanka, PCCSL, and the Sri Lanka College of Journalism, SLCJ.

PCCSL is a self-regulatory body for press ethics, while SLCJ is running a one-year diploma course in journalism and a number of shorter mid-career courses for working journalists. At the moment the diploma course is focusing on print journalism, while the mid-career courses are open for both print and electronic media journalists. The PCCSL is focusing on print journalism only.

The major funding of SLPI comes from Sida and NORAD for the period 2003–2006 under the agreement “Promoting Media Professionalism, Independence and Accountability in Sri Lanka”. During the same period the Institute for Further Education of Journalists, Fojo, is a Swedish partner to the SLPI to support institutional capacity building, funded by Sida and NORAD under the MoU for “Consulting Services Promoting Media Professionalism, Independence and Accountability in Sri Lanka, November 2003–December 2006”.

In 2005 a third Scandinavian donor, DANIDA, identified the need for TV and Radio journalism training in Sri Lanka, and expressed an interest to support an establishment of such a unit as part of the SLCJ. After a needs assessment implemented by DANIDA, SLPI and Fojo the SLPI entered into a MoU<sup>6</sup> with DANIDA regarding the expansion of the college for the period September 2005–December 2006. For the same period Fojo has a MoU for consulting services<sup>7</sup>.

The agreement between SLPI, Sida and NORAD stipulates that “An In-Depth Review (or/and) Evaluation shall be made during 2006. The Parties shall agree on the terms of reference and the procedures for its implementation (...)”.

## 2. Objective of Evaluation

The objective of the evaluation is to assess the implementation strategy of the project and how it has helped to meet the specific project objectives, as well as to assess the impact and relevance of the SLPI, the PCCSL and the SLCJ in the contemporary Sri Lankan media landscape and political context. The evaluation shall be future oriented, and produce concrete recommendations based on lessons learnt from the first two years of activities, as well as the recent developments in the media sector and current political trends.

The outcome of the evaluation will be the point of departure for discussions between SLPI, Sida/NORAD and other stakeholders on how to take the institute<sup>8</sup> further.

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<sup>6</sup> Strengthen Professionalism, Independence and Accountability of Radio and Television Journalists in Sri Lanka

<sup>7</sup> Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for Consulting Services Strengthening Professionalism, Independence and Accountability of Radio and Television Journalists in Sri Lanka

<sup>8</sup> Hereafter the term 'the institute' refers to the SLPI, the PCCSL and the SLCJ

### **3. Scope of Work/Issues to be Covered in the Evaluation**

1. The evaluation shall assess how the institute has implemented its planned activities, in relation to the agreed indicators as expressed in the SLPI Work Plans for 2004 and 2005. The assessment shall include feed back from the college students, the mid-career course participants, the news rooms receiving trained journalists, the parties involved in the PCCSL complaints (i.e. complainants and editors) and other beneficiaries of the SLPI activities.
2. The evaluation shall assess the impact and the relevance of the project, in relation to the overall development goal as well as the specific project objectives, as expressed in the agreement.
3. The evaluation shall give a brief overview of the Sri Lankan media landscape, with a focus on other media development initiatives. It shall include international organizations and donors, as well as local media organizations. The overview shall also include a discussion of the role of media in relation to the current political situation and the peace process.
4. The evaluation shall assess the organizational structure of the institute, and recommend necessary changes in order to strengthen the institute
5. The evaluation shall discuss possible future scenarios for the institute, and recommend the institute on how to adapt to the changing environment and meet the needs of the media industry.
6. The evaluation shall discuss and recommend possible future partners for the institute, international as well as local.
7. The evaluation shall discuss the financial sustainability of the institute, and recommend necessary steps to make the institute financially sustainable.
8. The evaluation shall assess the constituency of the institute among the founding organizations, as well as among other relevant media organizations.
9. The evaluation shall assess and analyze the role of Fojo in the project, and recommend a possible future role for Fojo in relation to the institute as well as the Sri Lankan media sector as a whole.

### **4. Method of Work**

The consultant will work in close collaboration with the SLPI, PCCSL, SLCJ, Fojo and representatives of Sida and NORAD. The consultants shall tap into existing studies as well as conduct their own field visits, interviews and discussions with the media industry, media organizations and other relevant stakeholders.

The consultant shall present an inception report outlining the methodology of the evaluation.

The evaluation shall be participatory to its nature, and at an early stage, invite the different stakeholders to articulate and present their needs, interest and expectations in relation to the institute's activities.

### **5. Composition of Evaluation Team**

The evaluation team shall include two consultants, out of whom one shall be Sri Lankan. The consultants shall have a proven track record of professional evaluation of similar international projects, and a thorough understanding of the media field and media development. Experience in capacity building in the media sector, and training of journalists is desirable.

## **6. Timeframe**

The assignment shall be carried out during the period of January to March 2006. The assignment will require a maximum of ten man weeks for the team, out of which a minimum of six weeks shall be spent in Sri Lanka.

## **7. Reporting**

The consultants shall produce a written report of maximum 30 pages, 2 page summary and appendixes not included. The report shall be written in English and the draft shall be presented to SLPI, Sida, NORAD and Fojo not later than 31 March 2006. Format and outline of the report shall follow the guidelines in 'Looking back, moving forward', Sida Evaluation Manual 2004.

Within two weeks after receiving comments on the report from SLPI, Sida, NORAD and Fojo, a final version in five hard copies and in soft copy (PDF) shall be submitted to SLPI, Sida, NORAD and Fojo.

The consultants shall be prepared to present and discuss their findings at a stakeholder's workshop in Colombo in May 2006, if SLPI, Sida, NORAD and Fojo decide to arrange such a workshop. However the workshop is not part of the above ToR.

## Appendix 2. SLPI External Evaluation

Date	Name of the person	Time	Venue
Monday 13th Feb 2006	Urban Sjostrom	9.00 am	Embassy of Sweden 49 Buller's lane Colombo 7
	Sida, Norad, SLPI, Fojo	10.00am	Embassy of Sweden 49 Buller's lane Colombo 7
	Sunanda Deshapriya Free Media Movement	2.00 pm	Centre for Policy Alternative 24/2 28th lane Off Flower Road Colombo 7
	Shimali Senanayake (Trainers – Mid career program)	4.30 pm	SLPI 65/5 Ward Place Colombo 7
Tuesday 14th Feb 2006	Johan Romare Fojo Representatives	9.30 am	SLPI 65/5 Ward Place Colombo 7
	SLPI, PCCSL Board members (Ranjit Wijewardene, Upali Tennakoon)	11.00 am	SLPI 65/5 Ward Place Colombo 7
	Keith Bernard/ DG/SLPI	2.30 pm	SLPI 65/5 Ward Place Colombo 7
Wednesday 15th Feb 2006	Amal Jayasinghe AFP	10.00 am	AFP 100 Barnes Place Colombo 7
	Sanjana Hattotuwa	12.00 noon	Centre for Policy Alternative 24/2 28th lane Off Flower Road Colombo 7
	Philip A. Frayne Counselor for Public Affairs U.S.Embassy	2.00 pm	Embassy of the United States of America 44 Galle Road Colombo 2
	Ranga Srilal Correspondent Reuters Member FMM	5.00 pm	Reuters 27 level East Tower World Trade Centre Colombo 1

Thursday 16th Feb 2006	Mel Gunasekera (Trainers – Mid career program)	9.30 am	Lanka Business Online 15 Prof Ediweera Sarathchandra Mawatha Epitamulla Pitakotte
	Jerome Senanayake Project Coordinator	11.00 am	BBC World Service SLPI 65/5 Ward Place Colombo 7
	Group of Diploma Students	3.00 pm	SLPI 65/5 Ward Place Colombo 7
	Group of Mid career journalists	5.00 pm	SLPI 65/5 Ward Place Colombo 7
Friday 17th Feb 2006	Henrik Grunnet Media Consultant, DANIDA	3.00 pm	SLPI 65/5 Ward Place Colombo 7
	Devananda Ramiah Radhika Hettiarachchi		UNDP
Monday 20th Feb 2006	Kumudini Hettiarachchi	10.00 am	Sunday Times 8 Hunupitiya Cross Road Colombo 2
	Ameen Izzadeen (Trainers – Mid career program)	11.00 am	Sunday Times 8 Hunupitiya Cross Road Colombo 2
	Manique Mendis Former PCCSL CEO	3.00 pm	Berghof Foundation for Conflict Studies # 1 Gower Street Colombo 5,
Tuesday 21st Feb 2006	Dr Uvais Ahamed Amantha Perera Ranga Kalansooriya/ College	9.30 am	SLPI 65/5 Ward Place Colombo 7
	Malraji Wanniarachchi (Norad)	11.00 am	Royal Norwegian Embassy 34 Ward Place Colombo 7
	Urban Sjostrom & Jerker Thunberg	1.00 pm	Embassy of Sweden 49 Buller's lane Colombo 7
	Ranga Kalnasooriya	4.00 pm	SLPI 65/5 Ward Place Colombo
Wednesday 22nd Feb 2006	Vasana Wickramasena Former PCCSLSL Complaints Officer	9.30 am	SLPI 65/5 Ward Place Colombo 7
	Ameen Hussain & S Dammulla PCCSL	10.00 am	SLPI 65/5 Ward Place Colombo 7
	Devanesan Nesiah	3.00 pm	Member PCCSL

Thursday 23rd Feb 2006	Wije Jayathilake	1.00 pm	FLICT
	Sharmini Boyle	4.15 pm	Chief editor YA TV
	Johan Romare	5.00 pm	Fojo
Friday 24th Feb 2006	Debriefing – Sida/NORAD	10.00 am	NORAD

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