



ANNUAL REPORT

2020



LAW & SOCIETY TRUST

"We are at a crossroads.

The direction we decide to take now will shape the type of society we want to live in and pass on to future generations. That choice will determine whether we bolster our freedoms or relinquish them, promote participation or undermine democracy, empower people or marginalise them.

DUNJA MIJATOVIĆ
Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights



**# HUMAN RIGHTS
DAY**

Cover photos:

1. Associated Press
2. LST Publications
3. Dabindu Collective
4. People's Alliance for Right to Land (PARL)
5. Sajeewa Chamikara for PARL
6. Reuters

Table of Contents

Who we are and what we do	04
LST's interconnected work clusters	05
Board and Staff details	06
'May you live in interesting times': 2020 in retrospect	08
Advocating for governance and a pandemic response based on the principles of democracy and human rights	12
Law and Governance: Advocating for policy and legal reforms	14
Law and Society: Creating awareness, influencing public discourse on critical social, political and economic issues:	14
Community empowerment and the protection of rights	16
Law and Economy: Advocating for the rights of women workers, the landless and for an equitable land policy	18
Publications	23
Communications	24
LST in Media	30
Library	30
Donors and Partners	31
Organisational Updates	31
Financial Highlights	32
Annual Report of the Directors for the year ended 31 st December 2020	38

Who we are and what we do

The Law & Society Trust (LST) is a not-for-profit organisation engaged in legal research, advocacy and human rights documentation

The late Dr. Neelan Tiruchelvam founded the Law and Society Trust in 1982 in Colombo, Sri Lanka under the Trust Ordinance. LST was subsequently incorporated in 1992 under the Companies Act No.17 of 1982 and given Registration No. N(A)211. LST has since re-registered as required by law under the new Companies Act No. 07 of 2007.

LST's goals are the promotion of legal reforms for access to justice, judicial enforcement of rights, and public accountability.

LST aims to use rights-based strategies in order to promote and protect human rights, enhance public accountability and strengthen respect for the rule of law.

LST has built strong networks across communities by implementing selective programmes and engaging in human rights advocacy. LST's advocacy is based on sound research and LST operates to expand democratic spaces wherever they exist. It does so by strengthening institutions promoting equal access and upholding good governance through the practice of honesty, transparency and persistent inquiry.

The programme interventions have included human rights education, advocacy, training and engagements with community-based organisations and duty bearers at the district and national levels. It also engages with judges, lawyers and opinion leaders.

The organization also focuses on building networks and coalitions of human rights activists and defenders at the national and international level. The knowledge gained through these efforts has shaped the strategies and approaches adopted in all of LST's programmes.

Vision

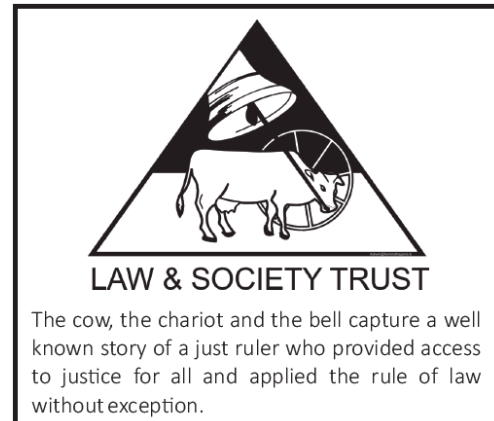
A society free from violent conflict, discrimination and social injustice and based upon human dignity for all.

Mission

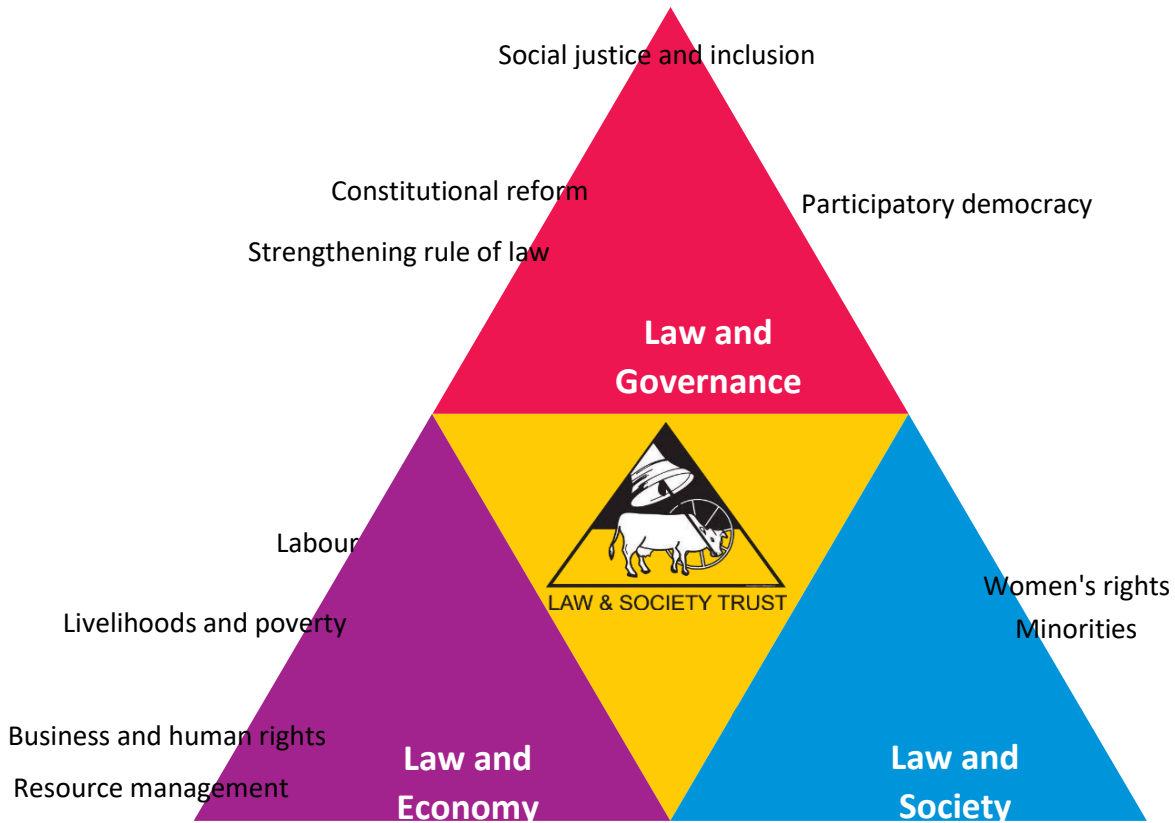
To utilize rights-based strategies in research, documentation and advocacy, and to promote the full realization of the rule of law, justiciability of rights and public accountability.

Goals

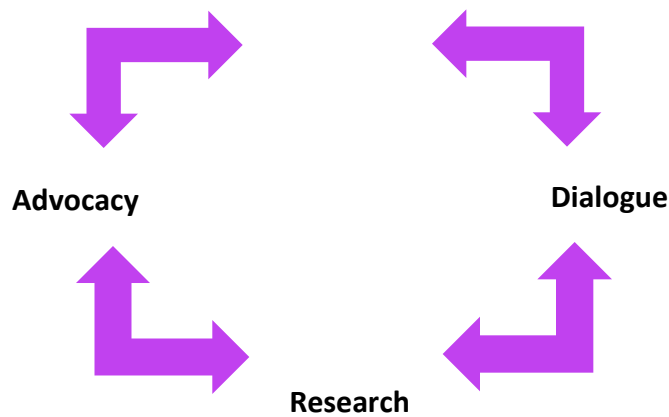
1. To be a leader in national level policy and legislative changes
2. To be a change maker in perceptions, attitudes and traditions which affect rights
3. To be a space maker for human rights discourse
4. To advocate for elective accountability ensuring good governance, transparency, equality and social justice
5. To empower and build the capacity of rights-holders



LST's interconnected work clusters



How we work



The focus of our work

Post-war social and economic justice

Social and economic justice during and in the aftermath of the pandemic

Board of Directors

Dr. J A S Felix - Chairman

Mr. Geoffrey J.T. Alagaratnam PC

Dr. Harini Nireka Amarasuriya (until 24 August 2020)

Miss Anushya Coomaraswamy

Prof. Fathima Farzana Haniffa

Mr. Tissa Jayatilaka

Prof. Jayadeva Uyangoda

Company Secretary

Secretarius (Private) Ltd

Auditors

External Auditors

KPMG

Internal Auditors

Jayasinghe and Company

Senior Management Team

Dr. Sakuntala Kadirgamar - Executive Director

Mr. Sandun Thudugala - Director of Programmes

Ms. Hasara Fernando - Head of Finance and Administration

Programme and Research Staff

Mr. P. M. Senarathna - Programme Manager

Mr. Vidura Munasinghe- Senior Researcher

Ms. Amalini De Sayrah - Communications Officer

Ms. Natasha Van-Hoff – Project Coordinator

Mr. Madasamy Vijeyakanth – Project Coordinator

Ms. Chathurika Sewwandi – Project Coordinator

Consultants

Ms. Marisa De Silva- PARL Coordinator

Ms. Krijah Sivakumar, Researcher

Mr. Malinga Prasad Jayarathna -Research Assistant

Mr. Prabath Hemantha Kumara - Research Assistant

Ms. Tharmika Sivarajah - Research Assistant

Ms. Uda Menike Deshapriya - Researcher (until November 2020)

Ms. Megara Tegal – Researcher (until February 2020)

Human Resources and Administration

Ms. Janaki Kamani Dharmasena - Human Resources and Administrative Officer

Finance Unit

Ms. Dharshika Anthonyraj - Accounts Assistant

Ms. Sagarika Nilmini - Accounts Assistant

Mr. Prasanna Kaminde Gajaweera - Accounts Assistant & Logistic Officer

Publications

Ms. Dilhara Pathirana - editor

Library

Ms. Dilani Wickramasinghe - Librarian

Support Staff

M. Chandran

“May you live in interesting times...”

2020 in retrospect

This expression, though widely attributed as a Chinese curse, has no known equivalent in Chinese. Is it a blessing spelling opportunity, a wish with an edge, or simply a curse? While we are hard-pressed to agree on the origins of this famous expression, I have come to regard it as having the potential to be all of the above — a blessing spelling opportunity, a wish with an edge and a fabled curse.

The year 2020 was surely the harbinger of interesting times in Sri Lanka, and indeed the rest of the world. It is challenging to review the gains and losses of a year such as this.

The COVID pandemic broke in March 2020 and Sri Lanka was not alone in experiencing confusion, chaos and misery. This global pandemic exposed the vulnerabilities and fault lines of rich and powerful countries and people. For a few months, the world was equal in unpreparedness and in helplessness; achieving equality is elusive and for once there was some parity.

The pandemic demonstrated that many of us had invested in priorities that did not help us in these “interesting times”. Our development models - export driven economies, debt- driven growth, low investment in health and education— contributed to our inability to take essential short- and long-term steps necessary to recalibrate our responses to the pandemic.

In the early days, the decisive action to close our borders was helpful but our government blinked when it realised the economic costs. The need to deal with the pandemic, including the need to protect the health and livelihoods of communities, came to compete with the need to win the parliamentary elections, eventually scheduled for August 2020. It was clear that elections trumped the pandemic. As things transpired, it was a very significant election, indeed.

The elections saw major national parties— the United National Party (UNP) and the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP)—crumble in disarray due to leadership struggles. The struggles within the UNP created the impetus for the hasty emergence of a new-old party, the Samagi Jana Balawegaya (SJB), which rose like the phoenix from the ashes of the UNP, mobilising its constituencies around a historic symbol, a telephone with a dial.

Breaches of health regulations were observed during the election campaigns. Social distancing was cast aside throughout the campaign, and extravagant electoral promises unhinged from political and economic realities continued to be the order of the day. However, the elections themselves, were organised with very credible safety procedures in place, reaffirming the professionalism of the independent constitutional commissions – in particular the role of the election commission.

The elections resulted in the electoral victory of the Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna

(SLPP) under the leadership of Mahinda Rajapaksa. The victory of the SLPP is inevitably viewed from the prism of the immediate past. The electorate had to make its choices in the light of the general failures of the Yahapalana government and the presentation of Gotabaya Rajapaksa as a strong and visionary leader. Most specifically, the Bond Scam, the Easter Sunday bombings and national security issues, the collapse of the economy, the split in the UNP, the broad coalition of SLPP and allied parties mobilising around ethno-nationalist rhetoric, the reaction against minority political parties, increased ethnic polarisation and of course the COVID-19 pandemic set the stage. There was little doubt that the SLPP would win the elections and that the opposition's contestations were largely around the size of the majority.

Despite the advantages of a President and Prime Minister coming from the same political party and compounded by their sibling relationship, the new government invested heavily in passing the 20th Amendment to the Constitution, giving the president the extraordinary powers that were enjoyed by previous presidents prior to the 19th Amendment to the Constitution. We asked then and ask again – What was the need for this, especially as the health crisis continued to loom? With a majority of nearly two-thirds in the government, the President and Parliament could have easily worked together. What was the need to undermine the office of the Prime Minister, minimise the oversight role of Parliament in audits and procurement and in making key appointments to the constitutional bodies?

The 20th Amendment Bill was a window into the soul of a government that signalled its impatience with democratic checks and balances, and the adoption of the Bill was a reflection on the moral fibre of Parliament.

Significantly, the people did not award the SLPP with a two-thirds Parliamentary majority—but Parliament obliged through the crossover of 5 members of the Opposition to the government. This ensured that the government received the two-thirds majority it required to make Parliament irrelevant.

The 20th Amendment to the Constitution was justified as fulfilling the need of a strong mandate to fight the pandemic, take Sri Lanka out of the economic crisis.

Quo Vadis Sri Lanka's Parliament?

Sri Lanka has a strong record of parliamentary democracy and in the past, Parliament attracted candidates of a high intellectual and professional caliber. However, this Parliament, the 16th Parliament established since Sri Lanka gained Independence is now distinguished with the presence of a member, a stalwart of the governing party, who was sentenced to death for murder and held in prison when he took oaths as a Member of Parliament.

Women's representation in Parliament continues to decline despite high levels of women's literacy and women reaching heights in the corporate world, in academia and as professionals in the health sector. For the first time in decades there is no ministry dedicated to Women's Affairs or a woman with cabinet rank dedicated to ensuring the advancement of women.

The lack of basic educational qualifications of many parliamentarians has been discussed publicly and interestingly the Secretary to Parliament declined to release this information on grounds that such information violates the privacy of parliamentarians.

Increasingly the oversight role of Parliament is eroded and diminished, even as far-reaching decisions relating to the country's national debt and foreign policy orientations

are being taken by a ruling coterie within and adjacent to government.

The role of the judiciary was undermined through the establishment of the Presidential Commission of Inquiry to investigate allegations of Political Victimization during the period between 8th January 2015 and ending in November 2019. The liberal exercise of presidential pardons for persons convicted of heinous crimes further compounded this. Given the government's wish to secure foreign investment and establish the country as a dynamic economic hub in the region, its commitments to the principles of the Rule of Law and One Country, One Law - such measures that undermine the judiciary do not augur well.

Challenges facing the country - Rising COVID infections, mounting national debts and fractured communities

Given the many challenges faced by Sri Lanka at this juncture and the impact they will have on the country, the highest priority of the government should be to bring all stakeholders together to make strategic decisions on the basis of consensus. This requires building bridges in Parliament and among the communities. At such critical times, it is necessary to go beyond party affiliations to seek the best professional advice. To date, this has not been the approach.

As of 31 December, a total of 43,289 COVID cases were reported with 7,800 active cases of COVID, and 4 deaths. Fresh waves of COVID infection are anticipated. The mounting public debt remains opaque and our dependence on lenders of first and last resort is worrying saner minds.

The pandemic created opportunities to bring communities together, re-orient strategic developmental priorities, choices and policies and to forge a common national

purpose. Globally investments have been made to find science-based solutions to combat the corona virus with investments in research to develop vaccines.

In the case of Sri Lanka, we have failed to re-orient our strategic developmental priorities, choices and policies and to forge that elusive common national purpose. Many civic groups and individuals have risen to the occasion to support affected free trade zone workers, to call for and fund the repatriation of stranded migrant workers and many other groups who were barely getting by. Many businesses too, have contributed to emergency relief funds and looked at measures to provide some support to workers even as they are hamstrung, being unable to engage in their core businesses.

The crisis has been exploited to create new opportunities for corruption, arbitrary bureaucratic and political controls. The public administration, the bureaucracy and medical professionals have been side lined. There is less communication with the public on matters related to the pandemic and key decisions around the breaking situation. The government, which turned to the military to manage the crisis, now appears more heavily dependent on the military to manage public administration and the economy. The politicisation of key administrative functions has given way into the militarization of these functions, taking Sri Lanka further away from its democratic moorings.

In its haste to spearhead economic development, the government has permitted or turned a blind eye to a host of measures that undermined the countries environmental security. These include indiscriminate sand mining and deforestation which has exacerbated human-elephant conflicts undermining security and livelihoods of farmers.

Sri Lanka faces multiple challenges and failure to support strong democratic leadership (bounded by transparency and oversight) has led to a drift towards arbitrary, opaque and unaccountable leadership. We do, indeed, live in interesting times.

Our work in 2020

Despite the challenges, in the year 2020, the Law and Society Trust provided support for vulnerable communities that did not have access to justice - in fighting for their rights to land, contesting the death penalty or arrests and open-ended detentions under the Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA) and the abuse of the rights of citizens during the pandemic.

We documented the stories of families who suffered the loss of their breadwinners through arbitrary detentions under the PTA and we worked to support and strengthen public administration, especially in their efforts to serve communities struggling to secure their rights to land.

We engaged with communities and supported them to express their needs and claim their rights creating platforms for government and communities to meet and develop programmes for cooperation. We

are part of a coalition of civil society organisations at the regional and national levels and we work collaboratively to support human rights.

We invested in monitoring the impact of the pandemic on the human rights of the community, including the arbitrary use of detention and the failure to support livelihoods, making policy recommendations to increase support for livelihoods.

Looking Ahead

National debates will emerge around the policy choices made for the country at this juncture. The Law and Society Trust will be active in these debates holding fast to the belief that democracy and respect for human rights underpin peace and prosperity. Any other approach will only create a mirage of prosperity.

I would like to thank the Board, our members, donors, partners and my colleagues at LST who have supported me throughout the year and I look forward to their continued support.

Dr. Sakuntala Kadirgamar

Executive Director

Advocating for governance and a pandemic response based on the principles of democracy and human rights

The fabric of Sri Lanka's society has been weakened through accumulated social, economic and political disorders and the pandemic has exposed this vulnerability.

The adverse impact of the pandemic has been greatest on the poor and marginalised communities. They were already on the peripheries of the social, political and economic systems. They have been pushed further. Our economic policy prioritised the creation of cheap and flexible labour and the promotion of export oriented industrial production in place of strengthening rural livelihoods. This has made our entire economy and the majority of our workforce extremely vulnerable to the economic shocks posed by the pandemic.

Our governance policies encouraged tensions and divisions between ethnic and religious groups and have made minorities an easy target for hate speech and discrimination. The democratic system has been battered and this has paved the way for militarisation and authoritarian governance structures. The poor and marginalised are disproportionately affected by not only the pandemic but also by the control measures imposed by the Government.

In the early stages of the pandemic, Government was successful in convincing the majority of the public that their highly centralised and militarised approach was the best way in controlling the pandemic. General elections were held in August 2020, which provided a strong majority for the government yet it fell short of a 2/3 majority in Parliament. However, that was secured

shortly after the elections through cross-overs in Parliament.

As an organisation which believes in democratic systems which protect the rights of every citizen, LST strongly advocates for a pandemic response that is based on the principles of democracy and human rights. Throughout the year 2020, LST tried to engage in public discourses nationally and internationally to highlight how the pandemic and the government response has impacted on the basic rights of citizens, focusing on the poor and marginalised who are continuing to fall through the cracks in the system. Through our writing, public discussions and social media products we raised issues such as burial rights of Muslims, the impact of the pandemic on the lives of informal sector workers, Free Trade Zone workers and the right of people to decent conditions of work and fair wages, and to job security. We called for a review of the structural injustices faced by plantation workers and other ethnic minorities that made them more vulnerable in the context of the pandemic. We also called for a review of the macroeconomic and urban development plans that dispossessed the urban and rural poor from their land and houses.

Even with restrictions imposed during the pandemic, LST tried to provide support for longer-term rights struggles of people. Through research and advocacy, we maintained support for the land rights movements in Sri Lanka, women's struggles against predatory micro credit and indebtedness, civil society interventions

against repressive legal reforms such as Counter Terrorism Act and the Voluntary Social Services organisation Act (VSSO Act) and on the rights of persons arrested under Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA).

While supporting social movements and community groups to advocate for their rights through our research and advocacy support is a key LST's strategy, we also engaged with policy makers and duty bearers, when and where spaces were available, to influence policy and legal reforms. Ongoing dialogues and proposed reforms to the Land Development Ordinance, Land Acquisition Act, Land Use Policy, Micro Credit Regulatory Act, Muslim Marriage and Divorce Act and the withdrawal of Counter Terrorism Act are among the positive engagements and advocacy undertaken by LST.

LST's engagement with Government authorities and officers at the national and local levels has enabled the establishment of more transparent and effective systems of resolving land related conflicts and related issues. Training of local land officers, creating spaces for communities to present their land issues to the authorities, facilitating multi stakeholder platforms to discuss and resolve land issues have collectively contributed towards more than 30,000 families getting their land permits or grants. LST has also empowered local communities and their organisations through legal trainings, creating an awareness of governance structures and participatory governance strategies. This

has enabled them to effectively engage with authorities to ensure that their right to services is properly supported. The creation of networks to support land rights, and citizen's forums are a few examples of these community level organisations at the local level that LST has supported in a variety of ways.

The year 2020 was a challenging year and they will endure in the future too. The pandemic will have a long- term impact that will not be erased quickly. Similarly, the political context, at both the national and international levels, can be unreceptive towards human rights and democracy. But with every challenge there will be new opportunities. We are optimistic about the people's capacities and collective power in challenging unfair and suppressive systems. In 2020, we have seen evidence for this in the farmers' struggles for their right to land, women's struggles against predatory micro credit companies, the efforts of the environmental movement and the continuous efforts of minorities for justice and equality. Lessons learnt in 2020 will help LST to be a stronger ally in people's struggles for equality and justice.

Sandun Thudugala

Director of Programmes

LSTs interconnected work clusters

LST undertook activities to support economic, social and cultural rights and political and governance reforms in Sri Lanka. Many of these activities are interconnected cutting across the spectrum of the economy, the society and politics reaffirming the understanding that there are no clear demarcations between indivisible human rights.

Law and Governance

Advocating for policy and legal reforms

Critiquing laws from a democracy perspective

LST analysed the impact of the 20th Amendment to the Constitution on parliamentary democracy and developed tools for civic education around the topic.

Submissions to Expert Committee on Constitutional reforms

In September 2020, an expert committee was established to provide recommendations for constitutional reforms. LST was part of a network of CSOs that discussed the opportunity to provide input to the process. LST provided submissions to the committee on 20 December 2020 and supported other CSOs in drafting their submissions as well.

LST's submissions can be accessed on the website:

https://www.lstlanka.org/images/pdf/2021/LST_constitution_submissions.pdf

Law and Society

Creating awareness, influencing public discourse on critical social, political and economic issues

Legal support for Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA) victims

LST initiated a programme to provide legal support for suspects who were arrested under emergency regulations and PTA after the Easter Sunday attacks in 2019. This initiative was launched in collaboration with other human rights organisations and

lawyers. LST facilitated legal support for 20 cases. 7 out of those 20 cases were discharged and 13 cases are on-going. Of these cases, Law and Society Trust (LST) represents 19 suspects involved in 4 cases and the rest are handled by external lawyers. All of the 19 cases have been filed under the PTA. Since most often applications to enlarge bail have been rejected on the grounds that the court has no jurisdiction to grant bail without the direction from the Attorney General's (AG) department, moving forward, LST made representations to the AG for every case in which LST appeared. LST filed a Fundamental Rights (FR) petition in the Supreme Court in regards to the arrest of a suspect under the PTA.

Stemming from its engagements with persons victimised by the PTA, LST undertook a research study to highlight the socio-economic impacts faced by the families of those arrested and detained under the Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA). The PTA has predominately targeted men belonging to ethnic and religious minorities (Tamils and Muslims), and their arrests leave the women and families vulnerable. The women have to bear the brunt of the socio-economic impact of these arrests.

Women are left to care for the elderly and their children, and generate an income in order to survive. They also have to liaise with lawyers and visit the arrested men. An increase in poverty levels and indebtedness is an additional consequence of the arbitrary arrest and detention of primary income earners. Thus, this indirectly places an additional burden on the State. Further, as society tends to buy into the government narrative and stigmatise such families as “terrorist families”, these families also face “guilt by association”, suffering social ostracism and psychological trauma.

This study focused on the families of Muslim detainees in the immediate aftermath of the Easter Sunday Attacks of 21st April, 2019 and it culminated in a report **PTA: Terrorising Sri Lanka for 42 years.**

Stories of roots and return: 30 years since the expulsion of the Northern Muslims

The experiences of the Northern Muslims and their expulsion from Jaffna in 1990 by the LTTE was memorialised 30 years later through this work. It includes a collection of narratives, seeking to capture the current lived realities of women from the communities of Muslims evicted from the Northern Province.

Several members of the community noted that the story of the Northern Muslims seems to be forgotten in political and social spaces, with few media or civil society groups engaging with their plight. This work was undertaken primarily to place on record the struggles this community has experienced, and continues to experience, thirty years after the eviction.

The voices presented here are from a number of conversations with communities, primarily with groups of women, held in early 2020 in Puttalam, Mannar, Jaffna and Negombo. The conversations captured the complexities of the choice and the process of return, showing them as anything but linear or simple. Those returning addressed the political and administrative roadblocks they have faced, and their relationships with the Tamil community around them. Those still living where they were displaced spoke of the challenges with the communities around them, and finding ‘home’ in more than one place. Names have been withheld to ensure privacy and safety. This study culminated in a report **Stories of roots and return.**

Community empowerment and the protection of rights

Youth for Inclusive Development in South Asia (YIELD)

Youth Civic Engagement in minority and marginalised communities

LST, in partnership with Misaal Foundation in India and Bandhu Social Welfare Society in Bangladesh, worked on a multi-country action research to develop tools to empower and engage youth from Muslim minority communities in India and LGBT+ communities in Bangladesh in civic engagement. In India, youth groups work with communities on furthering access to entitlements, education and livelihood development. In Bangladesh peer education is used to engage with LGBT+ youth. The YIELD project invested in the youth 'Changemakers' and by tracking their experiences, learned lessons on the challenges faced by these communities, the strategies that worked, and the initiatives and support required to empower them in meaningful ways.

After two years of rigorous capacity building, we saw how the Changemakers utilised the skills they learnt to support and empower their communities, signifying the development of organic leadership through YIELD.

The project came to an end in July 2020 and the final research report of the project outlining the lessons on youth civic engagement was presented to the communities.

Training for women activists

With the support of We Effect, LST in partnership with Savistri women's movement trained 200 women activists over the last two years (2019-20) to take on

leadership roles in their communities. These women lead community struggles to protect their rights (e.g., women's actions against predatory micro credit systems, land rights struggles, women farmers who develop alternative food systems, leaders of local women's organisations and women political leaders in local government authorities). The objective of this training programme is to develop their leadership at national level and to support them to develop their actions with a feminist perspective.

A detailed and longer-term training programme was developed in 2020 and a first round of the training programme was conducted in September 2020 for 40 women leaders.

As part of the capacity development training, these women leaders are supported to identify key rights issues faced by women in their areas and to develop their own action plans to address the rights violations. Currently these leaders identified strategic actions to resolve issues related to indebtedness, micro credit, land, marketing of agriculture products and access to basic services. Savistri and LST will continuously support the women to implement these action plans.

Protecting civil society in shrinking civic spaces

LST as a partner within the South Asia Collective (SAC), and the SAC collaborated with the Minority Rights Group (MRG) to conduct research on the state of minorities in South Asia.

In March 2020, LST convened the launch of the 2019 report South Asia State of Minorities Report 2019: Migrants, Refugees and the Stateless. This was the last public event that was held before the pandemic closed borders.

In 2020, The partnership included collaboration on the publication, The State

of Minorities Report 2020: Minorities and Shrinking Civic Space, the publication of quarterly bulletins on the state of minorities throughout the year and supporting SACs national allocations to CSOs through a small grants program. The National Christian Evangelical Alliance (NCEASL) was the recipient of the 2020 grant in Sri Lanka and published a report **Using the law properly to deal with COVID-19** and LST supported NCEASL in this endeavour by reviewing the report.

The publications are accessed at:

<https://thesouthasiacollective.org/annual-reports/>

<https://thesouthasiacollective.org/bulletins/>

Addressing gender discriminatory social norms and practices in the Northern Province of Sri Lanka

LST initiated a new research project with Chrysalis in 2020 on addressing gender discriminatory social norms and practices in the Northern Province of Sri Lanka. This participatory action research is called TRANSFORM and will be implemented with 50 women leaders selected from the Northern province and consequently will contribute to developing the capacities of other women leaders in addressing the violations of their rights.

Civic spaces and human rights during pandemic

During the pandemic, LST paid special attention towards the protection of civil society space and fundamental human rights. As the government's response to the pandemic was largely centralised and militarised there were real dangers that the human rights of the people would be overlooked and even violated during the pandemic.

In this context, LST wrote a series of think-pieces to create a discourse on the importance of protecting human rights during the pandemic. LST used its blog and social media platforms to critique the methods taken by the Sri Lankan government to contain the COVID-19 pandemic, highlighting its short-term and long-term impact on vulnerable communities.

The social media discourses challenged the political direction and governance of the state that did not focus on uniting the nation (Independence Day celebrations: Looking back and Looking forward), prioritised strong leadership over democratic leadership (Can We the People have a common understanding of what a strong executive and a strong government look like?; Will Parliament willingly kill democracy in Sri Lanka and itself in the process?) and its instrumental approach to constitution-making (Constitution-making – here we go again!).

The social media discourse also shone a light on the policy choices made (The pandemic as the prism through which we view our priorities, priorities in the pandemic, and Human rights in the time of Corona) and the misery experienced by workers and the marginalised communities during the pandemic (Current situation in Sri Lanka's Free Trade Zones, The worker in the post-COVID 19 economy and the Garment Sector and State Responsibility in an Economic Crisis). LST also produced a series of 8 videos with support from various partners and experts, on the impacts of the pandemic various groups of vulnerable people in Sri Lanka. The series featured content in all three languages.

The social media platform also focused on the still to be resolved “National Question” in its review of the violence and displacement experienced by minority communities in Sri Lanka (Kandy: What lingers, two years on, and 1990 – 2020: Thirty years of displacement at Neethavan IDP camp) and also highlighted the struggles of the Palestinian people for their human rights – a matter that is a global responsibility.

Law and Economy

Advocating for the rights of women workers, the landless and for an equitable land policy

Advocating for the rights of women garment factory workers during COVID pandemic

LST worked with Trade Unions and CSOs working with women garment factory workers in Free Trade Zones to advocate for their rights during the COVID pandemic. Women workers (especially those recruited by manpower agencies and referred to as “manpower workers”) were among the worst affected. They suffered as a result of the pandemic and also through the control measures imposed by the Government, the military and factory owners. LST has worked with 5 women-led workers’ organisations in the Free Trade Zones (FTZs) and supported them to form a collective network to protect their socio-economic rights.

LST supported this network to compile regular situation updates, develop policy briefs and gather information to enable their effective engagement with the Government, Board of Investment, brands and other national and international stakeholders.

LST also conducted research through surveys and stakeholder and key informant interviews (this included factory owners, unions, and hostel owners) on the issues related to the wages and living conditions of workers. The objective was to frame policy recommendations and advocacy strategies on workers’ rights.

Advocating for Land rights

LST worked with the People’s Alliance for Right to Land (PARL) to draft a people’s land policy. A People’s Land Commission (PLC) was appointed. The PLC met with 786 people in 15 districts to receive their views and their proposals for a people’s land policy.

‘Our Land, Our Life’, final report of the People’s Land Commission was launched on 31st of March 2020. This report is a result of the hearings with almost 850 women and men. The hearings were taken at protest sites and included the views of the landless and displaced communities - those who have been evicted and/or relocated and areas where development and urban regeneration projects are ongoing or are being planned. Recommendations in this report include various policy reforms as well as reforms to the institutions managing evictions and relocations and the procedures adopted. The recommendations in the report are driven by affected communities themselves. The report is designed to foster more meaningful and sustained discussions on land and land administration reform.

Coordinator of the People’s Alliance for Right to Land (PARL)

LST was the coordinator for PARL for year 2019/20 and ensured the implementation of the PARL strategic plan during the year.

Strengthening provincial level PARL networks was a key priority in the PARL strategy and with LST's support, Provincial PARL networks in the Northern, Eastern, North Central, Central and Uva Provinces were established. Currently 72 CSOs and community organisations are part of these 5 networks. Provincial networks developed their action plans to address key issues that challenged their land rights in their provinces. These key issues included: the continuous militarisation of land development in the North and East, development induced displacements of communities, occupation of land by forest, wildlife and archeological departments, the failure to recognise the land rights of plantation communities, the struggles of the landless and the corruption of government authorities.

These regional networks provided a platform for disparate communities with similar land struggles within the province to meet each other, discuss their struggles and learn from each other's struggles.

PARL also provided capacity building and training programmes for these provincial network members upon their request. For instance, the Northern regional network requested a training on the Right to Information Act and upon a request by PARL, Transparency International Sri Lanka (TISL) conducted a RTI training and a legal advice clinic for Northern Province members in January. A similar training was planned for Uva regional network in mid-May, but was postponed due to the COVID-19 concerns.

Training programmes on land law were conducted for members of Central and North Central network members.

Provincial networks were capacitated to develop petitions raising key land rights issues in their respective provinces and engage with the Director General of the

Department of Land Commissioner General. Land Commissioner General's Department established protocols for quarterly meetings with CSOs at provincial and national level to discuss their issues and to find solutions.

Responding to community concerns regarding digital security, a digital security training was held in July for members from the North regional network who are tech-savvy and use social media.

LST supported Yan Oya (Anuradhpura District) community members who are also members of the North Central Province Network to file fundamental rights cases against their rights violations in the Yaanoya multipurpose project. 7 fundamental rights cases were filled in July 2020.

Website and online land dispute database

PARL launched its website and online land dispute database (<http://www.parlsl.com>) in January 2020.

This is the first online database launched in Sri Lanka on the incidents of land grabbing and other land rights violations.

The online database documents the current situation of around 85 land rights violation cases in Sri Lanka. Approximately 25 PARL activists were trained as information providers to make inputs for the database.

Land Rights training for Government officers and community activists

In 2019 / 2020 LST conducted training programs for community leaders, government officials and local lawyers in Muttur, Lahugala, Manthei, Thunukkai,

Training programmes were conducted in collaboration with Land Commissioner and Provincial Land Commissioners of the Northern, Eastern, North-Western and North Central provinces.

The trainings were around:

- Legal issues and challenges faced by communities for land ownership under Land Development Ordinance and divisional secretariats
- Land acquisition for special development projects
- Legal provisions in relation to privately owned land, and the roles and responsibilities of Notaries in executing LDO and private deeds
- Legal provisions relating to lagoon and coastal conservation
- Delegation of Powers to Land Commissioner under the 13th Amendment
- Process of issuing land permits and grants
- Issues faced by the recently resettled communities

Following LST's community outreach, Provincial Land Commissioners and Divisional Secretariats in 3 provinces started their own initiative of conducting village level community awareness raising programmes. These training programmes provided community members as well as the government officers with the necessary knowledge to resolve land issues in their areas.

Almost all the government officers who participated in the programme noted that they improved their knowledge of the legal framework and on land-related circulars and this helped increase their efficiency in addressing the issues concerning the people.

The trainings for land officers, the creation of spaces for communities to present their land issues to the authorities, the facilitation multi stakeholder platforms to discuss and resolve land issues have made a positive contribution. The trainings have increased understanding and knowledge among local communities and local authorities of the many land-related challenges facing communities. As a result of LST's

interventions in 2019 / 2020, 11004 families qualified for land permits (with 2958 families coming from the North-Western Province, 921 from the Northern Province and 7125 from the Eastern Province) and 10727 qualified for land grants (with 650 coming from the North Western Province, 3557 from the Northern Province and 6520 from the Eastern Province). Most of these people have been living and cultivating these lands for generations and at last they are getting legal titles to these lands.

LST worked with Provincial Land Commissioners to introduce four levels of conflict resolution platforms to resolve land issues at local level:

✚ **Village level case conferences** are the first level for conflict resolution, where land officers meet with the respective Grama Niladhari and community members who have land issues and present their issues to land officers during these case conferences. Issues that cannot be resolved at community level will be taken to the next level. During 2020, as a result of LST's support, 16 village level case conferences were held, 216 issues were raised and 43 issues were resolved.

✚ **Divisional level case conferences** are the second level for conflict resolution where all relevant Government officers at Divisional level (Provincial Land Commissioners, Divisional Secretary, local level land officers, Grama Niladharies, Police officers, Forest and Wildlife Conservation Department officers etc.) meet with community members to resolve issues. During 2020 LST organized 3 case conferences in Cheddikulam, Manthei and Lahugala and 107 issues out of 143 issues were resolved.

✚ **District level case conferences** are the third level for conflict resolution. The District Secretary chairs the meeting and he/she invites other relevant officers such as land, environment, forest, land use planning divisions, respective Divisional Secretaries, Police, Army etc. to participate. Divisional Secretaries present the issues on behalf of

community and what they cannot solve is addressed at the divisional level case conference. During the period, 36 issues have been presented and 27 were solved.

✚ **Provincial level case conferences** are the fourth level of conflict resolution. They are chaired by the Provincial Land Commissioner. The Provincial level being the higher-level entity among the decision-making bodies, these conferences are attended by the Divisional Secretary who presents the issues on behalf of community at the meeting. During this period, 9 issues were presented for resolution.

Archeological conservation and community land rights

Demarcation of land as archeological reserves, especially in the Northern and Eastern Provinces in Sri Lanka has been a controversial subject for years. The People's Land Commission convened by PARL met several communities in the Northern, North central and Eastern provinces to hear their land related grievances. The local communities believed that the Government is using archeology as the reason to deny the minorities their rightful ownership to their land as the overwhelming majority of these archeological conserves are being newly demarcated as Buddhist historical sites.

PARL addressed the threats and concerns related to the establishment of this task force in a brief commentary available at: <https://bit.ly/2NzJhCR>

National Land Use Policy

The Department of Land Use Policy Planning began drafting a new Land Use Policy for Sri Lanka in 2018/19. In 2020 LST coordinated consultations at the district and national level to ensure that the views of the community and CSOs were incorporated

in the draft. LST also engaged with the Department to ensure the policy is based on principles that support the sustainable and equitable use of land.

Micro credit and indebtedness

LST supported a number of community organisations that formed themselves as the Collective of Victims of Predatory Micro Financing to draft a set of proposals to resolve micro credit crises. These proposals were presented to the President, State Minister of Micro Finance and to the Central Bank officials. On 27th February 2020, more than 700 women gathered in Colombo as part of a campaign advocating that the President and the Government of Sri Lanka write-off the unjust micro credit loans as promised by the President during the election campaign. Members of Women's Economic Forum established by LST and Savistri led this initiative. Participants conducted a silent protest in front of the Presidential office and a delegation of the participants were provided the opportunity to meet with the Secretary to the President to present their concerns.

Support for women farmers

Women play a pivotal role in Sri Lanka's agriculture sector although their contribution is neither recognised nor reflected in national policy frameworks. However, women farmers globally, with Sri Lanka being no exception, face numerous obstacles that hinder or prevent them from using their full potential to strengthen food systems and uphold security in their families, communities and countries. LST undertook a study on the plight of women farmers, identifying the key barriers they faced and made practical recommendations for policy makers to recognise the pivotal contributions made by women farmers and to address gender disparities.

In 2020, LST launched a new policy brief which focused on women farmers in Sri Lanka, the challenges they face and the reforms required to support them. This policy brief was used for training programmes of local authority members in Badulla Pradeshya Sabha, Ampara Urban council and Thirukkivil Pradeshya Sabha to discuss how local authorities can increase their resource allocations to support women farmers.

LST completed a series of public consultations (during 2019) with communities working with We Effect partners in 18 districts. The focus of the consultations was to identify the different rural development models adopted by Government and other stakeholders (including We Effect partners) and to identify the successes and challenges in these models. The final report of these consultations was launched in October 2020.

Turning Points in Sri Lanka's land policy - MCC and its predecessors

LST supported the People's Alliance for the Right to Land (PARL) through a seminal study of policies on land in Sri Lanka over time.

This study charted pivotal state policies on land in Sri Lanka and discusses the politics and the philosophies that underpin them. It focuses on changes in land policy during the colonial period in light of land use patterns of the colonial administration. The study also discusses the shift in land policy during the post-colonial period particularly in the context of major irrigation and agricultural schemes. The study also focuses on the recent approach of the state to land, in light of controversial agreements such as the Millennium Challenge Corporate (MCC) compact. This study takes

the 2018 National Budget, particularly its propositions to loosen regulation over land in Sri Lanka, as a point of departure, as it marks the most recent attempt to 'neoliberalise' the way we think about land in Sri Lanka.

The study addresses the cumulative effects of the proposed reforms in Land (Restrictions and Alienation) Act, No. 38 of 2014, Rent Act, No. 7 of 1972, Paddy Land Act, No. 01 of 1958 and the Agricultural Lands Act, No. 42 of 1973. The study points to a specific political economy, 'naturalizing' neoliberal ideas as the guiding principles of the Sri Lankan state and economic organization. The study argues that neoliberal ideas have inveigled into policy and law-making on land over the past four decades, not as a "neoliberal takeover", but as a logic of governing that is selectively taken up in diverse political economic contingencies. Using primarily archival methods, the study positions land policy within the national and global political economic assemblage.

Land Acquisitions for a Public Purpose in Post-War Sri Lanka

LST studied the land acquisition process and makes a case for strengthening processes, laws and safeguards within it. The study advocates for a nuanced approach to land acquisition that takes into consideration the existing land use, the social and economic implications of the land acquisition on the affected and the need to work together with the various state actors involved to ensure that those who give up their land for 'a public purpose' are not left worse off. This report also questions the sweeping powers of the State in acquiring land for a 'public purpose' when the said purpose ends up being one that does not benefit the public at large.

Publications

In 2020 LST published books, and reports in three languages and was active in reaching out to a wider audience through press statements and social media. LST has also reactivated its blog and developed several videos on important themes and also records the proceedings of seminars and citizen's dialogues and uploads it on the web to reach wider audiences.

LST has also collaborated with partners to publish reports and books.

Reports

PTA: Terrorising Sri Lanka for 42 years

https://lstlanka.org/images/publications/reports/2020/PTA_Terrorising-Sri-Lanka-for-42-years-English.pdf

Start Calling them Farmers: Five key barriers deterring the potential of women farmers in Sri Lanka. Targeted practical recommendations to address existing gender disparities

https://lstlanka.org/images/publications/annual_reports/Start-calling-them-farmers_English.pdf

Turning Points in Sri Lanka's land policy - MCC and its predecessors

<https://www.lstlanka.org/publications/reports/turning-points-in-sri-lanka-s-land-policy-mcc-and-its-predecessors>

Our land our life: People's land commission report 2019-2024

https://lstlanka.org/images/publications/annual_reports/Turning-points-in-Sri-Lanka-Land-Policy_English.pdf

Land Acquisitions for a Public Purpose in Post-War Sri Lanka

<https://www.lstlanka.org/publications/reports/land-acquisitions-for-a-public-purpose-in-post-war-sri-lanka>

Let's think about 20A

<https://www.lstlanka.org/publications/reports/let-s-think-about-20a>

Stories of roots and return: 30 years since the expulsion of the Northern Muslims

https://lstlanka.org/images/publications/annual_reports/Stories_of_roots_and_return_english.pdf

Collaborative publications

South Asia State of Minorities Report 2019 Migrants, Refugees and the Stateless

<https://minorityrights.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/SA-State-of-Minorities-2019.pdf>

South Asia State of Minorities Report 2020 Minorities and Shrinking Civic Space

<https://thesouthasiacollective.org/annual-reports/>

Communications

Video features

After COVID – Reimagining Lanka

This series, bringing together the voices of activists and academics working across various fields in Sri Lanka, showcased their opinions on how the country could look forward while responding to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The videos gained more than 6000 views on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/watch/668409573221694/592688878325760>

They also gained more than 500 views on YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZQUKy6hQjK4&list=PLoQm3M8QcdJDgvNxmpmbhEn85M2pCHBmd>

Local governance

Lessons learned and awareness created at various trainings with local government and administrative officials gained 300 views on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/watch/668409573221694/4155698897844361>

Northern Muslims – report trailer

Prior to the launch of a new report, this video on the displacement of the Northern Muslims gained 200 views on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/668409573221694/videos/838603163617228>

Webinars

With events and discussions moving online due to the pandemic, LST hosted and participated in various webinars to discuss key issues.

Impact of COVID on women farmers – Webinar hosted by LST

50 people participated on Zoom and it gained 250 views on Facebook:

https://www.facebook.com/watch/live/?v=369669227652724&ref=watch_permalink

Human rights situation in South Asia –

Hosted by the People's Coalition on Food Sovereignty

Natasha Vanhoff of PARL presented on current land rights issues and challenges at this webinar:

https://www.facebook.com/watch/live/?v=398211508032545&ref=watch_permalink

What Happened Since 1990? – Hosted by the Sisterhood Initiative

Natasha Vanhoff and Amalini De Sayrah, who authored a report marking 30 years since the displacement of the Northern Muslims, presented research findings at this webinar:

https://www.facebook.com/watch/live/?v=1219025785158091&ref=watch_permalink

Do we need authoritarianism? – Video series by the International Centre for Ethnic Studies

Sandun Thudugala explained the political and governance needs and challenges in this clip:

https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=130598178827964&id=106136311274151&sfnsn=wa

Chapter III – LST’s blog

Throughout the year, researchers at LST regularly contributed to the blog with articles on topics of significance in their work and responding to the breaking situation.

Independence Day celebrations: Looking back and looking forward – Sakuntala Kadirgamar

<https://lawandsocietytrust.blogspot.com/2020/02/independence-day-celebrations-looking.html>

5 years since the Cabinet decision to bring justice to the people of Panama – Sandun Thudugala

<https://lawandsocietytrust.blogspot.com/2020/02/5.html>

Kandy: What lingers, two years on – Megara Tegal

<https://lawandsocietytrust.blogspot.com/2020/03/kandy-what-lingers-two-years-on.html>

1990 – 2020: Thirty years of displacement at Neethavan IDP camp – Natasha Vanhoff and Amalini De Sayrah

<https://lawandsocietytrust.blogspot.com/2020/03/1990-2020-thirty-years-of-displacement.html>

Human rights in the time of Corona – Sakuntala Kadirgamar

<https://lawandsocietytrust.blogspot.com/2020/03/human-rights-in-time-of-corona.html>

Priorities in a pandemic – Sandun Thudugala

<https://lawandsocietytrust.blogspot.com/2020/03/yhousands-of-garment-workers-were.html>

Current situation in Sri Lanka’s Free Trade Zones – Natasha Vanhoff

<https://lawandsocietytrust.blogspot.com/2020/04/current-situation-in-sri-lankas-free.html>

The worker in the post-COVID 19 economy – Vidura Munasinghe

English -
<https://lawandsocietytrust.blogspot.com/2020/05/the-worker-in-post-covid-19-economy.html>

Sinhala -
<https://lawandsocietytrust.blogspot.com/2020/05/19.html>

Garment sector and state responsibility – Vidura Munasinghe

English –
<https://lawandsocietytrust.blogspot.com/2020/05/garment-sector-and-state-responsibility.html>

Sinhala –
<https://lawandsocietytrust.blogspot.com/2020/07/blog-post.html>

Can We the People have a common understanding of what a strong executive and a strong government look like? – Sakuntala Kadirgamar

English –
<https://lawandsocietytrust.blogspot.com/2020/07/can-we-people-have-common-understanding.html>

Sinhala –
https://lawandsocietytrust.blogspot.com/2020/07/blog-post_31.html

Tamil –
<https://lawandsocietytrust.blogspot.com/2020/08/blog-post.html>

2/3rd Parliamentary majority, people’s sovereignty and the MCC – Vidura Munasinghe

English -
<https://lawandsocietytrust.blogspot.com/2020/09/the-general-elections-and-supra.html>

Sinhala -
<https://lawandsocietytrust.blogspot.com/2020/09/23-mcc.html>

Will Parliament willingly kill democracy in Sri Lanka and itself in the process? – Sakuntala Kadirgamar

English -
<https://lawandsocietytrust.blogspot.com/2020/09/will-parliament-willingly-kill.html>

Sinhala -
<https://lawandsocietytrust.blogspot.com/2020/09/blog-post.html>

Tamil -
https://lawandsocietytrust.blogspot.com/2020/09/blog-post_24.html

Constitution-making – here we go again! – Sakuntala Kadirgamar

<https://lawandsocietytrust.blogspot.com/2020/10/constitution-making-here-we-go-again.html>

The tragedy of livelihood loss for rural people – Malinga Jayathilaka -
<https://lawandsocietytrust.blogspot.com/2020/11/blog-post.html>

The pandemic as a prism through which we view our priorities – Sakuntala Kadirgamar

<https://lawandsocietytrust.blogspot.com/2020/12/the-pandemic-as-prism-through-which-we.html>

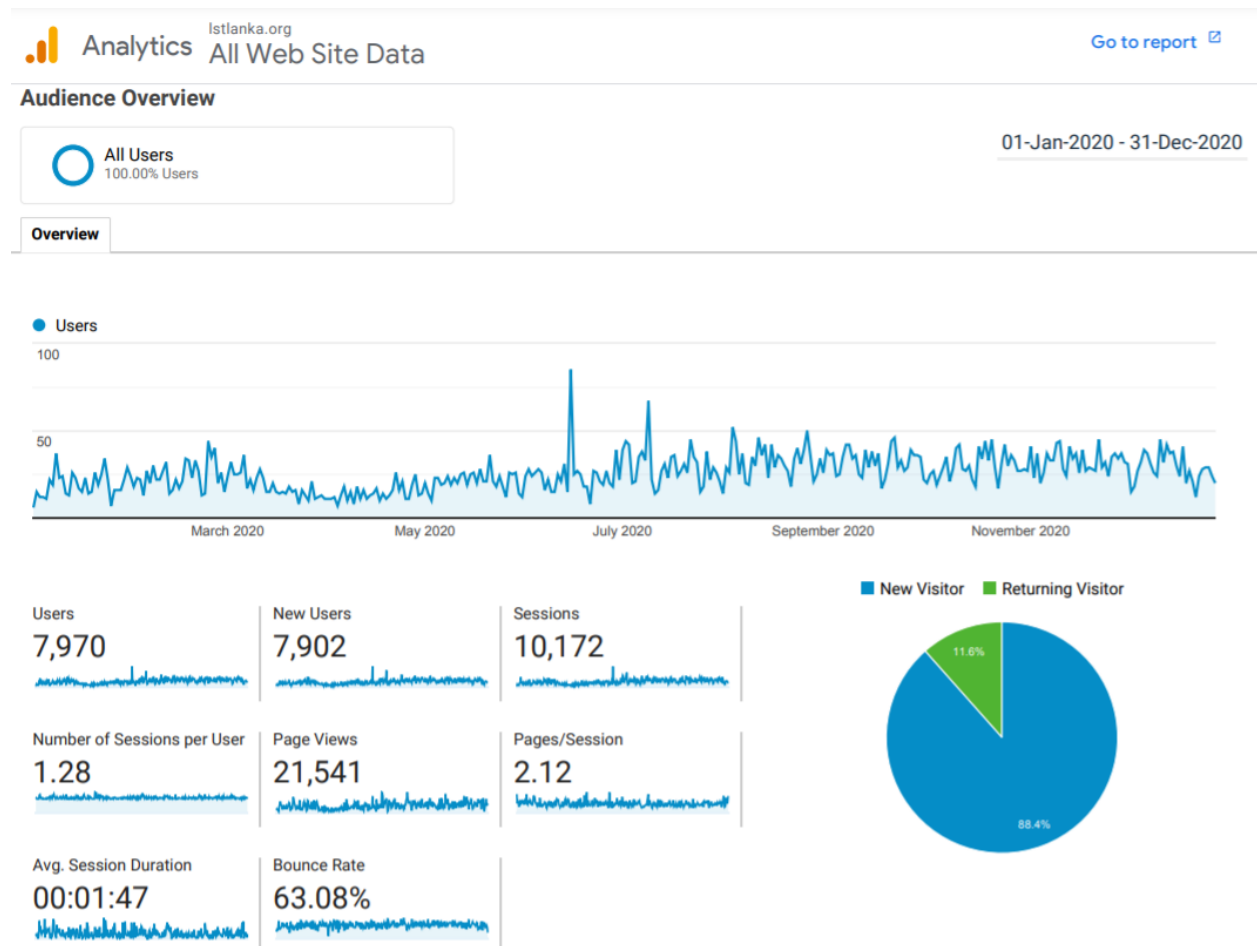
Opinion columns in local newspapers

The DailyFT ran several op-eds by LST's Executive Director and researchers during the year.

Website

LST's main website – www.lstlanka.org – is a repository of its key publications, and of publications from its archives as well.

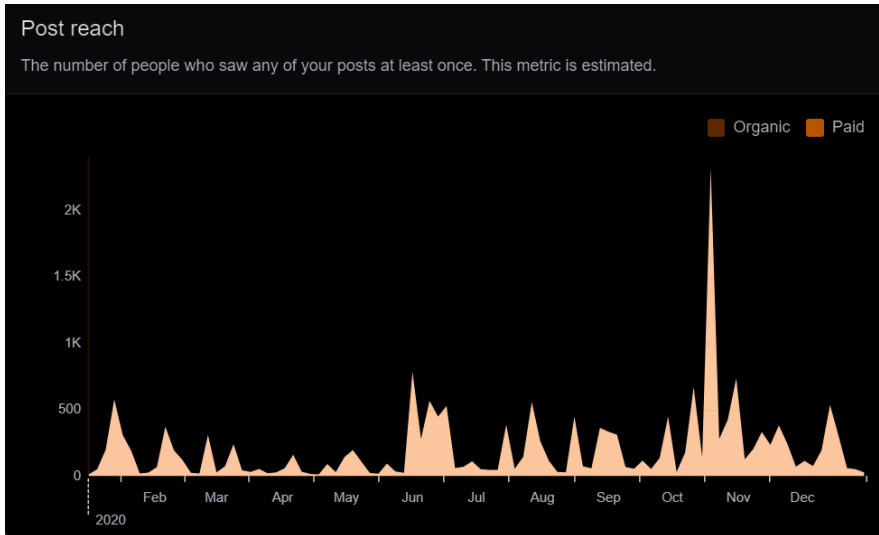
The statistics indicate that of the visitors to the site last year, a majority were new visitors, or those who had not visited the site before.



Social media

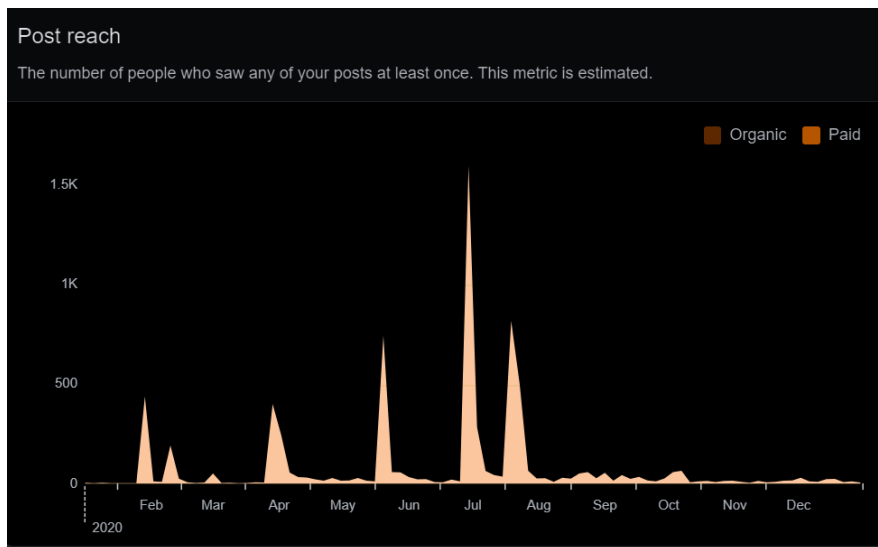
LST's Facebook page

Posts from this page reached more than 7,000 viewers in the year 2020.



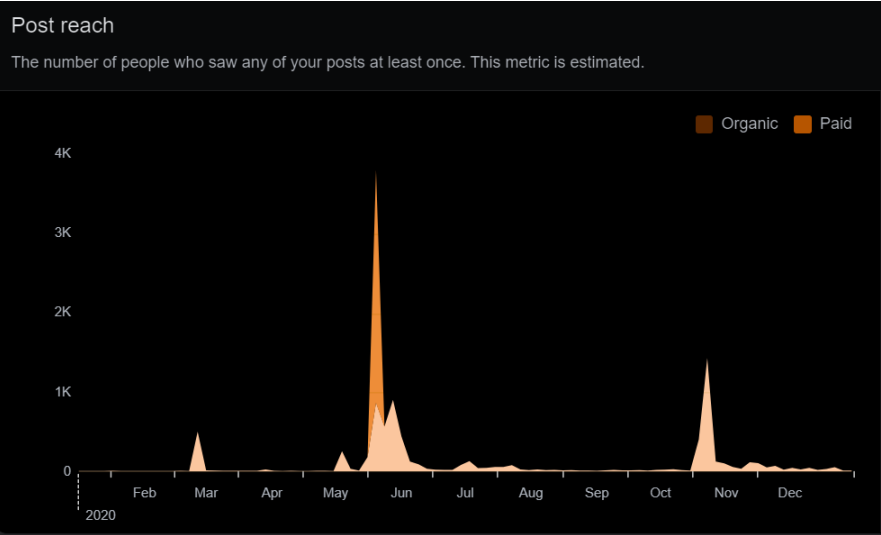
PARL Facebook page

Posts from this page reached close to 5,000 viewers in the year 2020.



Citizens' Dialogue Facebook page

The posts on this page reached more than 6,000 viewers in the year 2020.



LST in the media

Press statements

In 2020 LST has published press statement on matters of significance impacting human rights and the rule of law and the independence of the judiciary and the freedom of expression. These include statements on:

Women's political participation in Sri Lanka's 2020 Parliamentary Election
6 March 2020

Proposals to ensure employee rights and wellbeing within the COVID 19 pandemic situation and recovery process
27 April 2020

Civil Society Statement on the Presidential Task Forces
15 June 2020

Presidential Task Force for Archaeological Heritage Management in the Eastern Province
2 July 2020

LST Submissions on the proposed constitution
December 2020

Library

In 2019, the library reference collection stood at 9343 books.

LST subscribed to new digital libraries, JSTOR and Law Lanka to support research. In addition, the library updated

classification of the reference collection as well as scanned and uploaded old publications, including the LST Review, to the website. Due to the pandemic, the library was not opened to the public for the greater part of 2020.

Donors and Partners

LST was privileged to receive programme and long-term support from donors and partners committed to our values and objectives.

International Donors

Diakonia
WE Effect
AJWS (American Jewish World Service)
CAFOD (Catholic Agency for Overseas Development)
European Union
Ford Foundation
IDEA-MSI (IDEA- Increased Demand and Engagement for Accountability) - (MSI - Systems International)
IDRC (International Development Research Centre)
NED (National Endowment for Democracy)
Open Society Foundation

National Donors

Neelan Tiruchelvam Trust

International Partners

Business and Human Rights Resource Centre

FORUM-ASIA
Minority Rights Group
South Asia Collective
ESCR-Net

International Research Partners

University of Edinburgh
Goldsmith College, University of London
University of Warwick

National Partners

People's Alliance for Right to Land
Sri Lanka Coalition against Torture
March 12 Movement
Chrysalis
Savistri Women's Movement
National Fisheries Solidarity Movement (NAFSO)
Centre for Society and Religion (CSR)

Organisational updates

Recognising that 2020 was an appropriate juncture to revisit our strategic plan for 2020-2025, we commenced reflections on a new strategic plan that will guide our work beyond 2020. Our strategy is closely aligned to the Sustainable Development Goals that successive governments in Sri Lanka and around the world have adopted.

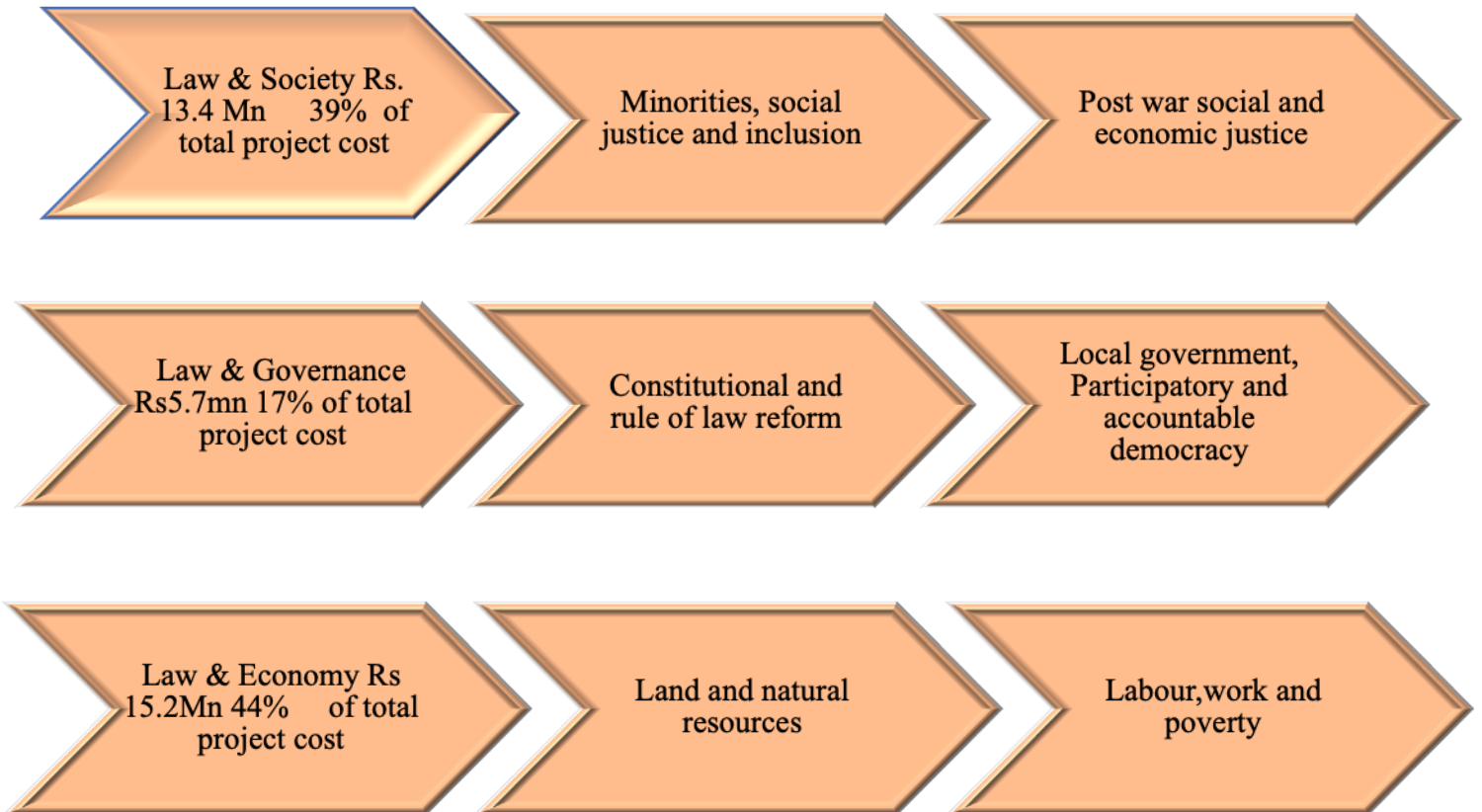
In 2020 LST finalized its new strategic plan for 2020-2025 with the support of Strategic Inspirations.

In 2020 the organisation undertook a major review of its human resource policies and rationalised its compensation packages.

With the support of The Employer's Federation, LST undertook a review of its Human Resource policies and updated them.

Financial Highlights

2020 Performance vis-à-vis Strategic Plan Implementation



Financial performance

*Amounts shown in Rupees Thousands

	2018	Percentage increase / (decrease) year on year	2019	Percentage increase / (decrease) year on year	2020	Percentage increase / (decrease) year on year	
Income							
Grant Income	60,614	45%	77,645	28%	54,512	-30%	ⁱ 30%
Publication Income	213	(-11%)	65	(-69%)	26	-60%	ⁱⁱ 60%
Interest Income	4,825	7%	5,052	5%	4,165	-18%	ⁱⁱⁱ 18%

	2018	Percentage increase / (decrease) year on year	2019	Percentage increase / (decrease) year on year	2020	Percentage increase / (decrease) year on year	
Net Surplus/(Deficit)	5,756	3195%	(1,741)	(-130%)	(2,423)	-39%	^{iv} 39%
Total Assets	104,869	13%	108,648	4%	109,854	1%	

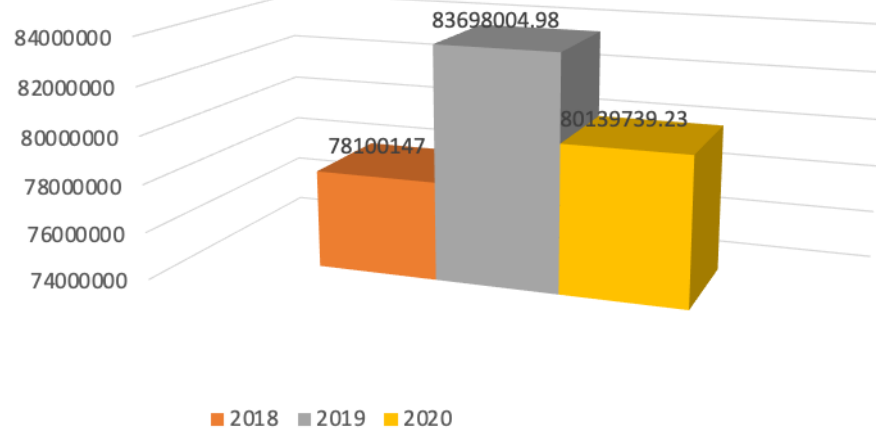
ⁱ 30% Reduction in 2020, Project implementation reduced in year 2020, due to COVID Pandemic.

ⁱⁱ Publication income has decreased by 60% due to the reduction of book sales in year of 2020 due to COVID pandemic.

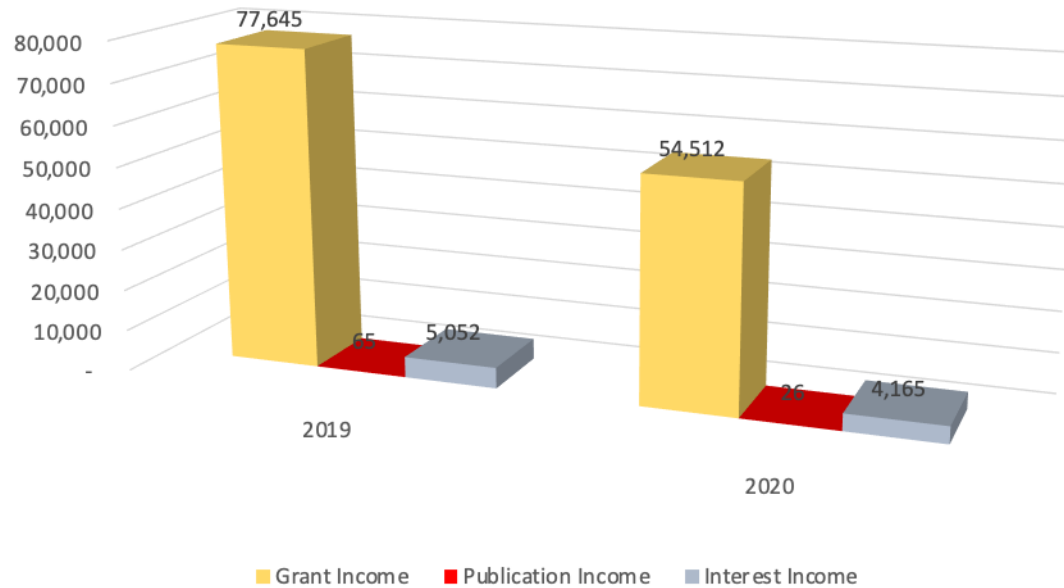
ⁱⁱⁱ Interest income has decreased by 18%. due to interest rates fluctuation.

^{iv} 39% Net Deficit in 2020, 4 major projects started and most of the project activities were carried out during the year 2019 and remaining activity done in 2020 year. With the COVID Pandemic there were delays in starting the new project cycle during 2020 Year.

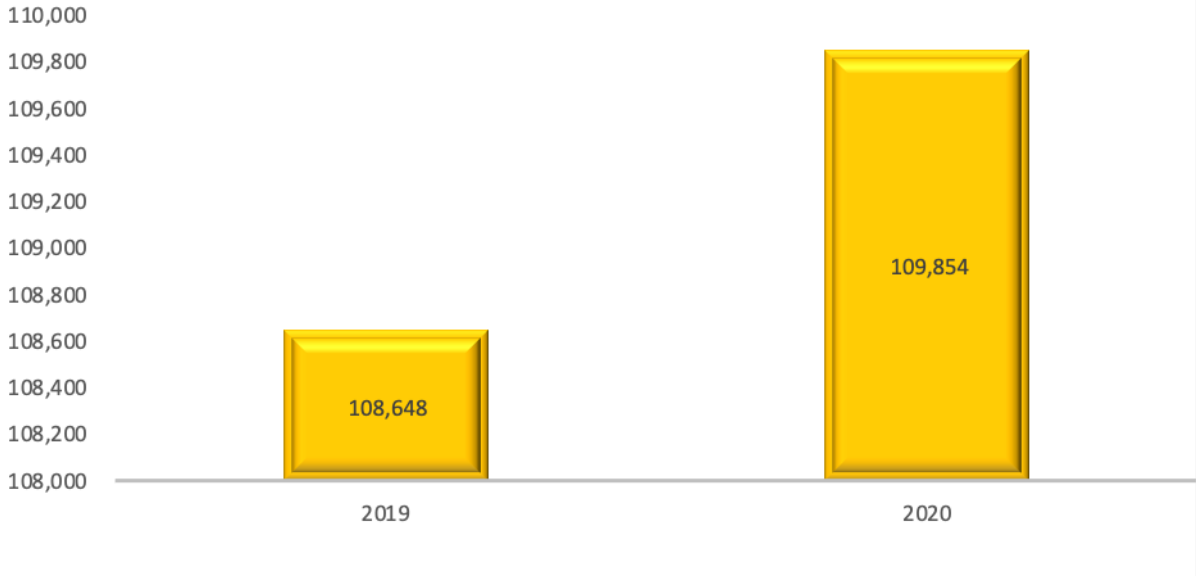
Short Term Investments

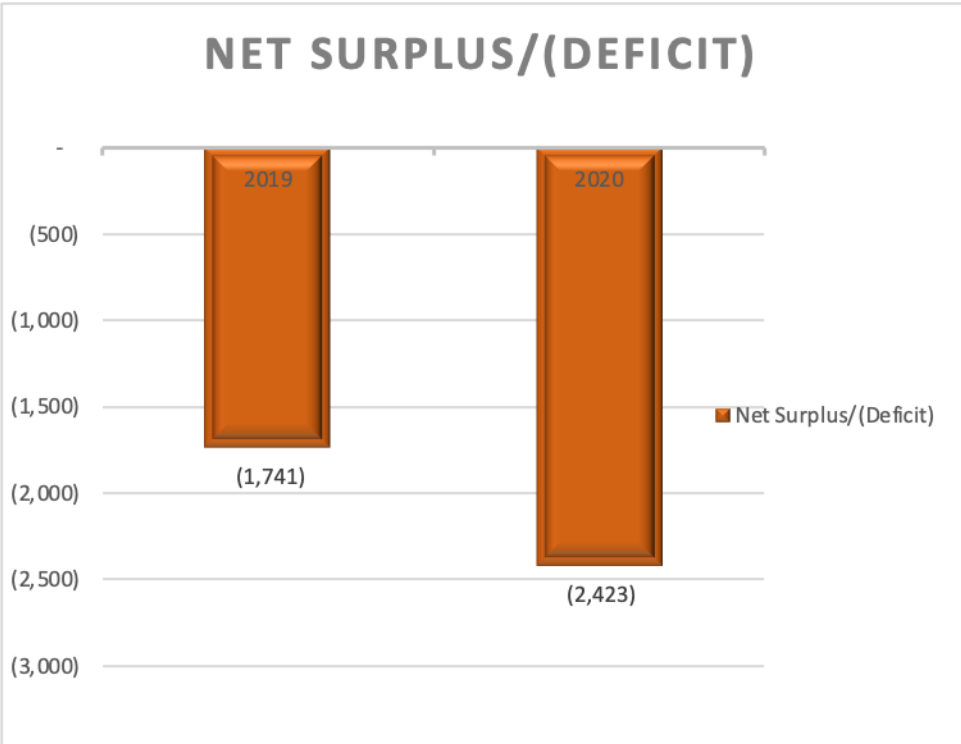


Income

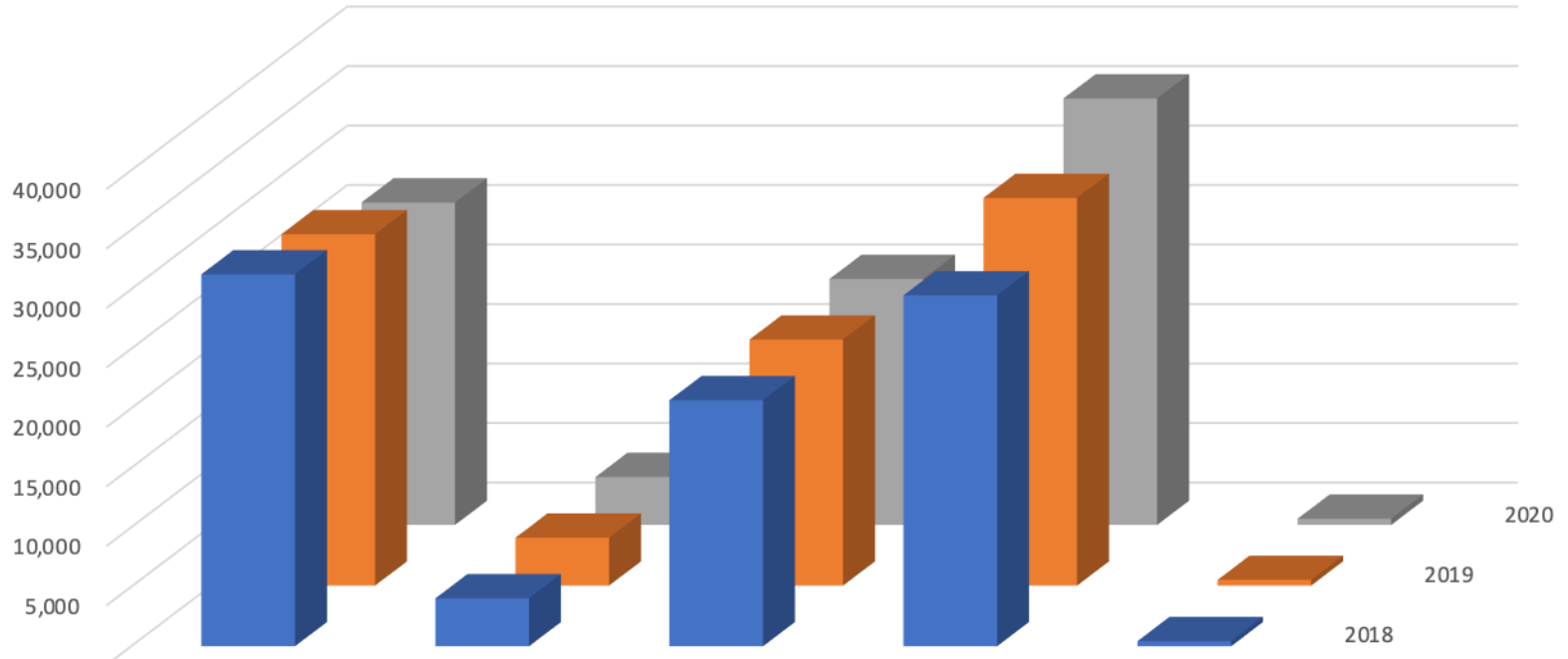


TOTAL ASSETS





Movement In Reserves



	General Reserves Fund	Assets Replacement Fund	Contingency Fund	Building Reserve Fund	Endowment Fund
■ 2018	31,265	4,031	20,677	29,493	430
■ 2019	29,523	4,031	20,677	32,581	475
■ 2020	27,100	4,031	20,677	35,847	521

■ 2018 ■ 2019 ■ 2020

Annual Report of the Directors

For

The Year Ended 31st December 2020

The Directors present herewith the Annual Report of the Board of Directors of the Law & Society Trust for the year ended 31st December 2020.

Nature of Business of the Trust

- To promote and conduct research into the indigenous legal culture of Asia and its relationship to the religious traditions of the Continent of Asia.
- To initiate studies in order to provide legal solutions appropriate to the problems and needs of contemporary Asian society from the indigenous legal culture and concepts of Asia.
- To establish centres for research and training on all aspects of law and social change, legal theory, social theory, comparative law, anthropology and related fields.
- To sponsor or co-sponsor with other institutions, lectures, meetings, seminars and symposia in pursuance of its applied and academic work and for the diffusion of legal knowledge.
- To promote an understanding and belief in the protection of human rights and in furtherance thereof to promote international understanding and co-operation in an universal respect for the observance of human rights and fundamental freedom for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, religion, colour and creed.
- To promote and encourage, in furtherance of protection of human rights, acquisition and diffusion of knowledge among the masses.

Financial Statement

The financial statements of the Law & Society Trust for the year ended 31st December 2020 include the Income Statement, Statement of Financial Position and the notes to the financial statements as set out on pages 3,4 and 11,18 of the audited financial statements.

Auditor's Report

The Auditor's Report is set out on page 1 and 2 of the audited financial statements.

Accounting Policies

Accounting policies used are summarised on pages 07 to 10 of the financial statements and are consistent with those used in the previous year.

Directors Remuneration

The Directors receive no remuneration from the Law & Society Trust.

Donations

No donations were given by the Trust for the period under review.

Directors

The Directors of the Law & Society Trust as at 31st December 2020 were as follows:

Dr. J A S Felix

Mr. G J T Alagaratnam

Prof. F F Haniffa

Miss Anushya Coomaraswamy

Mr. Tissa Jayatilaka

Prof. JayadevaUyangoda

Miss Anushya Coomaraswamy and Dr.Shivaji Felix retire by rotation in terms of the Articles of Association of the Trust and being eligible offer themselves for re-election.

Resolutions for the appointment of Mr. Tissa Jayatilaka and Prof. Jayadeva Uyangoda who are over 70 years will be proposed at the AGM of the Trust.

The Board met on three occasions during the period under review. The attendance at Meetings of the Board of Directors during the period under review is as follows:

Director	No. of Meetings Attended
Dr. Shivaji Felix	3
Mr. G J T Alagaratnam	2
Prof. F F Haniffa	3
Miss. Anushya Coomaraswamy	3
Mr. Tissa Jayatilaka	3
Prof. Jayadeva Uyangoda	1

Amounts payable to the firm holding office as External Auditor

The remuneration payable by the Trust to the external auditor is given in Note 21 of page 17 to the financial statements.

Auditor's relationship or any interest with the Company

The Directors are satisfied that the auditors did not have any relationship or any interest with the Trust that would impair their independence.

Directors' interests in contracts

The Directors have confirmed that none of them have conflict of interest in relation to operations and transactions or contracts and have no related party interests in any transactions or contracts of the Trust.

Going Concern

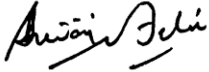
The financial statements are prepared on a going concern basis. After making adequate inquiries from the management, the Directors are satisfied that the Trust has adequate resources to continue its operations in the foreseeable future as a going concern.

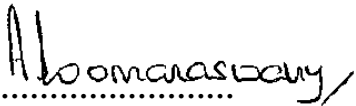
Appointment of Auditors

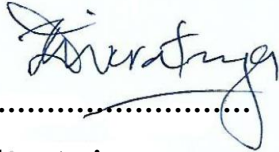
The Directors recommend the re-appointment of Messrs. KPMG, Chartered Accountants as auditors of the Trust.

A resolution to re-appoint Messrs. KPMG, Chartered Accountants, will be proposed at the Annual General Meeting of the Trust.

This Annual Report of the Directors has been signed on behalf of the Board by:


.....
Director


.....
Director


.....
Secretaries

Colombo

8th July 2021



No. 3, Kynsey Terrace, Colombo 08,
Sri Lanka
Telephone : +94112684845, +94112691228
Fax : +94112686843
info@lstlanka.org
www.lstlanka.org