



GFS World Project : English for Employment Prospects (EEP)

PROGRESS REPORT : JUNE – DECEMBER 2019

General

Visit of Ms Val Gribble

The GFS Immediate Past World President Lay Canon Ms Val Gribble visited Sri Lanka from July 25 - August 1, 2019, to observe the implementation of the World Project in Sri Lanka.

* On July 27 she participated in the first Award Ceremony of the World Project held at GFS Headquarters, at which the chief guest was the Bishop of the Diocese of Colombo.

* On July 28 she visited the Southern Province -

1. All saints' Church, Galle - She met the Archdeacon of Galle, participated in a programme, met members of the newly established GFS group and presented them with their GFS badges. She also met some of the prospective participants of the EEP Course.

2. St. Anne's Church, Kitulampitiya - She participated at a meeting and heard about the computer class that the Priest in charge of this church was trying to conduct for children of less privileged communities.

* On July 30 she visited the Central Province -

1. GFS Regional Office, Dickoya - She participated in a programme, met members of the newly established GFS group and presented them with their GFS badges. She also met the girls of the Hatton batch who had just begun the EEP Course.

* On July 31 she paid a courtesy call on Rt Rev Keerthisri Fernando, Bishop of the Diocese of Kurunegala, to inform and promote the World Project.

Our thanks

It was a great encouragement to have Ms Gribble visit two areas in which the World Project was being conducted, to see for herself the progress made, meet the participants and also meet new members. We were pleased that she was able to attend our Awards Ceremony which was postponed from May to July due to the bomb blasts that rocked our island nation on Easter Sunday in April. GFS Sri Lanka thanks her for her encouragement, advice and motivation that gave us the strength to take on a large islandwide project of this nature with the determination to see it through in spite of many challenges.

Future

We are happy to continue with the Project even after the specified time period and depend on God's grace as we boldly take the GFS to more areas of our country.

Opening of the GFS Regional Office, Dickoya

This is a milestone in the life of our Society and has proved to be of immense use in conducting and coordinating activities in the Hatton area. Its value as the venue for the EEP Course cannot be measured.

It was blessed and opened by Ven. D.K. Balakrishnan, the Archdeacon of Nuwara Eliya on July 6, 2019 at a colourful ceremony.

EEP COURSE

- ❖ **1st Batch** - **Colombo** (“Deborah”) (Pilot project) (*Western Province*)
Archdeaconry of Colombo, Diocese of Colombo
and
- ❖ **2nd Batch** - **Batticaloa** (“Miriam”) (*Eastern Province*)
Eastern Deanery of the Archdeaconry of Nuwara Eliya, Diocese of Colombo

Award Ceremony

A grand award ceremony was held on July 27, 2019 at GFS Headquarters in Colombo, at which 24 girls who successfully completed the English Course were awarded their certificates. The chief guest was the Bishop of the Colombo Diocese of the Anglican Church, Rt. Rev. Dhiloraj Canagasabey, while the guest of honour was Lay Canon Val Gribble, Immediate Past GFS World President. Ms Sherryn Yaseen, the Founder/CEO and Mr Victor Patrick, General Manager of the American College of Higher Education too participated.

The chief guest was led from the road entrance to the Hall by traditional dancers and drummers amidst a guard of honour accorded by the *Pink Pearls* and the *Star Sapphires* who then marched into the Hall with the GFS banner. The guests were led into the Hall by the dancers and drummers and the Bishop was garlanded and Ms Gribble and Ms Yaseen were presented with bouquets of flowers. The traditional oil lamp was lit. Two cultural dance items were presented and appreciated by all.

The winner of the GFS Speech Contest gave a moving speech about the opportunity she received to follow the English Course and expressed her gratitude to God and the GFS. A power point presentation of the World Project in action was an eye opener to many to understand the objectives and value of this project undertaken by Sri Lanka.

The carpeted stage of the GFS Hall with the GFS logo as the backdrop was a fitting setting as the Bishop presented the prestigious Certificates of the American College of Higher Education to the successful students. Thereafter, Ms Gribble and Ms Yaseen congratulated the students.

Impact of the Project

The project which aims to better equip young girls for the competitive job market through a job-related English course, has positively impacted the lives of the girls of these two batches. Some obtained employment, several moved upward in their careers and others are pursuing higher education in Nursing and HR. Two Anglican ministerial candidates are following a theology degree.

Christmas Party

The two batches gathered for a Christmas Party at the GFS Hall in Colombo on December 11, 2019, along with the GFS *Pink Pearls*. All the girls enjoyed the programme planned for them which included worship, motivational speaker, games, lucky dip, refreshments and plenty of fun and opportunities for them to display their talents.



3rd Batch - Hatton (“Esther”) (Central Province)

Upcountry Deanery of the Archdeaconry of Nuwara Eliya, Diocese of Colombo

The Course

The third batch of the World Project commenced on July 20, 2019 and was completed on October 26, 2019. A total of 19 girls completed the Course. Extra coaching classes were organized to help the weaker girls along the way. This batch awaits the awarding of their certificates.

Impact

Ten girls currently hold jobs at the Estate Community Development Mission (ECDM), which operates under the Board of Social Responsibility of the Anglican Church and strives to uplift the lives of the estate communities. One girl works for a hotel. The English classes have helped them perform better in their jobs. Some girls are looking for job opportunities, while one is awaiting admission to the Law Faculty of a State University.

GFS Regional Office

The regional office was blessed and opened by the Archdeacon of Nuwara Eliya in Dickoya in the Hatton area on July 6, 2019 to conduct EEP classes and serve GFS groups in the region by supporting them and organizing regional programmes.

Staff

A Regional Co-ordinator was recruited to oversee the EEP Course and ensure the smooth operation of activities in the Hatton region.



4th Batch - Galle (“Rebecca”) (Southern Province)

Archdeaconry of Galle, Diocese of Colombo

The Course

The fourth batch commenced on September 21, 2019 and was completed on January 18, 2020. A total of 18 girls from the Galle district completed the Course. This batch awaits the awarding of their certificates.

Impact

The English classes have helped some girls secure salaried employment in small business enterprises in Galle. Others are able to perform better in their existing jobs.

Staff

A Regional Co-ordinator was recruited to oversee the EEP Course and ensure the smooth operation of activities in Galle.

● **NEW GFS BRANCHES**

Central Province

➤ **Hatton Region**

Currently two GFS groups are actively operating in the Hatton Region, Nuwara Eliya District, Central Province. They are : The Dickoya Church Group and the Watawala Church Group.

The ground-work such as introducing the GFS and EEP at Deanery Meetings, liaising with Anglican priests, and church women's groups as well as Anglican bodies such as the Estate Community Development Mission (ECDM) are undertaken by the GFS Regional Office in Dickoya. This is deemed essential for the smooth functioning of the GFS groups and their activities.

1. Dickoya GFS Group

Membership

This is the initial group formed in this region. The members of this group are mainly from Christ Church, Dickoya.

Programmes conducted :

- * Food Sale
- * Cake Baking & Icing Demonstration

2. Watawala GFS Group

Membership

This group has membership from those belonging to St John the Baptist Church, in Watawala.

Programme conducted :

- * Personal hygiene & menstrual hygiene Programme - for the benefit of women in the region.

Regional Activities

- * Christmas Party

A Christmas party was held to nourish the fellowship and goodwill among the GFS members of the above two groups at the GFS Regional Office in Dickoya.

Future Plans

The GFS Headquarters, Colombo and the GFS Regional Office, Dickoya are involved in the ground-work to initiate more GFS groups in this region.

Southern Province

➤ **Galle Region**

1. Galle GFS Group

Membership

This is the initial group formed in the Galle District, Southern Province. This group comprises of women belonging to eight churches in the region.

Programmes

- * Night Vigil - conducted at All Saints' Church, Galle.
- * Computer Class

A computer class is being conducted for children who live in the vicinity of St. Anne's Church, Kithulampitiya. Our thanks to GFS Australia for their generosity in gifting a computer to be used to assist this low income community.

Future plans

Networking with the Anglican priests and church women's groups to form new GFS groups and conducting activities is done by the part-time Regional Co-ordinator of GFS at Galle.

➤ Matara Region

1. Deniyaya GFS Group

Membership

This GFS Group is established in the Matara District, Southern Province. Members belong to St. Luke's Church, Deniyaya.

Programmes

The GFS is exploring the possibility of conducting an English class for young mothers, so that they could help their children in English lessons in school.

A vocational training for viable income is also in the planning process.

Eastern Province

➤ Batticaloa Region

1. Navatkudah GFS Group

Membership

Currently the Navatkudah GFS group is operating in this region. They are members of St. Mary's Church, Navatkudah.

This group is led by a young lady who was a beneficiary of the EEP Course. The group is engaged in short-term planning process.

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Goals for January - December 2020

- **Award Ceremonies**

Award Ceremonies to be held to award the prestigious Certificates from the American College of Higher Education to the girls who have successfully completed the course from the "Esther" (Hatton) and "Rebecca" (Galle) batches.

- **Conducting more EEP Batches**

The ground-work and liaising with stakeholders are already under way to form new batches of students in the Central Province (Bandarawela, Nuwara Eliya, Kandy) and North Western Province (Kurunegala) to follow the "EEP" Course.

- **Forming GFS Groups**

Forming GFS groups in parishes in Badulla, Bandarawela and Nuwara Eliya.

- **GFS and promoting the EEP Course**

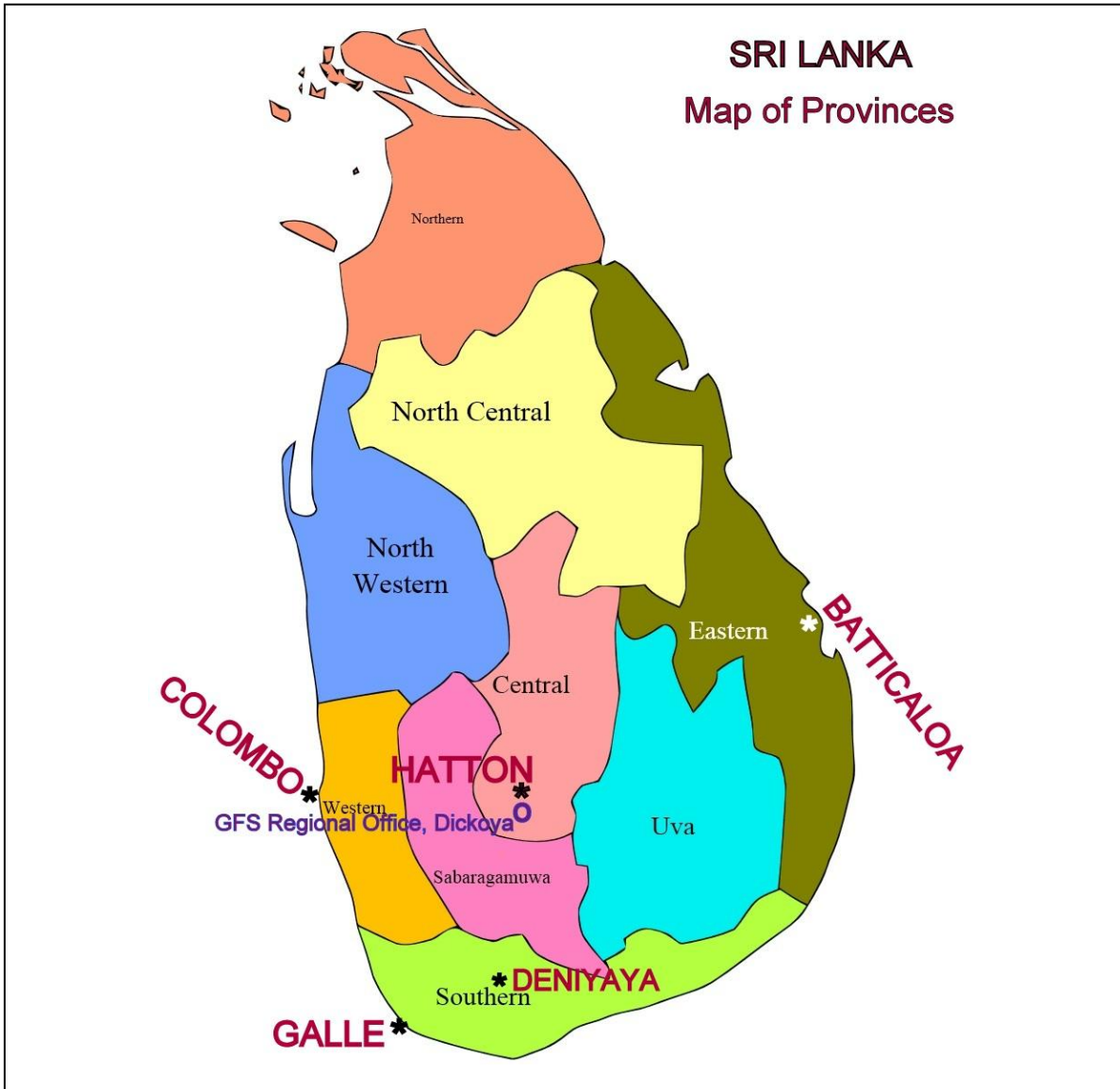
Several introductory programmes have been planned in the above areas.

In order to attract girls and ladies, usually an interesting programme is also conducted.

- **Introducing the GFS and EEP to the Diocese of Kurunegala (Central and North Western Provinces)**

Liaise with the Bishop of Kurunegala and the Archdeacon of Kandy to set up batches within the Kurunegala Diocese.

Contact the priests serving at Kandy, Kurunegala, Pussellawa, Gampola, Polgahawela and also the Pilimathalawa Theological College, Hillwood College and Mowbray College to promote and recruit girls for these batches.



As at Dec. 31, 2019

EEP Courses conducted in :

- * Colombo
- * Batticaloa
- * Hatton
- * Galle

New branches opened in :

- * Batticaloa - 1
- * Hatton - 2 (Dickoya & Watawala)
- * Galle - 1
- * Deniyaya - 1

GFS Regional Office opened in : Dickoya

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Colombo - Batticaloa = 319 km (7 hours travel time by road)

Colombo - Hatton/Dickoya = 137.5 km (4 hours travel time by road)

Colombo - Galle = 126 km (3 hours travel time by road)