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CULTURE FOR RECONCILIATION Harmony New Year Celebrations

The three decade armed conflict of Sri Lanka has had a draining effect on social capital. People have gotten used to living in conditions of threat and anxiety that often contributes to acute tensions between diverse ethnic and religious groups. This has resulted in cultural stereotyping and prejudice, which in turn fosters misunderstanding. Hence to provide the student community the opportunity to appreciate and understand the cultures of others, the Nena Guna Weduma: Sisu Diriya national programme organized two Sinhala and Hindu New Year Festivals in 2009, 2010 and 2012 etc.

Students from all ethnic groups, to their delight, participated

in these events where they built traditional houses, prepared edibles belonging to certain ethnic groups, and performed various cultural events. These occasions proved to be valuable opportunities for members of different communities not only to become aware of other cultures, but also to share their views on matters of timely relevance.

More than 4000 students, teachers, parents, organizations, and other civilians benefitted through these events which were hosted thanks to the generous sponsorship of the Governor of the Northern Province Hon. G.A. Chandrasiri and the International Committee of the Red Cross, World University Friends (WUF) and Rajarata Development Forum (RDF) in Vauniya and Mulathive in 2010 and 2012.

















