



# ANNUAL REPORT 2023





# ABOUT CEJ

Established in 2017, the Centre for Equality and Justice (CEJ) is a Sri Lankan not-for-profit organisation that brings a gender perspective to all of our work. Based in Colombo with projects throughout the country, we aim to achieve gender justice across Sri Lanka so that men, women, and persons with diverse sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and sex characteristics (SOGIESC) live in a society that is

## FREE, JUST, AND EQUAL.

Initially, CEJ's work focused on the rights of war-affected women from the Sinhalese, Tamil, and Muslim communities and the rights of those affected by political violence and other forms of civil unrest. Over the past seven years, CEJ has expanded our scope of work to address issues of democracy, the rule of law, social inclusion, preventing violent extremism, reconciliation, and grassroots-level capacity building while maintaining a particular focus on women. Through this diverse portfolio, we aim to advocate for progressive policies, advance community well-being, and accelerate positive progress.





## CEJ'S VISION

**A FEMINIST  
ORGANISATION  
THAT SEEKS TO  
ACHIEVE GENDER  
JUSTICE WITH A  
RIGHTS-BASED  
APPROACH.**

## CEJ'S MISSION

The achievement of gender justice so that men, women and persons with diverse SOGIESC live in a society that is free, just and equal. This will be achieved by promoting gender equality, advancing the rule of law, good governance and democratic principles, promoting women's advancement and economic empowerment, advocating for the commitment to international human rights standards, and fostering partnerships with grassroots-level women's networks.

# SNAPSHOTS OF 2023





# MESSAGE BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Centre for Equality and Justice (CEJ) underwent significant growth in 2023. Following several years of national crises and global phenomena, we had a chance to catch our breath and get back to basics. Our dedicated team rose to this new challenge with passion. They did not miss a beat. With more opportunities for in-person activities, they adjusted to increased time out of Colombo; and they were eager to engage on novel topics and expand the boundaries of their work. Thanks to their innovation and expertise, we extended our portfolio and, together, reached new levels.

In 2023, we were honoured to take a leadership role in a rare event – an undeniable and tangible outcome from advocacy efforts in the political sphere. We know that our work has an impact. We see it in self-help group members who start small businesses. We hear it in workshop participant feedback. We measure it in support packages delivered. However, to witness years of our advocacy efforts on sexual bribery bear fruit was a special moment. Our consistent lobbying for legal and policy reforms, building capacity of diverse stakeholders and nationwide research catalysed change and progress. As a result, the term “sexual favour” was expressly included as a form of bribery in the recently passed Anti-Corruption Act No. 09 of 2023, thus concretizing CEJ’s efforts to recognize sexual forms of bribery under the corruption regime. This landmark moment was a consolidation of our efforts and will

help countless victim-survivors seek justice. However, there is still much work to be done.

We built on these core topics to explore related issues such as gendered online hate speech and cyber sexual and gender-based violence. These emerging forms of harassment and violence have an enormous impact on society and are further complicated by the ever-expanding digital sphere. To effectively address them, we worked with various stakeholders, including youth groups, social media influencers, and government officials, raising awareness and building their capacity to act as advocates and leaders for change. We also developed several publications that highlight original research and serve as resources for organizations in the field and other interested parties.

The mix of continuing work and spearheading efforts on new thematic areas allows CEJ to grow sustainably, and as we mature, we increase our own capacity to support communities with the hope of building a flourishing Sri Lanka. We are thankful to our generous donors who champion our vision and to our amazing partners who ground our work. With their support, our team is ready to tackle the next challenge. Following a productive year, I look forward to the adventure 2024 will surely bring.

**Shyamala Gomez,**  
Executive Director

# LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

|                |                                                                                 |
|----------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>CEJ</b>     | Centre for Equality and Justice                                                 |
| <b>CSGBV</b>   | Cyber Sexual and Gender-Based Violence                                          |
| <b>FGD</b>     | Focus Group Discussion                                                          |
| <b>FoEAA</b>   | Freedom of Expression, Assembly and Association                                 |
| <b>GOHS</b>    | Gendered Online Hate Speech                                                     |
| <b>OGP</b>     | Open Government Partnership                                                     |
| <b>SGBV</b>    | Sexual and Gender-Based Violence                                                |
| <b>SHG</b>     | Self Help Group                                                                 |
| <b>SOGIESC</b> | Sexual Orientations, Gender Identity, Gender Expression and Sex Characteristics |
| <b>UoC</b>     | University of Colombo                                                           |
| <b>UoJ</b>     | University of Jaffna                                                            |





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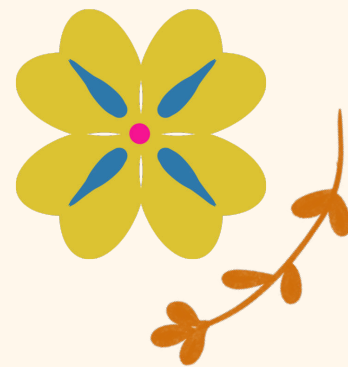
# CAPACITY BUILDING

Capacity-building is developing and strengthening the skills, instincts, and abilities of individuals, communities, and organisations so that they thrive in a complex and rapidly evolving world. Capacity-building is a crucial aspect of CEJ's work and aims to empower individuals to shape a fair, progressive, and transparent society. To support this vision, CEJ facilitated several capacity-building sessions and workshops with youth groups, women, and government officials in 2023.





## WOMEN-LED SELF-HELP GROUPS SUPPORT COMMUNITIES IN ANURADHAPURA AND KILINOCHCHI



Throughout 2023, CEJ continued to support women from the Anuradhapura and Kilinochchi districts by establishing and expanding self-help groups (SHGs); to date, each district has established 40 plus groups with approximately 20 members per group. SHG members have been trained in the self-help approach, which focuses on empowering participants to build their social and economic development through skills-building and collective action.

The topics for training sessions are based on community needs and insights. Initially, since most SHG members are mothers, activities focused on ensuring children's and women's rights. Sessions included

awareness programs on the impact of corporal punishment, domestic violence, drug and alcohol misuse and addiction, and the harmful effects of dropping out of school. With the mental health and well-being of their children as a priority, and since most SHG members bring their children to weekly meetings, the formation of children's clubs was a natural next step. Similar to the SHGs, the children's clubs offer opportunities to participate in skill-building and creative activities focused on leadership, communication, and awareness-building related to child rights, as well as education.





Another focus area for SHG members was finding stable sources of necessities and reliable means for income generation. With the economic crisis in Sri Lanka continuing to impact the cost of daily essentials, SHG members chose to engage in home gardening, planting and harvesting vegetables, grains, palmyrah, and other products. Often, these home gardens expanded into small businesses, including peanut and vegetable farming, poultry, and palmyrah-based products. For example, in Kilinochchi, SHG members use harvested palmyrah to produce handicrafts such as mats, winnowers, and 'nethuppeddi' (steaming cook pot).





CEJ supported SHG members to pursue these income-generating opportunities by providing financial assistance, conducting trainings, and connecting members with relevant government officers. Training topics included goal setting, financial management, bookkeeping, business plan development, and other practical skills like how to obtain a loan, establish market linkages, and expand business ideas.

SHG activities continue to provide members with a space to share their problems, voice concerns, participate in the community, and collectively work towards finding solutions and achieving their goals.





# CAPACITATING STATE ACTORS TO SUPPORT VICTIM-SURVIVORS IN THE DIGITAL SPHERE



Sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) refers to any act perpetrated against a person's will based on gender norms and unequal power relationships, including physical, emotional or psychological, and sexual violence, threats of violence, coercion, and the denial of resources or access to services. Cyber Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (CSGBV) refers to SGBV that occurs online; in other words, any SGBV committed using the internet or mobile technology. CSGBV can take many forms, including blackmail, online harassment, cyberstalking, cyberbullying, cyber flashing, gendered online hate speech (GOHS), grooming, hacking, identity theft, image-based sexual abuse, sextortion, trolling, trafficking, doxing, photo morphing, and defamation. In an increasingly digital world, capacity-building to address rising cases of CSGBV and GOHS is crucial to supporting

victim-survivors and ensuring justice.

Building on CEJ's previous work on CSGBV, CEJ conducted several workshops for police officers attached to the Children and Women's Bureau of Sri Lanka Police in the Anuradhapura, Batticaloa, Kilinochchi and Puttalam districts. Further, a two-day workshop on Gender and CSGBV was conducted with Women Development Officers and Counselling Assistants attached to the Ministry of Women, Child Affairs, and Social Empowerment based in the Western Province. These activities provided participants with an in-depth understanding of gender-sensitive best practices when working on a case involving CSGBV, and many participants shared that the sessions provided new information and insight that they can apply to their work going forward.







CEJ also conducted follow-up workshops with the police to map changes in case management after the training and worked with local CSOs to document instances of improved responses to incidents of CSGBV and GOHS.



**"We are only taught the laws and procedures; however, this [training] is what we need. We need to be taught ethics, sensitivity, attitudes and behaviour when it comes to dealing with cases"**

**- Female police officer, Anuradhapura district**

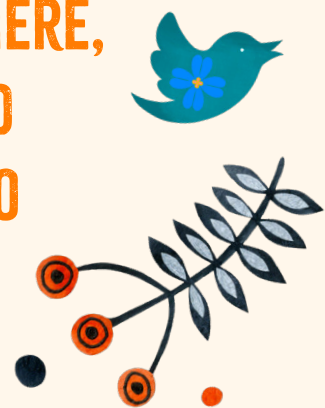


**"This training gave us the courage and knowledge to pursue these kinds of cases. Before this, when we got these IT-related cases, we would have to go to many people asking what it's all about. When we didn't get answers, we had to look for ways to resolve the issue using unofficial channels, which may not be the best way to handle the case."**

**- Male police officer, Anuradhapura district**



# GENDERED ASPECTS OF THE DIGITAL PUBLIC SPHERE, WITH EMPHASIS ON SEXUAL AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE (SGBV), IN THE CONTEXT OF RIGHTS TO FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION, ASSOCIATION, AND ASSEMBLY



Since the internet was constructed in a patriarchal context and primarily by men, offline norms of violence against women and misogynist viewpoints are replicated online. Women and people of diverse sexual orientation, gender identities, and sex characteristics (SOGIESC) are targeted for sharing their personal content and broader expression online, and one of the most significant repercussions of this targeting is self-censorship, reduced engagement in online spaces and less participation in digital leadership roles. CSGBV triggers this silencing and reinforces patriarchal gender roles. This systemic issue creates a space where toxic gender norms lead to CSGBV, which in turn, leads to self-regulation and restrictions in FOEAA.

CEJ is committed to addressing gender issues in the digital sphere while preserving and promoting FOEAA in Sri Lanka, with an understanding that the resulting online

spaces will be fairer, more transparent, and safer for everyone. Throughout 2023, CEJ conducted workshops for grassroots, civil society, community-based, and other local non-government organisations on the connections between SGBV and FoEAA to strengthen their capacity to support victim-survivors and advocate for their rights.

Eight capacity-building sessions on GOHS, CSGBV, and online security surveillance were conducted in the Galle, Kilinochchi, Polonnaruwa, and Puttalam districts for 162 community women. An additional eight skills-building sessions were conducted for 152 Human Rights Defenders, service providers, and SGBV victim-survivors in Galle, Kilinochchi, Polonnaruwa, and Puttalam, focusing on addressing SGBV by mobilising women at the community level, raising awareness of service providers available for victim-survivors, and providing appropriate referrals.







**"...when my husband hit me, I was injured, and I was admitted to the hospital. I had difficulty explaining the situation to the police. I had to go to the police to get my husband to leave my house. Since we had to speak in Sinhala at the police station, I took someone with me who could speak Sinhala."**

**- Capacity-building session participant and SGBV victim-survivor, Puttalam district**



**"I'm involved in political activities. I entered politics a few years ago. At the start, I faced a lot of problems online and offline. There were fake profiles created using my image, and people spread fake news. At the time, I had the confidence to face this but not the knowledge. But now, I can use the knowledge from this workshop to face similar situations and also help others who are facing the same".**

**- Capacity-building session participant, Puttalam district**



# INVESTING IN SRI LANKA'S FUTURE



Young people are crucial to Sri Lanka's current and future development as thought leaders and drivers of change. To better understand the unique challenges young people face, CEJ led numerous advocacy workshops in 2023, along with sessions designed to ensure they have the knowledge, skills, and tools to address challenges specific to their communities. Furthermore, in recognition of young people's role as vocal advocates, CEJ worked with numerous university students to develop and disseminate awareness-raising campaigns on relevant topics.



# YOUNG WOMEN PEACEBUILDERS BUILD THEIR NETWORKS AND CAPACITIES TO IMPLEMENT GRASSROOTS-LEVEL INITIATIVES



Building on a research study on women and peacebuilding conducted in 2021, titled 'Peace in Motion: Women's Leadership in Peacebuilding in Sri Lanka', CEJ supported 60 young female activists from the Puttalam, Anuradhapura, and Vavuniya districts to receive training from local women's rights activists and women peacebuilders on the importance of bringing women's experiences and views into the peacebuilding process. The trained group formed networks and discussed how their collective power could be harnessed to address the challenges women face when engaging in peacebuilding work at the grassroots level. Following the larger training, 90 selected youth participated in a two-day capacity-building workshop on

implementing grassroots-level initiatives; these individuals received seed grants to implement nine youth-led initiatives in the selected districts. Activities included debates, painting competitions, documentary screenings, and community discussions on women and peacebuilding. The youth groups also expressed their views on women and peacebuilding through art. These art pieces were uploaded to a digital archive hosted by CEJ for public awareness. At the conclusion of the project, CEJ hosted an international advocacy event to learn best practices from other middle-income countries on engaging youth in peacebuilding initiatives, including a session with a peace activist from Columbia who shared her experiences with local activists.



# TRAINING AND EXPERIENCE-SHARING TO MOTIVATE UNIVERSITY STUDENTS TO CONTINUE YOUTH ADVOCACY EFFORTS



As part of CEJ's work to address corruption, bribery, and sexual bribery, 40 students from the University of Colombo (UoC) and the University of Jaffna (UoJ) participated in ten sessions on the Open Government Partnership (OGP) principles and issues related to democracy, such as the importance of transparency, accountability, and strong governance.

The sessions offered a nuanced perspective on bribery and corruption and the legal framework and utilised interactive components such as Q&A sessions, mini-games, and quizzes to solidify learning. The session also included creating awareness among participants on including sexual bribery as a form of corruption.

## TOPICS COVERED DURING THE SESSIONS



**GOVERNANCE, DEMOCRACY,  
AND HUMAN RIGHTS**

**BRIBERY AND CORRUPTION**

**GENDER AND SEXUAL BRIBERY**



**ROLE OF YOUTH IN GOVERNANCE, INCLUDING  
PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE SHARING**

**OPEN GOVERNMENT  
PARTNERSHIP**



**ADVOCACY THROUGH  
TRADITIONAL AND DIGITAL MEDIA**





Finally, students organised eight youth network discussions, four per university, to share the knowledge and skills they gained during the project with other young people in their communities. The core student group developed the content and materials for the sessions themselves with guidance from mentors and led the group discussions. The use of a combination of presentations and group activities sparked interesting debates among the students and participants and challenged participants to consider how they could further their learnings and continue to serve as youth advocates.





# INFLUENCING CHANGE IN THE DIGITAL SPHERE

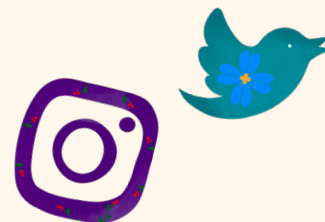
Following an initial workshop in December 2022 with twenty-seven young influencers, CEJ organised a two-day residential training workshop for twenty-one young influencers (19 women and 2 non-binary individuals) on combatting hate speech, disinformation, and CSGBV in the digital space. The residential training built on the knowledge and skills imparted to the participants at a previous workshop and explored the subject material in-depth whilst also bringing in new aspects such as local case studies of hate speech, disinformation and CSGBV, as well as comprehensive legal mechanisms and other resources to combat these issues in the current Sri Lankan context. The training also provided the participants with a valuable open forum or round table discussion component where the influencers could discuss amongst themselves and strategise on ways they could collaborate, raise awareness of project themes, and become better advocates for safe digital spaces.

Following the training sessions, CEJ held a sharing event at the request of the influencers. This roundtable discussion included selected influencers who participated in previous project activities. These influencers had developed a strong bond and commitment to the project and subject matter and wanted a final opportunity to strategise and collaborate together in person on the project themes.





# YOUTH-LED INITIATIVES ON GENDER AND CSGBV



In 2022, CEJ conducted workshops for seven youth groups from the Anuradhapura, Batticaloa, Kilinochchi, and Puttalam districts on gender, CSGBV, GOHS, and cyber security. These workshops aimed to sensitise participants on gender and sex, build their capacity to identify gender stereotypes, increase their understanding of CSGBV and GOHS, and raise awareness of their role in preventing and responding to CSGBV and GOHS.

Following these capacity building workshops, CEJ collaborated with the youth groups, providing them with seed grants, to conduct peer-learning activities on preventing and addressing GOHS, CSGBV,

and digital literacy. These exercises resulted in raising awareness on the subject within their communities.







## CAPACITATING FUTURE LEADERS TO UPHOLD FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS

CEJ conducted two workshops for 27 law students and graduates in Colombo district on the practical aspects of monitoring Fundamental Rights (FR) cases. These sessions aimed to capacitate law graduates to take an active role in monitoring and documenting FR cases in Sri Lanka, enabling them to effectively advocate for Freedom of Expression, Association and Assembly (FOEAA) within the justice sector, especially protecting civic spaces that are used to advocate for victim-survivors of SGBV.





# ADVOCACY AND AWARENESS RAISING

Advocacy is a form of awareness-raising that aims to change attitudes, policies and practices. It involves supporting and educating the public about a cause or policy through various actions, including efforts to drive public policy changes, opinion and social action.



# PEACE IN MOTION: VISIBILIZING THE WORK OF WOMEN PEACEBUILDERS IN SRI LANKA



With deep roots in the community, young women peacebuilders are often at the forefront of any attempt to bridge divides. Unfortunately, their roles and contributions are frequently overlooked, minimised, excluded, or invisible. To document their voices and preserve their invaluable perspective, CEJ designed and produced a digital archive using materials developed by young women peacebuilders.

The digital archive aims to build linkages for collective peace advocacy, encourage young women to join the work, and visibilize and recognise the efforts of women

peacebuilders working on diverse platforms, from online engagement to grassroots advocacy to national activism.

This digital archive was launched at the International Advocacy Event on Women and Peacebuilding on 28 November 2023. It is presented as a virtual exhibit that showcases materials developed by young women peacebuilders during residential workshops and peacebuilding activities in the Puttalam, Vavuniya, Kilinochchi, Hambanthota, Batticaloa and Anuradhapura districts.

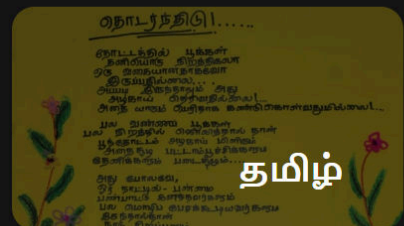
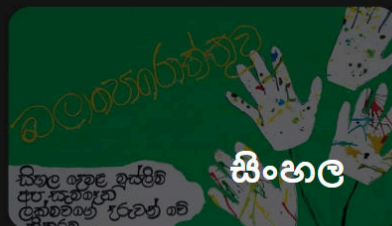
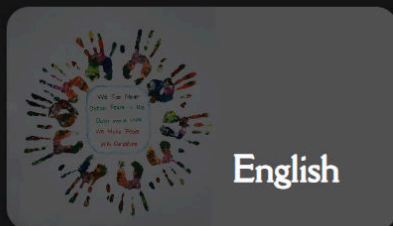
## Peace In Motion

### Visibilizing The Work Of Women Peacebuilders In Sri Lanka

This virtual exhibit showcases materials developed by young women peacebuilders during residential workshops and peacebuilding activities in the Puttalam, Vavuniya, Kilinochchi, Hambanthota, Batticaloa and Anuradhapura districts.

මෙම - ප්‍රදර්ශනය තුළින් පුත්තලම, වවුනියාව, කිලිනොච්චිය, හම්බන්තොට, මහකලපුව ඝන අනුරාධපුර යන දිස්ත්‍රික්කවල පවත්වන ලද නේවාසික වැඩමුළු ඝන ආයතන ක්‍රියාකාරකම් වලදී යොමු කළ කාන්තා ආයතනිකයන් විසින් කරන ලද නිර්මාණ ප්‍රදර්ශනය කරනු ලබයි.

புத்தளம், வவுனியா, கிளிநொச்சி, ஹம்பாந்தோட்டை, மட்டக்களப்பு மற்றும் அனுராதபுரம் ஆகிய மாவட்டங்களில் வதிவிட செயலமர்வுகள் மற்றும் சமாதானத்தைக் கட்டியெழுப்பும் நடவடிக்கைகளின் போது சமாதானத்தைக் கட்டியெழுப்பும் இளம் பெண்களால் உருவாக்கப்பட்ட கலையம்சங்கள் இந்த மெய்நிகர் கண்காட்சியில் காட்சிப்படுத்தப்படும்.





# NAVIGATING THE ECONOMIC CRISIS: WOMEN IN URBAN SPACES



To raise awareness of the ongoing economic crisis' impact on women living in urban poverty in Colombo, CEJ developed a [digital scrapbook](#) that highlights the unique challenges they face.

CEJ trained two women photographers on how to sensitively and appropriately document human narratives. These women spent a month engaging with communities and documenting the realities of their daily lives. The photographers carefully captured the women's stories as accurately as possible, and all facts/stories presented

in the final scrapbook are the direct and unaltered testimony of the women themselves. The women and community members that the photographers interacted with were given complete creative freedom and agency to choose how they would be photographed and how their stories/narratives would be portrayed. The resulting digital scrapbook was shared across CEJ's social media pages and website, accompanied by a virtual and in-person sharing session with the photographers.





# #WeAreTheFuture



## YOUTH AS CHANGE AGENTS: FIGHTING CORRUPTION AND SEXUAL BRIBERY

Research by CEJ has revealed that sexual bribery in the public sector is a serious issue, with a 2023 poll showing that more than 50% of respondents were aware of incidents of sexual bribery when obtaining public sector services. A 2019 report published by the Transparency International Sri Lanka office indicates that 44% of people view most or all Members of Parliament as corrupt, with similar views of Local Government officials and the Police. Unfortunately, while the 2020 Global Corruption Barometer shows that 79% of respondents think government corruption is a major issue, young people rarely have opportunities to engage in conversations on issues of governance, bribery, corruption, or sexual bribery.

In recognition of the crucial role of young people's voices, opinions, and actions for Sri Lanka's future, CEJ conducted an advocacy campaign under the 'Youth as Change

Agents: Fighting Corruption and Sexual Bribery' project. For the campaign, CEJ collaborated with students from the UoC and the UoJ, social media influencers, and a media consultant to create content under the campaign's tagline #WeAreTheFuture.

The campaign included 42 pieces of original content in English, Sinhala and Tamil that addressed issues like democracy, governance and human rights, bribery and corruption, sexual bribery, transparency and accountability, and the OGP principles in Sri Lanka. This also included opinion pieces produced by the students on the said topics. The content was shared across CEJ's social media platforms and amplified by local influencers identified by the university students as trustworthy sources of information.





# UNIVERSITY STUDENTS ADDRESS LANGUAGE RIGHTS IN SRI LANKA



CEJ conducted a ten session online course for students from the Colombo, Kelaniya, and Sri Jayewardenepura Universities in 2022. The course covered the history, legal basis, theoretical and practical aspects of language rights and language related issues. After the course, students were more knowledgeable of all aspects of language rights policy and implementation, and were eager to use their learnings to become better language rights advocates.

Accordingly, in 2023 CEJ conducted a creative media campaign with the students to further build their capacity to raise awareness of language rights issues in Sri Lanka. The students produced original content reflecting their opinions, attitudes, and learnings of language discrimination from the online course. Through the content, which included poetry, artwork, short stories, and essays, students shared their experiences facing language barriers and the inefficiencies of institutions intended to protect and safeguard language rights, aiming to inspire and motivate other young people to become language rights advocates. All content was shared on their personal social media platforms to organically raise awareness among their peers and networks.

The students also helped create a video calendar that showcased critical events related to language rights in Sri Lanka's history, highlighting successive governments' inability to implement the Official Languages Policy and promote language inclusivity effectively.



The video calendar is available in  
[ENGLISH](#) | [SINHALA](#) | [TAMIL](#)

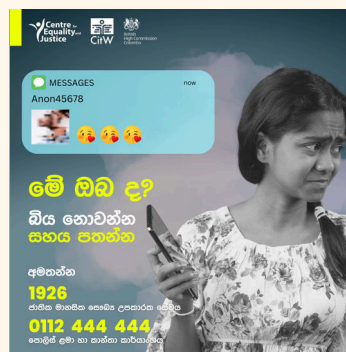


# CAUGHT IN THE WEB: TACKLING CYBER SEXUAL AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE AND GENDERED ONLINE HATE SPEECH



To raise awareness of the issues of CSG-BV and GOHS, available reporting mechanisms in Sri Lanka, and the importance of psychosocial support for victim-survivors, CEJ conducted an islandwide 360-degree media campaign. The campaign included television, radio, and newspaper advertise-

ments and social media posts. The content featured fictionalised individuals receiving offensive and abusive messages and highlighted how it negatively impacted their lives and well-being. Each piece ended by sharing helpline numbers to support individuals in similar situations to seek support.



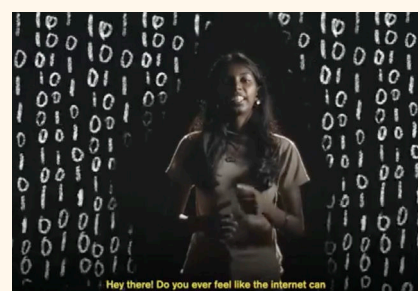
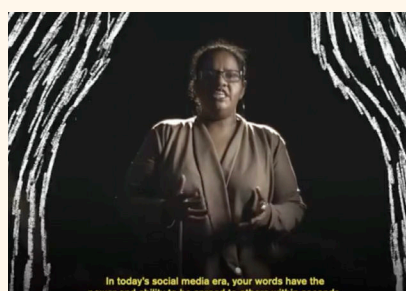
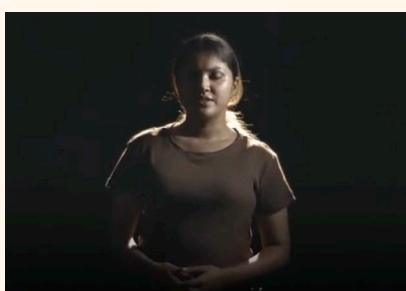
## HATE SPEECH, DISINFORMATION, AND DIGITAL LITERACY

As part of CEJ's work to strengthen digital literacy and promote effective digital responses, CEJ collaborated with five women influencers to conduct a short social media campaign to raise awareness of GOHS, disinformation, and CSGBV. The influencers used creative mediums, such as informative videos, skits, comedy sketches, drawings, poetry, research articles, and live streams, to create original content that educated their

audiences on the impact of these issues and encouraged them to use their voices and agency to combat them.

These influencers also participated in three videos on hate speech and disinformation's negative impact on social cohesion; each video included a mix of

[English](#) | [Sinhala](#) | [Tamil](#)





# CRISIS RESPONSE

Crisis response refers to the actions taken by an organisation to address disruptions and unexpected events that threaten to harm an organisation or its stakeholders. CEJ's work is rooted in Sri Lankan communities, and therefore, responding to the country's evolving needs is fundamental. We strive to adjust plans to accommodate shifts in accessibility and to acknowledge emerging needs. In 2023, the major issues addressed were limited access to nutritious food and hygiene products.



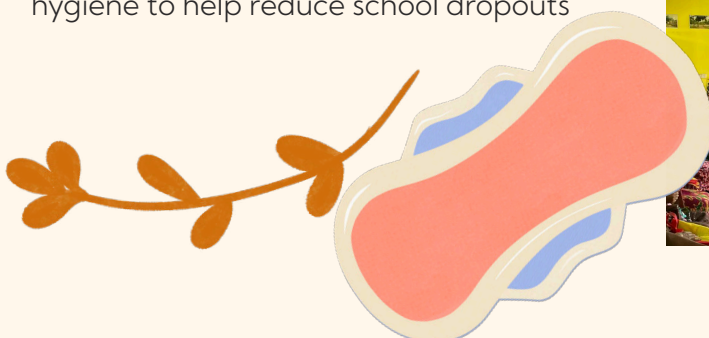
## COMBATting CHILDHOOD MALNUTRITION IN KEY DISTRICTS

Continuing CEJ's work to address food security concerns during the economic crisis, nutritional packages were distributed to SHG members' children aged four to twelve in Anuradhapura and Kilinochchi, aiming to improve their nutritional status and overall well-being. Additionally, to ensure food security and combat malnourishment, with the support of KNH and the Sri Lanka Centre for Development Facilitation, Samaposha packs were distributed to 58 families in the Kukulewa village in two rounds under the 'Dhiri Poshaku - C1' programme.



## DISTRIBUTING PERSONAL HYGIENE PRODUCTS TO SUPPORT SCHOOL-AGED GIRLS

CEJ received a generous donation of 8,000 sanitary napkins from the Arka Initiative through the Adithi by Arka project. These sanitary napkins were distributed to 200 women and school-going girls in the Kilinochchi and Anuradhapura districts. This initiative not only supplied essential sanitary products to families but also raised awareness about menstrual health and hygiene to help reduce school dropouts







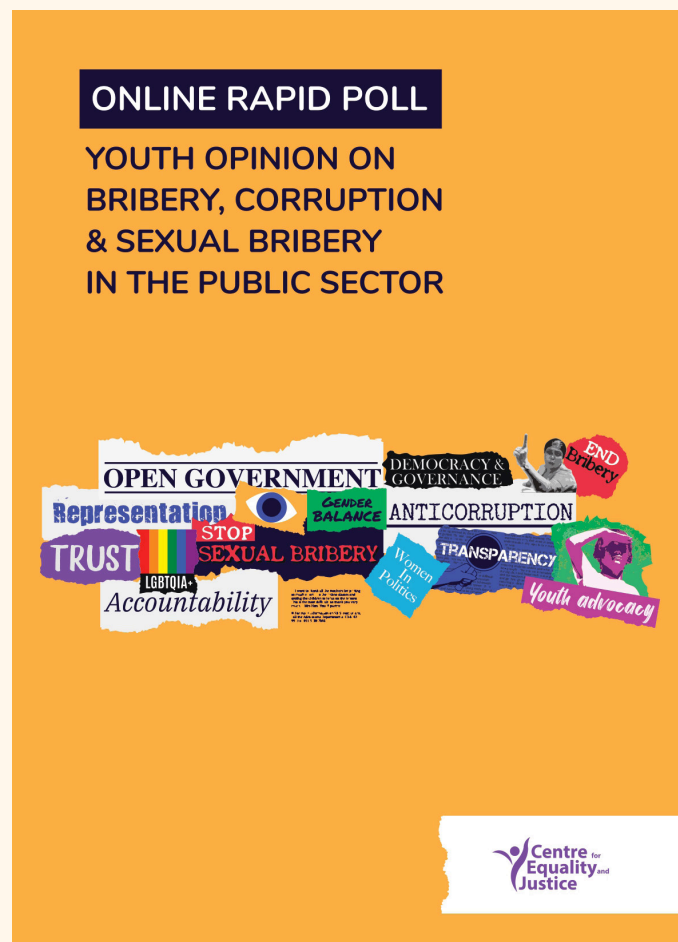
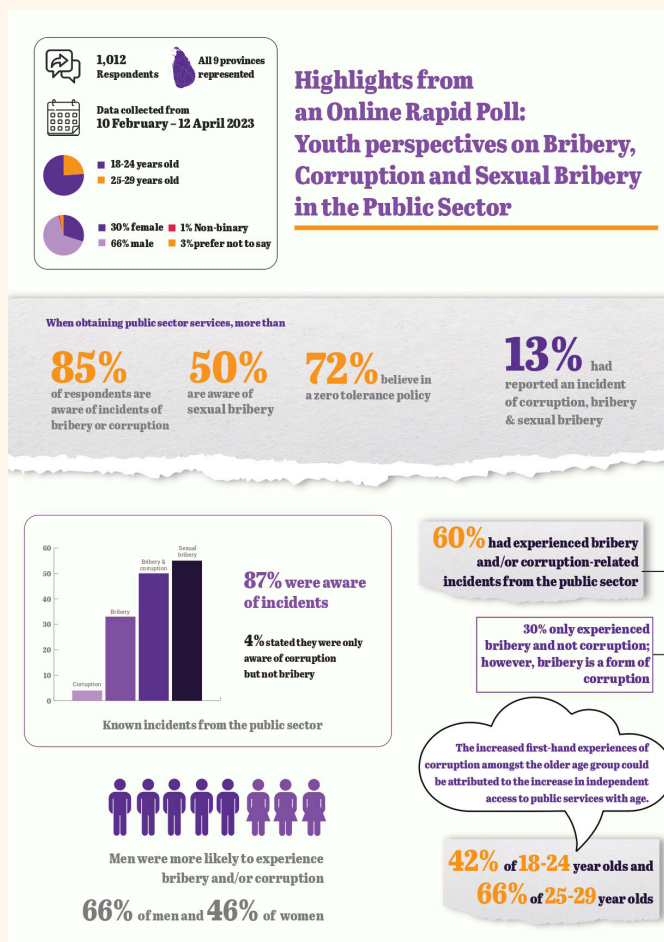
# RESEARCH AND KNOWLEDGE GENERATION



Research and knowledge generation can be defined as the systematic investigation into and study of materials and sources to establish facts and reach new conclusions.

High-quality research provides a strong foundation for all of CEJ's work, ensuring our plans and activities are comprehensive and responsive to the ground reality in Sri Lanka.





## ONLINE RAPID POLL: YOUTH PERSPECTIVES ON BRIBERY, CORRUPTION AND SEXUAL BRIBERY IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR



To further CEJ's work to promote transparent, accountable, and strong governance, CEJ conducted an islandwide online rapid poll to understand young people's opinions on corruption, bribery, and sexual bribery in the public sector. Information from the poll was used to develop an infographic and a report titled "Online Rapid Poll: Youth Opinion on Bribery, Corruption & Sexual Bribery in the Public Sector." The poll revealed crucial insights, including that most people, 85% of respondents, were aware of incidents

of bribery or corruption; 50% were aware of sexual bribery; 72% believe in a zero-tolerance policy; but only 13% had reported an incident of corruption, bribery and sexual bribery. Similarly, only 9% of respondents were fully aware of available reporting mechanisms. Finally, the poll indicated that men were more likely to experience bribery or corruption; however, women were more likely to experience sexual bribery.

The [infographic](#) and the [online rapid poll report](#) are available on the CEJ website.

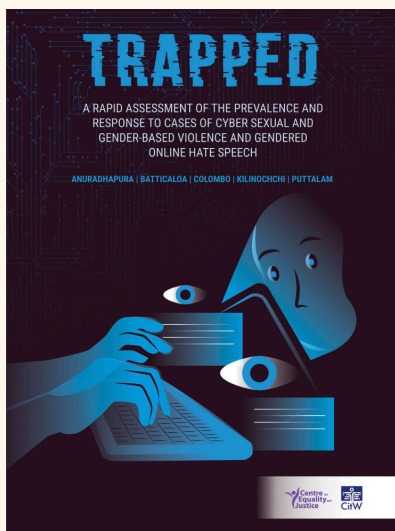


# TRAPPED: A RAPID ASSESSMENT OF THE PREVALENCE AND RESPONSE TO CASES OF CYBER SEXUAL AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE AND GENDERED ONLINE HATE SPEECH

As part of a broader project conducted by CEJ, Search for Common Ground, and Hashtag Generation to improve the existing response mechanism to online hate speech and CSGBV in Sri Lanka that started in 2021, CEJ compiled a report titled “Trapped: A rapid assessment of the prevalence and response to cases of Cyber Sexual and Gender-Based Violence and Gendered Online Hate Speech”, to share key findings from data gathered from a rapid assessment carried out in the Anuradhapura, Puttalam, Batticaloa, Kilinochchi, and Colombo districts. The report includes information from eight creative sessions with community women and girls, two focus group discussions (FGDs) with key service-providing institutions, a poll conducted during a webinar with

youth from districts across Sri Lanka, and stakeholder interviews.

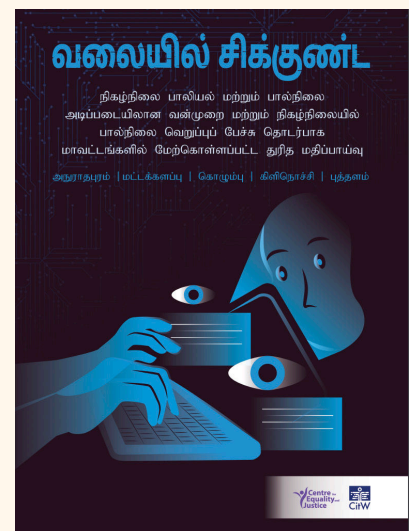
This report contributes to the larger project by collecting and analysing data and presenting relevant findings from the inception phase. The findings describe internet usage trends in the districts, the prevalence of CSGBV and GOHS, and factors that make people more vulnerable to CSGBV and GOHS. It also seeks to understand peoples’ perceptions of CSGBV and GOHS and the impact they have. Finally, the report explores avenues to prevent and respond to CSGBV and GOHS, including a discussion on existing response mechanisms and challenges in responding to CSGBV and GOHS.



ENGLISH



SINHALA



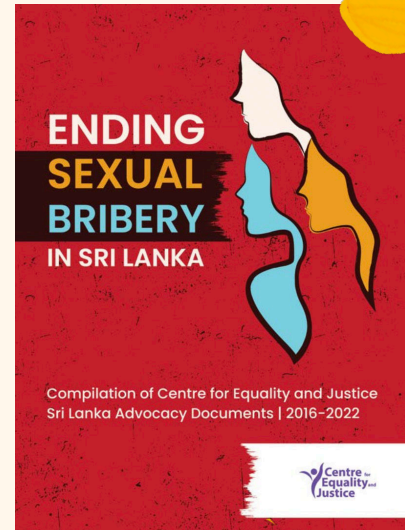
TAMIL

# PUBLICATIONS

## Combatting Sexual Bribery in Sri Lanka

CEJ published a consolidated publication on the advocacy work we conducted from 2016 to 2022 related to sexual bribery. The publication outlines activities related to lobbying and awareness-raising, original research, and training and capacity-building work. The publication also includes an archive of all the materials CEJ developed to address sexual bribery from 2016 to 2022. The publication can be used as a textbook or guiding document for anyone interested in learning more about the issue of sexual bribery or how to advocate for a similar social cause.

[CLICK TO VIEW THE PUBLICATION](#)



## Consolidating learnings on SGBV and the justice system

CEJ compiled a report on what was learned from a former project, SGBV Public Messaging to Amplify the Gender Justice Legal Network, which took place in 2021. This project raised awareness of SGBV, court processes and procedures, advocacy on SGBV, and the structural barriers of the criminal justice system in Sri Lanka. The report, titled "Labyrinth: Navigating Response Mechanisms for Sexual and Gender-Based Violence," aims to raise awareness of the barriers and challenges faced by victim-survivors from Sinhala, Tamil and Muslim communities in the Puttalam, Kilinochchi, and Polonnaruwa districts.

[THE FULL PUBLICATION CAN BE ACCESSED HERE](#)

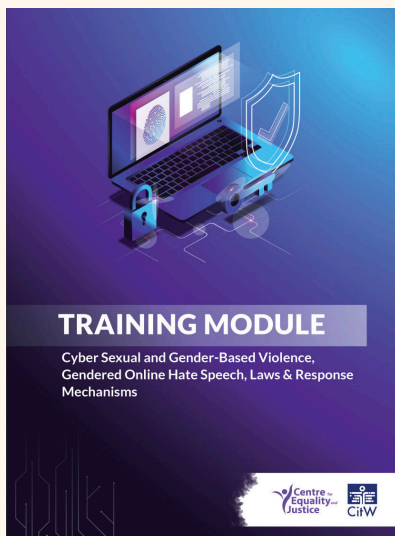




## Training module to address online violence

Building on data collected through research and FGDs with members of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and state-sector responders working in the areas of CSGBV and GOHS in 2022, CEJ developed a training module titled 'Training Module: Cyber Sexual and Gender-Based Violence, Gendered Online Hate Speech, Laws and Response Mechanism' in English, Sinhala, and Tamil. The draft training module was initially developed by two consultants with expertise in technology and gender issues and was further refined by a legal expert.

The training module is a valuable resource for training and the capacity-building of first responders on definitions of SGBV, CSGBV and types of CSGBV, response mechanisms of CSGBV and ethical guidelines in dealing with cases of CSGBV and GOHS. It is intended to support service providers in adopting a more gender-sensitive and victim-centric approach when providing assistance and addressing incidents of CSGBV and GOHS.



ENGLISH



SINHALA

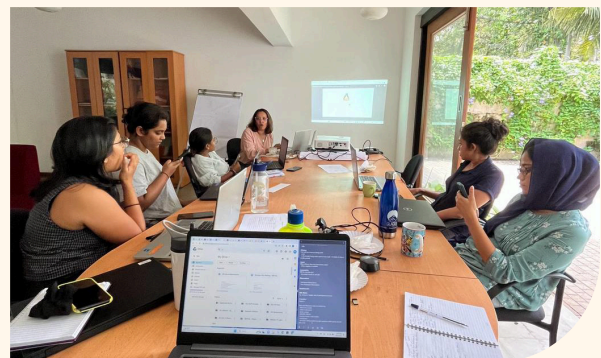
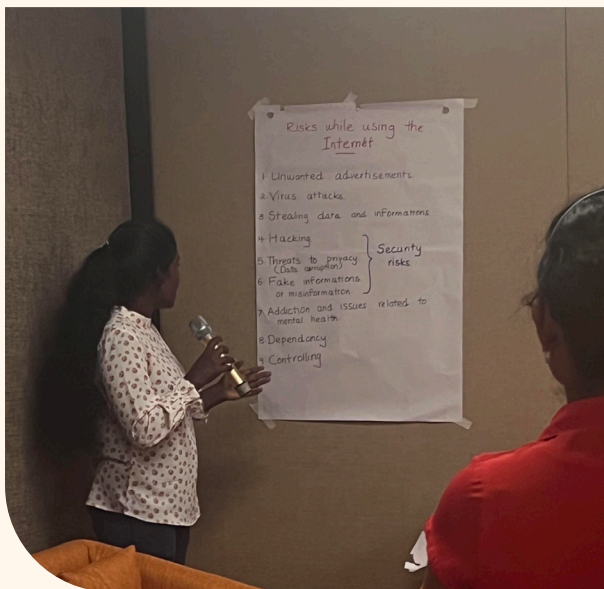


TAMIL

# STAFF AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

CEJ considers staff's personal and professional development crucial to its mission. Accordingly, we provide opportunities for learning and growth, allowing staff to take on challenges and acquire new skills, tools and perspectives. These opportunities include external project conferences and workshops, organisation and team development training, and staff well-being and

team-building programmes. Sessions encourage staff to establish camaraderie, build stronger relationships, and foster a sense of community and teamwork while improving the organisations' performance and impact, ultimately making us better equipped to support the communities and beneficiaries we work with.





# STAFF WELLBEING



*A CHANCE FOR STAFF TO  
COME TOGETHER,  
CREATE CAMARADERIE,  
BUILD STRONGER RELATIONSHIPS*





# DISTRICT PARTNERS



CEJ is privileged to have a mutually productive relationship with our district partners. As trusted members of each district, our partners provide crucial updated information on evolving needs and support community involvement. Their insights inform project design and their input is included in activity planning and implementation. Conversely, our partners benefit from their involvement with CEJ. Through participation in activities, they are capacitated in a range of thematic areas, further enhancing their capacity to respond to community needs.

## Kilinochchi

OfERRCeylon  
Sirakukal Cultural Forum  
Light Up Lanka

## Vavuniya

Rural Women's Forum

## Anuradhapura

Rajarata Praja Kendraya (RPK)  
Safe Foundation  
Foundation of Innovative Social Development (FISD)

## Puttalam

Muslim Women Development Trust (MWDT)  
Rural Development Foundation (RDF)  
Praja Diriya Padanama (PDP)

## Polonnaruwa

Sunila Women and Children Development Foundation (SWCDF)  
Pulathisi Praja Sanwardana Samagama

## Galle

Saviya Development Foundation  
Rural Women's Front

## Batticaloa

Peace and Community Action Network For Advocating Requirements Of Women (NewAROW)

## Ampara

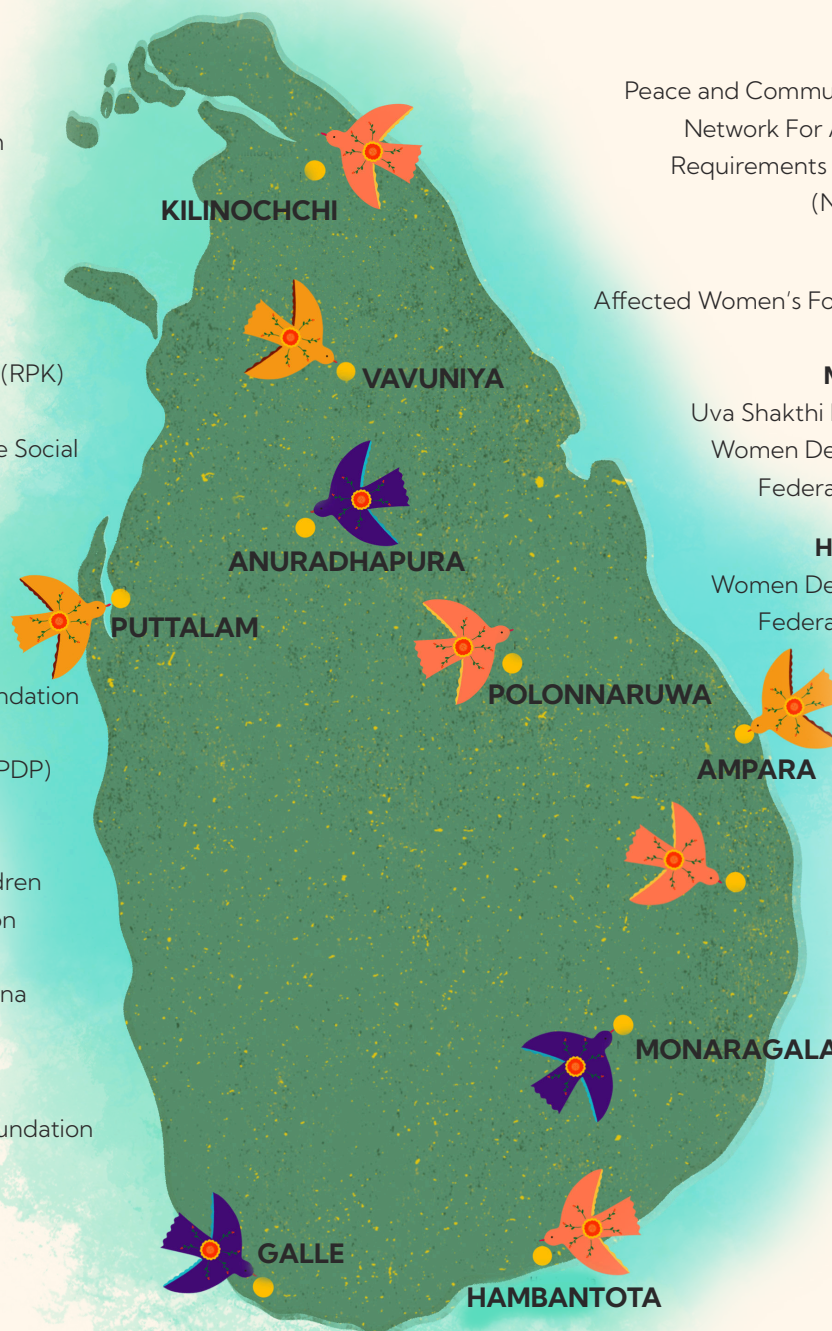
Affected Women's Forum (AWF)

## Monaragala

Uva Shakthi Foundation  
Women Development Federation (WDF)

## Hambantota

Women Development Federation (WDF)





# OUR DONORS

Our donors' generosity and support are the foundation of our work.

**Kindernothilfe**

**International Coalition of Sites of Conscience**

**The Asia Foundation**

**National Democratic Institute**

**Global Fund for Women**

**UNDP**

**Legal Action Worldwide**

**British High Commission**

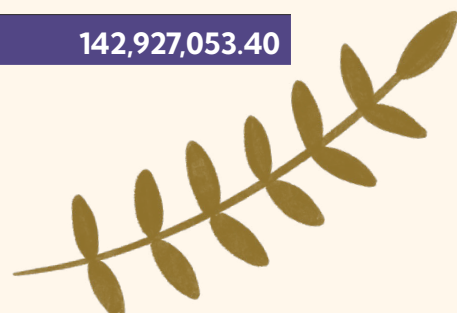
**National Languages Equality Advancement Project**



# FINANCIAL SUMMARY



|                                        | LKR                   |
|----------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Salaries                               | 46,929,521.36         |
| Staff Gratuity                         | 493,750.00            |
| Rent                                   | 3,982,960.00          |
| Utilities                              | 782,335.00            |
| Communication Expenses                 | 516,221.48            |
| Meeting Expenses                       | -                     |
| Staff Welfare                          | 439,697.00            |
| Equipment Maintenance                  | 157,309.00            |
| Office Maintenance                     | 94,864.00             |
| Stationery, printing and consumables   | 1,957,217.00          |
| Postage and Courier                    | 7,530.00              |
| Office Travel                          | 299,912.00            |
| Periodic Expenses                      | 219,351.08            |
| Bank Charges and Other Finance Charges | 91,969.35             |
| Audit Expenses                         | 760,000.00            |
| NGO Tax                                | 1,360,553.32          |
| Legal Fees                             | 16,225.00             |
| Company Secretary                      | 120,718.00            |
| Consultancies                          | 2,376,000.00          |
| Translation                            | 13,633.00             |
| Interns                                | 81,900.00             |
| Other General Expenses                 | 172,948.00            |
|                                        | 60,874,614.59         |
| <b>Total General Expenses</b>          | <b>82,052,438.81</b>  |
| <b>Total Expenses 2023</b>             | <b>142,927,053.40</b> |







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**2023.**

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