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UNDP SRI LANKA FLAGSHIP PORTFOLIO ON SDG 16+

Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions

Progress Review
November 2019 – September 2020



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Development Context

- **Presidential (Nov 2019) and Parliamentary Elections (Sep 2020)** - Significant shift in the national policy framework.
- **Indication of the new Government's intention to withdraw from the UN Human Rights Council Resolution 30/1 (Feb 2020)** - National commitments on transitional justice, reconciliation compromised.
- **Constitutional Reform (20th Amendment)** - Centralized governance, overreach of executive power and the erosion of independence of the Commissions.
- **Covid-19 Pandemic** - Exacerbation of vulnerabilities, religious/ethnic tensions, strain on democratic governance (ex: minimal accountability), institutional paralysis.
- **"Vistas of Prosperity & Splendor"** - Strong emphasis on economic development an entry point for engagement with the Government on inclusive governance through non-traditional forms.
- **A strained economy** - High fiscal deficit and unsustainable debt prompting government to focus on social sector investment.



Pillar One: Parliament and Independent Commissions

Core functions, especially the legislative function of Parliament improved

- Core functions of 9th Parliament enhanced through development of a **Parliamentary Development Action Plan** based on development priorities identified through a consultative assessment.
- Three bills **addressing gender discriminatory legislation** in line with the 1325 agenda which were drafted with UNDP's technical support submitted to Parliament by the Chairperson of Sectoral Oversight Committee on Women and Gender.
 - *To Amend the Marriage Registration Ordinance;*
 - *To Introduce Minimum Age of Marriage in Sri Lanka; and*
 - *To Amend the Land Development Ordinance;*
- **Public access to information on Parliament increased**
 - Live committee proceedings on The Committee on Public Enterprises (COPE) of the 9th Parliament, recorded and telecast on each sitting day.
 - Enhanced public engagement and outreach through support to Parliament Department of Communications.



Independent Commissions

Strengthening the Independence of the Human Rights Commission (HRC)

- **Case investigations and inquiries expedited** through the implementation of digital complaint and case management mechanisms. Complaint handling by the HRC improved by 70%, totalling 2342 cases from August 2019 to October 2020.
- **Recommendations and findings on the prison conditions island-wide identified** through a consultative pioneering prison study.
- **HRC staff sensitized** on recent developments relating to torture cases and the right to freedom of expression through webinars conducted, and **staff capacity strengthened** to generate visibility materials and enhance HRC's public outreach.



Complaint handling by the HRC improved by

From August 2019 to October 2020

70%

2342

cases handled



Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka

WEBINAR - SINHALA

TORTURE AND OTHER FORMS OF SOCIETAL VIOLENCE IN SRI LANKA: PARTS OF ONE SPECTRUM?

in commemoration of

INTERNATIONAL DAY IN SUPPORT OF VICTIMS OF TORTURE -2020

organized by

Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka

THE PANEL

- | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| • Prof. Harendra De Silva
Co-founder, Coalition Against Violence in Universities & Founder Chairman National Child Protection Authority | • Prof. Deepika Udagama
Chairperson, HRCSL |
| • Dr. Ramila Usoof
Senior Lecturer
Department of Psychology
University of Peradeniya | • Ms. Ramani Mutthetuwegama
Commissioner, HRCSL |
| • Ms. Sajeewanee Abeykoon
Attorney-at-Law | • Mr. Shantha Jayawardena
Attorney-at-Law |

together with survivors of torture and other violence

SATURDAY, 27th JUNE, 10.30 AM

National Police Commission (NPC)

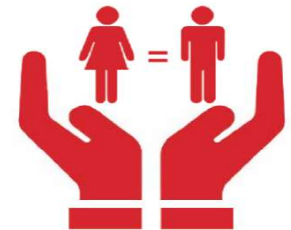
- Citizen-centric service delivery enhanced through implementation of **web-based Public Complaint Management System (PCMS)** - Total of 1677 calls received Jan-Sept 2020 were received through the system.
- Business continuity of NPC ensured through establishment of a **Smart Commission Meeting System (SCMS)**.
- Public perceptions of NPC enhanced through a **trilingual newspaper campaign, engaging 18 newspapers** raising public awareness on post-election violence in Sri Lanka.
- Gender sensitivity increased and disparities of women representation in SLP reformed through the implementation of 80 priority recommendations in premier study on **“Achieving gender equality in the Sri Lanka Police Force.”**
- Gender sensitivity when handling complaints by women improved through the development of **Gender Guidelines for NPC**.
- Systemic child abuse and exploitation traced through **study on unprotected children** conducted in Colombo, Kurunegala and Anuradhapura districts.

Divisional Bureaus for the Prevention of Abuse of Children and Women



AN INITIATIVE OF THE NATIONAL POLICE COMMISSION,
THE UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME AND
CENTRE FOR WOMEN'S RESEARCH

Achieving Gender Equality in the Sri Lanka Police: An Analysis of Women Officers



AN INITIATIVE OF THE NATIONAL POLICE COMMISSION,
THE UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME AND
CENTRE FOR WOMEN'S RESEARCH

Right to Information Commission (RTIC)

- Appeals hearings of RTI Commission expedited through provision of research/technical assistance to **help clear over 70% of the backlog of appeals.**
- Transparency in public sector enhanced through support in the development of a **Cabinet paper on Proactive Disclosure** to Strengthen Right to Information in Sri Lanka.
- Strategies on RTI-related awareness raising informed through island wide **survey on the Assessment on Public Awareness on the Right to Information**, commissioned by the Ministry of Mass Media
- Effective implementation of RTI Act ensured through technical support to develop **'Right to Information Guiding Manual'** for Information Officers.

Appeals hearings of RTI Commission expedited through technical assistance



Over 70% of the backlog of appeals cleared

(of 1089 appeals in 2019, 709 appeals were resolved.)



Pillar Two: Rule of Law and Access to Justice

Policy / law reform supported and improved access to justice for excluded and vulnerable groups

- Protection to victims and witnesses of crime ensured through **review and amendment of the Victim and Witness Protection law which secured Cabinet approval (Bill to be tabled in Parliament in Dec)**
- Protection for child victims/witnesses and whistle-blowers increased through development of specialized laws . **Protection Guidelines and Criteria developed** for the Victims and Witnesses Assistance Division of the Police.
- Policy decisions on crime prevention informed and development of a proposed National Crime Prevention Strategy initiated through pioneering **qualitative assessment on criminal victimization trends and crime trends analysis.**

Strengthened service delivery for victims of crime and witnesses through enhanced institutional capacities.

- Over 2500 service providers within the justice sector, health sector, public service, and media sensitized and capacitated operationalize the law and **deliver victim-centric services to victims of crime and witnesses.**
- Public access to information regarding services of the National Authority improved through **operationalization and awareness-raising of the National Authority Victim Hotline** resulting in over 1500 complaints/requests for protection received (during July 2019 –March 2020). **Public awareness on the rights and entitlements of victims/witnesses** increased through island wide poster campaign - over 3250 posters distributed across all Districts and extended to 188 courts, all police stations, schools across the country.
- **Enhanced (court-ordered) compensation to victims of crime** through development Victim Impact Statements in line with international best practices.




Improved access to justice for
excluded and vulnerable
groups



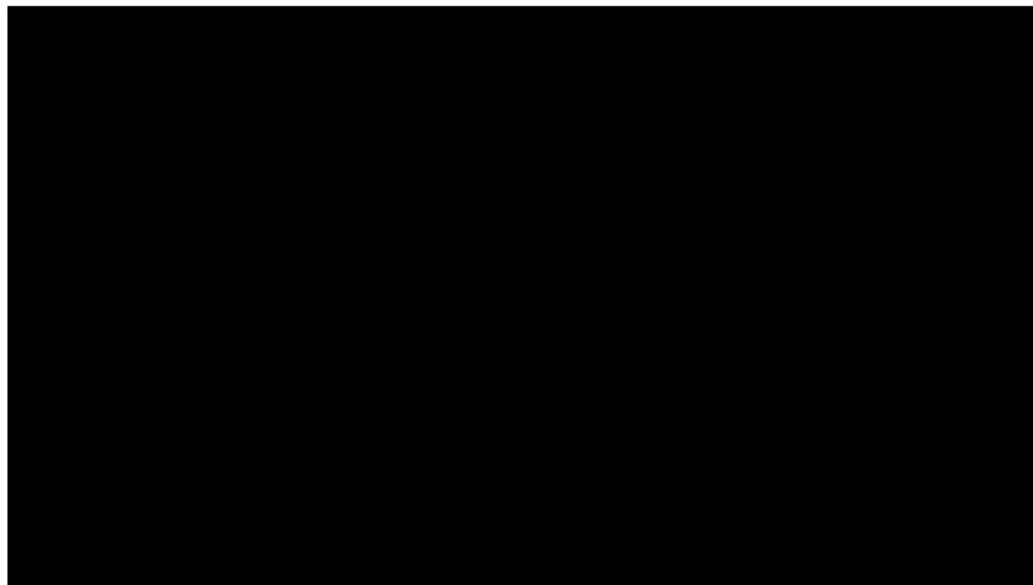
Enhanced access to justice and gender-sensitive support to address SGBV

- Protection to victims of SGBV enhanced through coordination and technical support in **standardizing the National Guidelines on Management of Shelters** including incorporating Covid-19 measures, presently in draft stage.
- **Men's participation in promoting gender equality increased** through support to the Men Engage Alliance of Sri Lanka in collaboration with National Committee on Women (NCW) to develop a series of 10 videos as part of the Equal Partners campaign; engaging men and boys for change.
- Audio-visual materials produced on coping with COVID-19 "Lockdown" and 2 videos on "**Disability and Child Abuse**" and "**Disability, Sexual Harassment & Discrimination**" produced through CSOs, strengthening awareness and prevention of GBV.
- Development of an App to address **Cyberviolence by Youth for Youth**, especially young women





**Enhanced gender-sensitive
support to address disability
and child abuse**





**Pillar Three : Public Sector and Local
Government Authorities**

Development planning capacities at provincial and district level enhanced

- **Local Government capacities strengthened** through development of comprehensive District Capacity Development Plans. Capacity development plans for 11 out of 25 districts developed and Wayamba Provincial Development Plan presented to the President of Sri Lanka.
- Service delivery improved through support to 134 Local Authorities in the four Provinces to **develop vision and mission statements** as part of strategic direction setting measures.
- Evidence-based decision making in consideration of climate vulnerabilities strengthened through **Climate Vulnerability Risk Assessments** undertaken in all 4 provinces.
- Initiation of **policy dialogue on the development of “green/smart cities”** to be piloted in the 4 provinces



Durable Solutions Policy and services to IDPs and refugees to facilitate resettlement and reintegration

- **Resettlement and reintegration of IDP's and refugee returnees** (app. 600 families) assisted through improved access to durable livelihoods, upgraded community infrastructure and facilitation of resettlement in newly released lands in-line with National Durable Resettlement Policy (reached 1694 resettled families, 36% women)

Skills Development & Livelihood Support to women affected by conflict

- Economic resilience improved, independent livelihoods promoted and equitable access to essential services facilitated for **200 military and war widows through business and financial training support and business pitching** in Kurunegala, Anuradhapura and Kilinochchi districts. Business training conducted for 293 widows in total, in-kind grants given to 85 in Kurunegala to start-up or strengthen existing businesses.

Promotion of Social Cohesion and Prevention of Violent Extremism

- Push and pull factors of violent extremism addressed and trust built between diverse ethnic and religious groups through **support to civil society and Government in addressing violent extremism and the spread of hate speech**, rolling out platforms for **inter-religious, civil society and youth dialogues**, developing **early warning systems of emerging violent extremism** and socio-economic and vulnerability assessments of COVID-19 through primary data research that inform national strategies on response and recovery.





COVID-19 Reprogramming

Pillar Two

Ensuring access to justice and business continuity in the justice sector

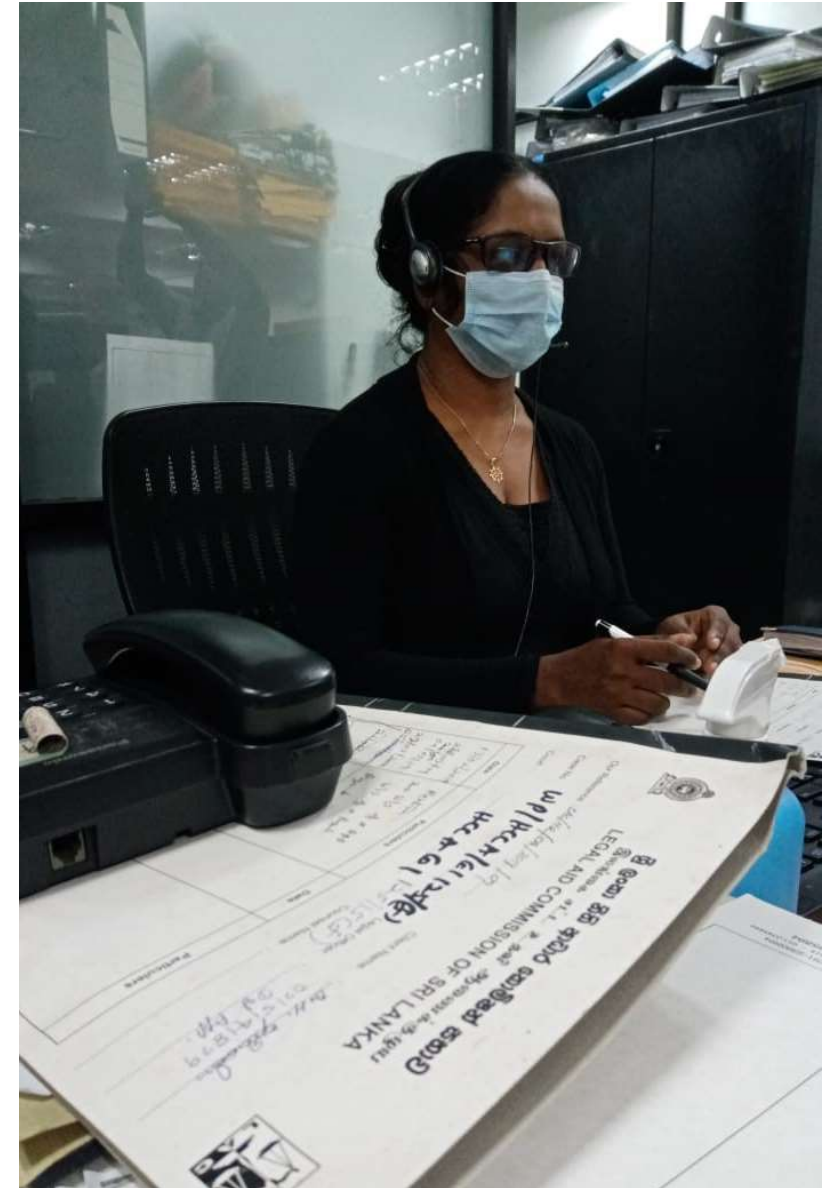
- Protection of personal liberties and fundamental rights of the public ensured during the COVID-19 pandemic through technical collaboration with the Judiciary to issue a **Judicial circular/order prioritizing bail as urgent applications**- total of over 4000 applications heard.
- **Business continuity ensured and pioneering of remote bail hearings conducted in 23 Courts and 10 Prisons** through substantial digital support.
- Uninterrupted access to justice provided through technical support to the Legal Aid Commission and the Prisons Department which **facilitated remote legal counselling for public and prisoners**- Of the 30 prison inmates who received legal aid counselling during Covid-19 lockdown, 25 inmates secured judicial remedies (including bail) and instituted proceedings in the High Court.
- 12,000 indigent female clients of the Legal Aid Commission who rely on court-ordered maintenance received **Government Covid-19 relief package** through technical intervention in collaboration with the Legal Aid Commission
- Access to information supported through **compilation of laws/regulations on Quarantine, Infectious Diseases and Restriction of Movement** (200 judicial officers, 300+ attorneys)

Pioneering of
remote bail
hearings
conducted in

23



10



Pillar Two

Enhanced access to justice and gender-sensitive support to address SGBV including victims of SGBV

- **Pressing needs of existing shelters identified** and areas of further development determined through rapid COVID needs assessment of shelters.
- **Shelter services and facilities strengthened** through support to Women In Need (WIN), Women's Development Centre (WDC), Kandy and OfERR Ceylon to maintain shelters for women and girl survivors of SGBV and respond to essential needs due to COVID 19.
- Victim centric support including **counselling, legal assistance and court representation for victims of SGBV** provided through CSOs. A total of 17,717 services were provided to SGBV victims in the period of September 2019 – May 2020, including 372 legal cases filed and 313 victims of SGBV receiving shelter assistance.
- Public awareness raised through **promotion of support hotlines for SGBV survivors** in all three languages in 13 districts.
- Protection and wellbeing of SGBV victims secured **through updated SGBV referral mechanisms** which include COVID-19 safeguards that ensure the need for effective quarantine measures.



Pillar Three

Ensuring business continuity of Local Government Authorities

- **Business continuity of Local Government Authorities ensured** through facilitation of internet coverage and equipment for virtual conferencing.
- **Protection of front-line officials of local and district authorities** and delivery of essential services during Covid-19 ensured through provision of PPE kits and equipment.
- **Local Government's role in managing health and safety enhanced** through the drafting of 21 by laws which govern health and safety regulations in public gatherings, maintain health standards in public places, and manage hazardous waste disposal.
- **Workplace equity and anti discriminatory policies ensured** through the review and update of the national anti-sexual harassment guidelines by the Ministry of Women and Child Affairs and Social Security.



Challenges

Mitigation Measures

Pandemic-induced protocols impacting outreach, service provision and access, and public engagement.

Supported business continuity through digital solutions (remote court hearings, digital complaints mechanisms, online communication tools for parliament)

Lack of access information (ex: entitlements, procedures) by both the authorities and the public compounded, necessitating a shift in priority action.

Supported through compilation and dissemination of laws/regulations on Quarantine, Infectious Diseases and Restriction of Movement, and development of 21 bylaws regulating public health & safety at local government level.

Escalation in the numbers of domestic violence victims.

Supported through expansion of shelter services and increased awareness of the SGBV app and hotline.

Navigation of the transition from one political cycle to another necessitating the need to secure endorsement of key interventions.

Continued engagement with the leadership resulting in renewed buy-in (ex: parliamentary development action plan).

NORWAY FUNDING AND CORRESPONDING UTILIZATION (1ST JANUARY 2019 - 30TH SEPTEMBER 2020)

	Overall Utilization (Cumulative)	Project	Expenditure (USD)	Commitments (USD)	Total Utilization (USD)
Pillar 1	Support to Parliament	112513	115,647	13,589	129,236
	Support to Independent Commissions		454,206	82,434	536,640
	Sub Total		569,853	96,023	665,876
Pillar 2	Inclusive Justice	117979	308,912	90,030	398,942
	Sub Total		308,912	90,030	398,942
	Direct Project Costs				71,040
	General Management Support				90,265
	Grand Total			878,765	186,053

Norway Funding and Corresponding Utilization (1st January 2019 - 30th September 2020)

(USD)	
468,320.24	1st Tranche
404,676.00	2nd Tranche
519,695.62	3rd Tranche
1,392,691.86	Total Received
1,500,000.00	Total Budgeted
107,308.14	Total loss due to exchange rate fluctuations



SDG16 Portfolio
Mid-Term Evaluation
Preliminary Observations

Relevance

- The Strategic interventions identified under the Portfolio were relevant as it was context specific and responded to national priorities (aftermath of the 19th A.) at the time, maximizing effectiveness and impact.

Effectiveness

- **Targeting and increased support to development of systems and processes** (digitization and changing the style of business conduct of Parliament – COPE/COPA, streamlining appointment of police officers NPC)
- **Developing of policy/strategic plans and institutional/infrastructure development** (multi-faceted approach to Victims and Witness legislation, communications strategy for NPC and Parliament)
- **Capacity Building and Training** – (e.g. multi stakeholders on NVWPA and increase in the number of inquiries to the Authority, Parliament communications unit - change of attitude towards public engagement and empowerment)
- **Improving coordination platforms between Government institutions and between Government and CSOs** (e.g. Referral platform - Government and CSOs at the District and Divisional level, forging partnerships between LAC and HRC, NVWPA and judicial and medical sectors)
- **Strong Partnerships: UNDP's unique role as convenor/facilitator and knowledge broker, leverage with Government partners** (justice sector / Parliament /women's ministry) has positively contributed to its position as facilitator and to influence strategic reforms (e.g. PDAP, international standards to VWP Act, Remote Court hearing process) MOJ requesting UNDP to facilitate donor forum for justice.
- **Lack and absence of a strategic coordination between CSOs identified under Pillar Two and Pillar Three for concerted and collaborated effort and to improve efficiency of interventions.**

Efficiency

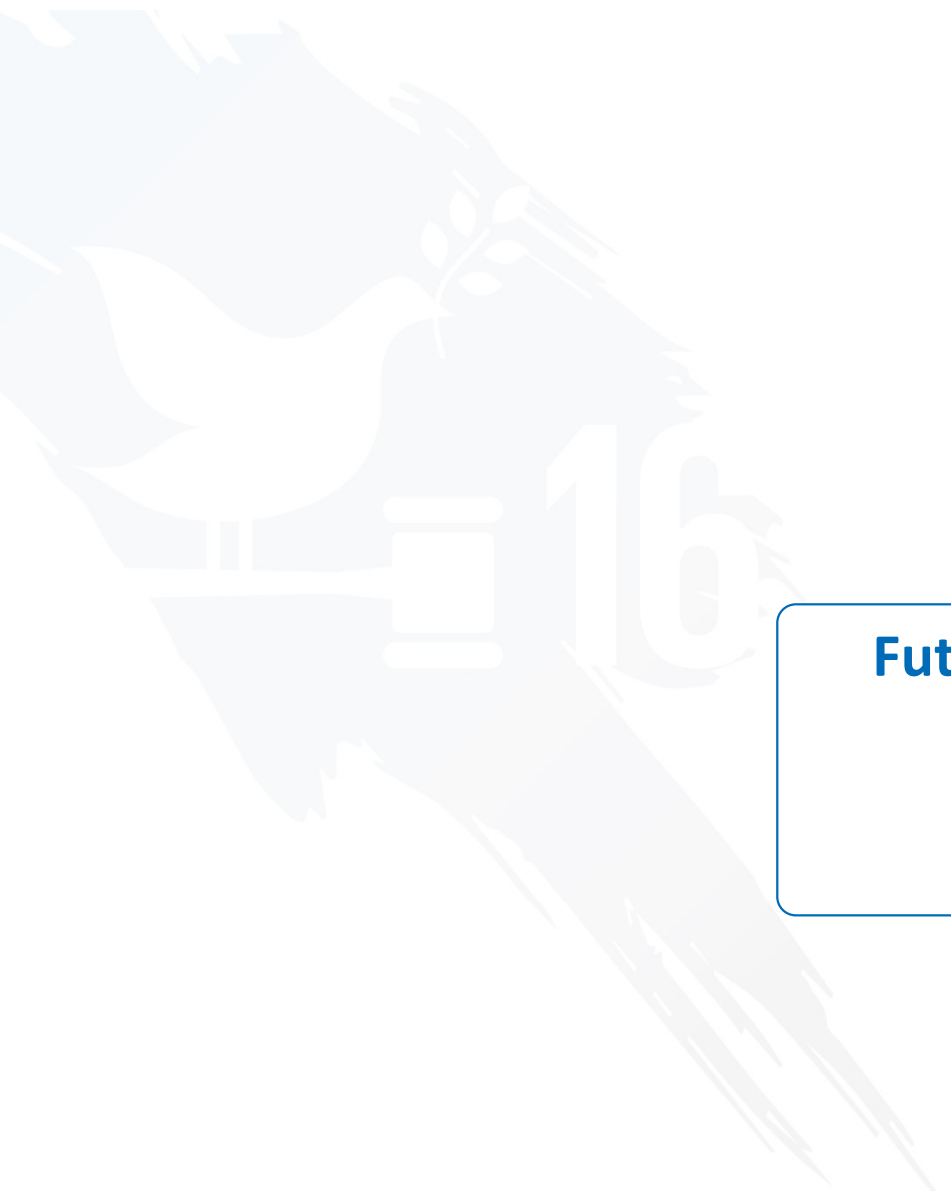
- **Flexibility in reallocation of resources within Portfolio Outcomes/Outputs. enabled the Output to address emerging needs /contexts (political, economic, social) appropriately and responsively** – E.g: Covid – remote court hearings.
- **Efficient use of resources and best practices (e.g- donor coordination platform** to support to **Parliamentary reform** through the Parliamentary development Action plan / direct engagement with Ceylon College of Psychiatrists - **first coordination mechanism between law enforcement and clinical psychiatrists** on responses to victims./ Select Committee on SDGs - discussions resulted in **mainstreaming SDGs into National Budget** call in 2019.
- **Evidence based development of legislation and policy through pioneering research integration, international standards and best practices** (e.g. Review of NVWPA and review of corollary legislation and procedures based on international norms and standards, contribution to research to develop a comprehensive crime prevention strategy and sentencing policy for Sri Lanka, review of the SGBV Action Plan incorporating international norms and standards)

Impact

- **Continuous engagement and support services has contributed to a cultural/attitudinal shift in their response to provision of gender centric services.**
- **Tangible contribution of Gender specific research and targeted intervention by the NPC** (contributed towards the recent appointment of 9 women OICs and 1 woman DIG).

Sustainability

- **There are a number of strategic interventions that has an increased likelihood of progressing towards self-sustenance during and beyond the lifetime of the Portfolio.** (PDAP – buy in from current leadership and bureaucracy, Comms Dept., legal reform, SGBV action plan)
- **Interventions that would require further support towards self-sustenance** (SOCs, SDG committee), monitoring capacity and inquiry procedure of the RTIC, Expansion of remote court hearing mechanism through law and procedural reform and infrastructure support, etc.)
- **Ownership and High-level support from government institutions and role played by key personnel** (NVWPA/MoJ ownership of the review of the law – attitudinal shift in stakeholders towards victim protection, SG Parl)



Future Directions for SDG16 Programming

2021-2023

Nick Booth, UNDP Bangkok Regional Hub

Guiding Principles

- New context calls for repositioning – but not weakening - support to governance in SL, as agreed at highest levels of UNDP and broader UN system.
- Three guiding principles:
 - **Consolidate** results under the SDG16 portfolio so far, but
 - **Recalibrate** for the changed context
 - **Do no harm**, attentive to risks of weakening accountability and impacts on rights of interests of minority groups
- Therefore focus on:
 - **Increasing transparency** while also **opening space for citizen's engagement**.
 - **Strengthen civil society capacity** to engage/advocacy in governance and using SDGs –**including direct engagement of grassroots CSOs/CBOs outside Colombo and CSO networks under Pillar III**.
 - **Leveraging the SDGs**, as the common policy agenda of the Govt and UN, as an entry point, including **data and analysis** on SL's development through the lens of all SDGs including SDG16.

Pillar One: Parliament and Independent Commissions

Parliament

- Potentially weakened by 20A, but still a critical governance institution.
- Strong UNDP positioning – long partnership, convener of DPs, lead support to Parliamentary Road Map which has been endorsed.
- Willingness of Speaker and SG to engage
- Entry points: young/women leaders (MPs and others); reform of committee system; communications/outreach; research capacities; SDG oversight.
- Strengthen CSO capacity to engage.

Independent Commissions

- NPC – weakened by 20A; limited engagement (e.g. building on gender study), monitor closely.
- HRC – statutory mandate intact but independence may be weakened: monitor closely.
- RTIC – important role in strengthening govt transparency.
- Consider Public Service Commission/MinPS in context of public service reform (aligned to Govt priorities) for stable, merit-based and effective public service.
- Strengthen CSO engagement including CSO networks under Pillar III.

Pillar Two: Justice

- SDG 16 Portfolio has engaged broadly across justice chain and achieved results especially through VWPA, including on crime prevention strategy, criminal law, gender/SGBV, and these areas not politically contentious.
- **Continue engagement**, but **strengthen engagement of CSOs** especially grassroots/outside Colombo and linking to Pillar III networks (on social cohesion/PVE and local governance)
- Explore how justice work **can complement Pillar III work on social cohesion** protecting ethnic/religious minorities, and on Business and Human Rights (e.g. ensure CSO networks under Pillar III have access to justice and remedies, VWPA/OMP, reparations – alternative pathways to transitional justice)

Pillar Three: Local Governance and Social Cohesion

- Social cohesion elements of Pillar III will remain critical – strengthening participatory local government through a social cohesion lens, social innovation approaches to strengthen inter-community cohesion.
- In addition, strengthen links to Pillars I and II particularly through:
 - Building capacities of CSO networks under Pillar III (including grassroots CSOs/CBOs) for engagement with Parliament and Commissions, access to justice/remedies.
 - Using UNDP's **convening power** to bring to the table; but also
 - **Strengthening advocacy capacity** especially through SDG lens.
 - Generating **evidence** (e.g. data and analysis on SDGs) **to support advocacy**.

WE THANK OUR DONORS AND NATIONAL PARTNERS FOR THEIR COOPERATION AND SUPPORT



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