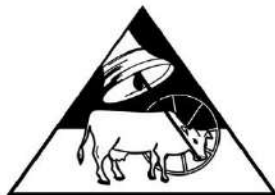


ANNUAL REPORT 2022



LAW & SOCIETY TRUST
தீதிர தா சதாச தாரத
சட்டம் மற்றும் சமூக நம்பிக்கை

Choices of Policy Responses to Crisis: Adopting a Human Rights Approach to Crisis

“States can neither waive nor limit their obligation of upholding civil, cultural, economic, political and social human rights in times of crisis. Rather, by fully integrating human rights principles and standards into law and practice are governments able to respond to an economic downturn in a truly sustainable manner...”

—Navi Pillay, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights in her statement to the UN General Assembly High Level Conference on the World Financial and Economic Crisis and its Impact, June 18, 2009

Human rights are critical in shaping the response to crisis

They put people at the centre produce and better outcomes

Immediate human rights responses to address the consequences of the crisis:

- Refraining from violating civil and political rights
- Prioritizing a basic minimum of effective economic and social rights for all
- Protecting the most vulnerable and ensuring non-discrimination
- Respecting human rights principles in policy processes as well as outcomes

Long-term responses to address the causes of the crisis

Re-thinking the Role of the State

Rethinking global governance

Cover photos

All photos are by LST staff and consultants:

Sakuna Gamage

Sakuntala Kadirgamar

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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 & 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.

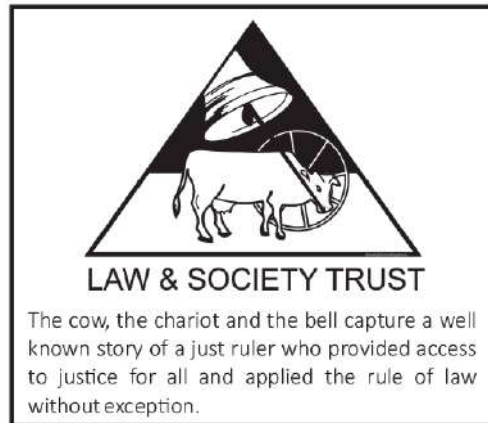
LST aims to use rights-based strategies in order to promote and protect human rights, enhance public accountability and strengthen respect for the rule of law.

LST has built strong networks across communities by implementing effective 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 Mission and Goals

Vision

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

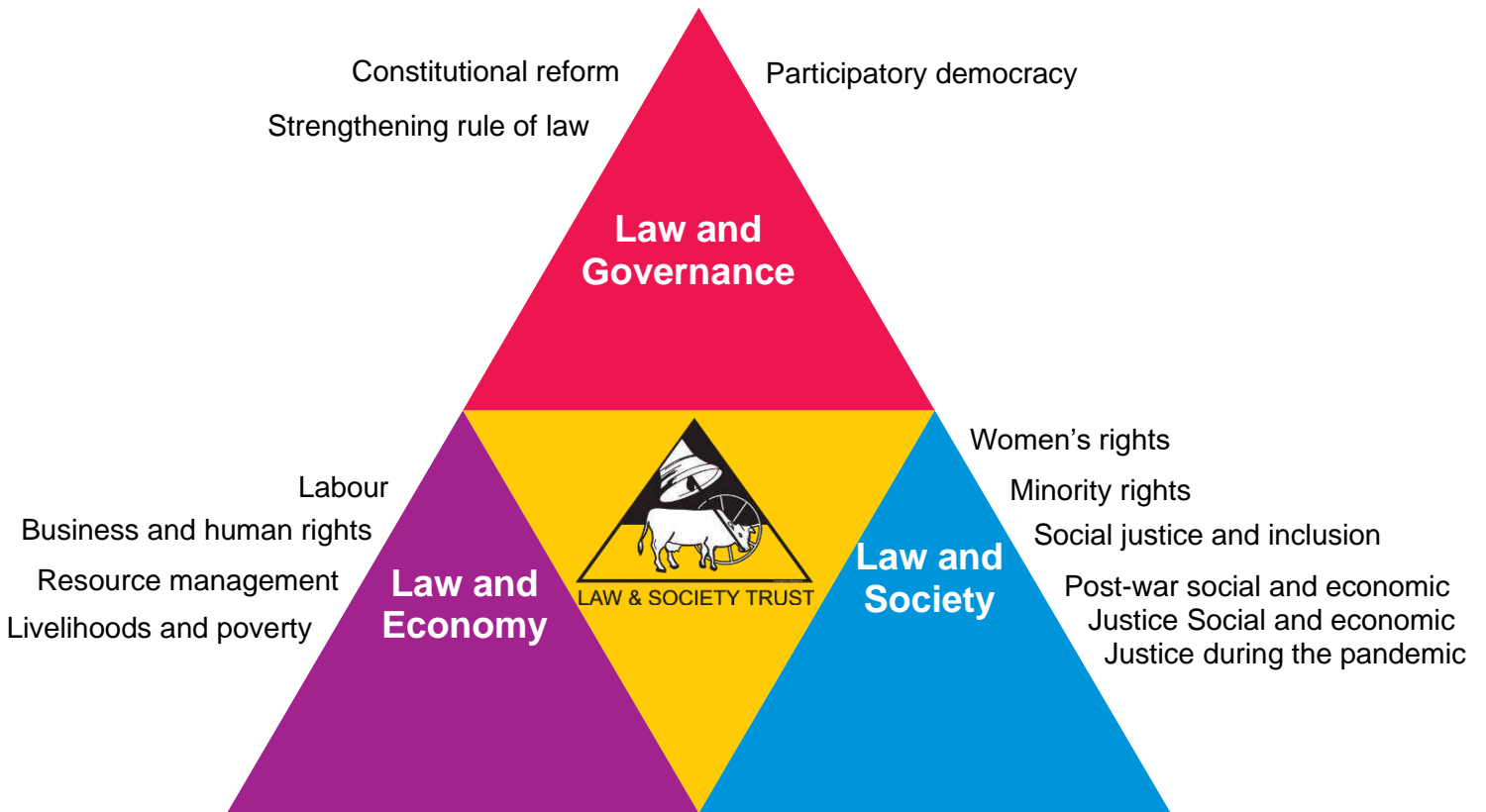
Mission

To utilise 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

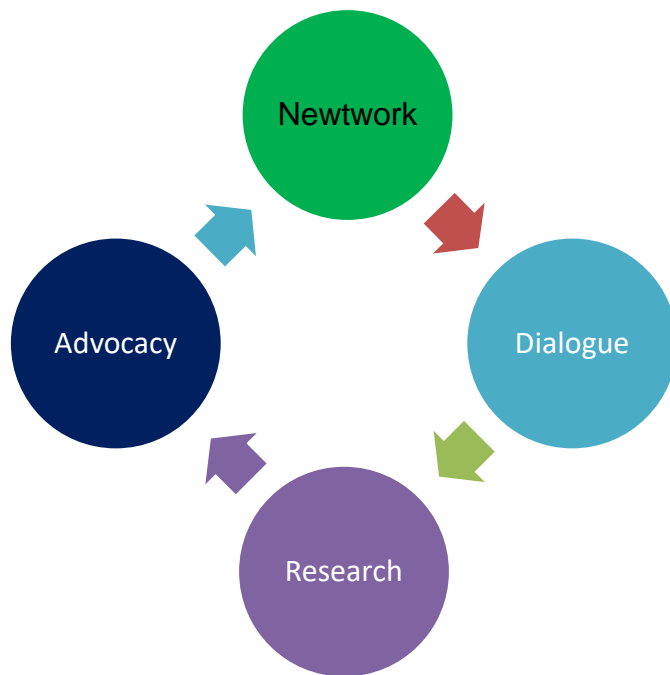
1. To be a leader in national level policy and legislative changes
2. To be a change maker in perceptions, attitudes and traditions which affect rights
3. To be a space maker for human rights discourse
4. To advocate for effective accountability ensuring good governance, transparency, equality and social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

LST's interconnected work clusters



How w

How we work



Board of Directors and Staff

Board of Directors

Dr. J. A. S. Felix - Chairman
Mr. Geoffrey J.T. Alagaratnam PC
Ms. Anushya Coomaraswamy
Professor Fathima Farzana Haniffa
Mr. Tissa Jayatilaka
Professor Emeritus Remini Sharya Scharenguivel (from 26th January 2022)

Company Secretary

Secretarius (Private) Ltd

Auditors

Ernst & Young - External Auditors

Jayasinghe and Company - Internal Auditors

Senior Management Team

Dr. Sakuntala Kadirgamar - Executive Director
Mr. Sandun Thudugala - Director of Programmes
Ms. Hasara Fernando - Head of Finance and Administration

Program and Research Staff

Mr. P. M. Senarathna - Project Manager – up to 31.07.2022
Mr. Vidura Munasinghe- Senior Researcher
Ms. Amalini De Sayrah - Communications Officer – up to 11.09.2022
Mr. W.R. Anura Nisanka – Communications Officer – from 10.11.2022
Ms. H.M. Chathurika Sewwandi – Project Co-ordinator
Mr. Madasamy Vijeyakanth - Project Co-Ordinator & Researcher

Library

Ms. Dilani Wickramasinghe - Librarian – up to 30.09.2022
Ms. W.M.T. Arosha P. Wasala – Librarian from 16.11.2022

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

Consultants

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Mr. Malinga Prasad Jayarathna -Research Assistant
Mr. Prabath Hemantha Kumara -Research Assistant
Ms. Megara Tegal – Researcher 31.01.2020
Ms. Anuradhi Jayasinghe – Researcher
Mr. Sakuna M. Gamage – Researcher

Mr. Michael Mendis – Researcher

Ms. Inoma Karunatilake – Project Co-ordinator – up to 31.08.2022

Mr. T. Suvirthan – Research Assistant

Ms. Anusha Gayathri Selvendran – Research Assisatnat - from 01.07.2022

Ms. Vraie Cally Balthazaar – Researcher

Mr. Amila Udagedara – Videographer & Editor

Mr. Mark Schubert - Legal Researcher

Ms. Pragathi Jayaweera – Intern – from 10.01.2022 to 30.06.2022

Ms. Vijayakumar Ashvini – Research Assistant from 20 january to 30 June 2022

Ms. Ishara Danasekera – Media Advisor up to 28.02.2023

Ms. Megara Tegal – Researcher from 01.08.2022

Ms. Rasmi Fathima Rasma – Research Assistant from 01.08.2022

Mr. Chathuranga Pradeep Kumara – Researcher & Digital Content Producer from 01.09.2022

Ms. Sobiya Vincendepaul – Research Assistant – from 01.09.2022

Support Staff

M. Chandran

2022 – The Year of the Aragalaya

According to the Chinese Zodiac, 2022 is the Year of the Tiger. However, In the collective consciousness of Sri Lankans, the year 2022 will forever be remembered as the Year of the Aragalaya.

There are defining historical events that are seen to catapult change. Who can forget the fall of the Bastille and fail to see it as a precursor to the French Revolution? The Bastille symbolised the abuse of monarchical power and its fall symbolised the power of the angry people. Today it is commemorated by France and bourgeoisie politicians in various parts of the world commemorate and celebrate it with the French government and people over cocktails, although a similar action in their own countries would be labelled as anarchy at best and as terrorism at its worst.

Some of these defining events may not bring about changes immediately but they remain the pivotal turning points that galvanise the people. The Soweto Uprising in South Africa did not bring about change immediately but it was undoubtedly a turning point in the anti-apartheid struggle. The Nakba (the Catastrophe) that befell the Palestinians in 1948, generated international platitudes but it has not brought change. It has, however, served as the clarion call among the international community for a political resolution and it is embedded in the consciousness of human rights activists and Palestinians, young and old alike.

Sri Lanka's Aragalaya is of this genre. In the Sri Lankan political context, the Aragalaya defines an event that took place over a spate of weeks and it describes a process of civic awakening and struggles. Many factors and events contributed to the Aragalaya. Many people, cutting across

class, ethnicity, religion and political ideology joined the Aragalaya and gave it momentum because it was their struggle.

The People's endless struggles – the inevitability of an implosion

Undoubtedly in 2022, Sri Lanka reaped a bitter post-Covid harvest of deprivations. People lost jobs and their livelihoods due to Covid. They suffered due to the poor social services available to them and the seeming indifference of the state and bureaucracy to their plight. The health and education sectors were strained. The Samurdhi payments were found to be woefully inadequate and criticised for being distributed on opaque grounds. Sri Lankans faced water and power cuts Life was tough. The prospects of earning a living were bleak. But these challenges reached a crescendo in 2022 when people recognised that this was also due to corruption and mismanagement. Farmers were protesting against the sudden executive decision to ban fertiliser and switch to organic farming. Consumers faced shortages in essential commodities and were resentful of having stand in queues for the most basic essentials – cooking gas, petrol and diesel, powdered milk. The images of dark streets as these miseries were compounded by power cuts provided the most graphic narrative of the government's failures.

The shortages were due to Sri Lanka's inability to pay for imports as it faced depleted foreign exchange reserves. Traditional foreign exchange and revenue sources - tourism, tea exports (down due to the fertiliser ban), and remittances plummeted. Migrant workers declined to remit their earnings through banking channels due to the mismanagement of the

Central Bank. Domestic funds were not available due to the government's decisions to cut taxes. Sri Lanka spends a high percentage of its resources servicing debt and paying pensions and salaries. It was at this low point that the population recognised that these policy failures were possible because Sri Lanka was governed by a cabal that was mired in corruption and supported by a pliant citizenry.

Wiser heads have called for a re-appraisal of Sri Lanka's political economy but their counsel has not been heard. The economy has not been diversified and expanded; inequality is rising and the true engines of growth – the small and medium-size enterprises remain unsupported, while the businesses that have access to the ears of politicians receive special concessions that suit their interests. The justification given for the centralisation of power, as a necessity to take Sri Lanka down a pathway of rapid development was revealed to be a fiction – it only covered up graft and mismanagement that led to catastrophic ruin.

System Change – a demand that cannot be ignored

The calls of the Aragalaya were initially specific. “Gota Go Home” and “Maina Go Home” were calls for the rejections of specific politicians. It was extended to “225 Go home” – a rejection of all the Parliamentarians and effectively a call for the election of a new Parliament. With newfound confidence, that call changed to a demand for “System Change”. These slogans signalled people's disenchantment with Parliament as well the political system that perpetuated the recycling of entrenched political elites from the traditional political parties that are captured by political dynasties who spewed the same political messages of ethnic and religious divisions and focused more on plundering the state than they did on developing the economy, creating strong institutions and on building solidarity.

The Aragalaya was a reaction to the hardships that people were forced to bear. It created a broad tent for the disaffected. It was a magnet for those who did not have the confidence to make their voices heard. The Aragalaya broke barriers, created bonds and signalled hope and opportunity. It created that revolutionary moment and sufficient pressure that the cabinet resigned, then Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa to resign and then the President to flee. In the political confusion and mayhem that followed a Lone Ranger surfaced. Mr. Ranil Wickremasinghe, a leader without a party was appointed first as Prime Minister and then as President.

In June 2022, in the midst of the political crisis, the finance minister resigned and was replaced by a businessman who was sworn in as the Minister of Investment Promotion. On 20 July 2022, Parliament elected Mr Ranil Wickremesinghe as President of Sri Lanka. It was ironic that the parliamentary voter base that coalesced to elect Mr Wickremasinghe was the very political party that was hitherto resolutely, ideologically and consistently opposed to Mr Wickremasinghe. This was a coalition government with a difference – a coalition of the illegitimate, but desperate times called for desperate measures. On 22 July 2022, President Wickremesinghe appointed a new prime minister of Sri Lanka and a cabinet consisting of 18 ministers along with a new governor of the Central Bank.

President Wickremasinghe once selected by Parliament moved speedily to consolidate his position. He no longer saw himself as an interim President pending an all-party government – an idea initially, and fleetingly mooted as a way out of the political impasse. He presented himself as THE President with a mandate to do what he thought it takes to address the crisis. His selection, while constitutionally permissible. But in the context of Aragalaya, it has not been possible for him as President and for the Parliament to slough off the smear that they lack legitimacy. The “legitimacy question” follows them like their shadows. It challenges

them on every front - it challenges their competence, their authority and their bonafides to steer the country through its gravest economic crisis.

Acts of violence and embedded structural violence: The many forms of violence characterising Sri Lanka's politics

The Aragalaya began as a non-violent mass protest but it soon became an arena of violence with government supporters attacking protestors on the 9th of May and with counter-violence from the protestors themselves, physically attacking Members of Parliament aligned with the government and their homes. The attacks included the residence of Mr Wickremasinghe. The new government has highlighted the violence to condemn and undermine the Aragalaya and adopted a defensive approach, re-grouping to consolidate their power bases but they are missing the woods for the trees. If they do not take to heart the real, deep-rooted and structural issues that led to the Aragalaya protests, even violent protests will be endemic.

By September 2022 Sri Lanka reluctantly agreed to approach the IMF for a bailout. This was a measure that the politicians resisted for a long time but it left the politicians open to the criticism that the IMF support may be too little too late. Sri Lanka's political and governance crisis is now accompanied by a painful economic crisis. Indeed, many would assert that the

economic crisis is a result of the governance crisis – whereby authoritarian governance enabled corruption, crony capitalism and the removal of all institutional checks and balances,

The year 2022 culminated in a political, economic and social crisis that in hindsight appears inevitable. It calls for a re-orientation of our political discourse, scrutiny of our laws, policies and practices, our institutions and the need to build social solidarity. The Aragalaya must be accompanied by a System Change and the need of the hour is to build consensus around this realisation. However, a "System Change" cannot and will not take place without "Attitudinal Changes". We need to remind ourselves that while we are in crisis, we cannot let a good crisis go to waste.

I would like to thank the Board, our members, donors, partners and my colleagues who have supported me since I took up this challenging position. This year has been particularly challenging for Sri Lanka. I look forward to continued support as I provide leadership to fulfil the mission and mandate of the Trust.

Dr. Sakuntala Kadirgamar
Executive Director

The year 2022 in retrospect: Scoping the ways forward for Sri Lanka

A review of the year 2022 is inevitably triangulated by the Aragalaya, the economic crisis, and the IMF agreement and this is the prism through which we will review the ways forward for Sri Lanka. We anticipate that these factors will be the key drivers of Sri Lanka's economic, political and social landscape for the next few years.

The Law and Society Trust (LST) along with other civil society organizations, had to take these factors into account and seriously rethink the approaches to our work.

The 'power of people' demonstrated in the Aragalaya and the way in which the established democratic institutions such as the Parliament, the cabinet and the presidency functioned during the crisis, exposed the serious limitations of these institutions, the personnel who presented themselves as national leaders and it raised questions around many of our assumptions relating to liberal democracy.

The economic crisis had a crippling effect on the entire society and this has pushed us to broaden our understanding of what constitutes the core of human rights. LST has, for years, advocated to prioritize social and economic rights and to constitutionalize these basic rights as basic fundamental rights. The suffering of people during the pandemic and the economic crisis reinforced the importance of this. These core beliefs and approaches have become most important at this time during and crisis and with the economic reforms pushed through under the IMF

agreement. These reforms are ostensibly to address Sri Lanka's debt crisis although they will not address the existential crisis facing ordinary citizens.

Although the political and economic context is volatile and desperate, posing serious challenges it has also presented us with some significant opportunities. It has called on people to be introspective. The crisis has pushed them to question their familiar paradigms. To be responsive to these changes, LST created spaces for reflection and dialogue. The "People's Parliament" became a forum for activists, communities and civil society organizations who came together during the various protests to articulate their vision for a better Sri Lanka. Through the People's Parliament, LST and other activists created a platform for the various 'Aragalayas' emerging across the country, to come together and discuss their demands and aspirations to build a common agenda for a meaningful "system change".

LST emphasized the need for a human rights-based approach to addressing the crisis, ensuring that the voices of the most marginalized and vulnerable will be heard and taken into account in economic policy planning and in the debt restructuring agreements. LST engaged with workers, farmers, women and many others to understand their needs and expectations and to question the dominant narratives about economic solutions pushed by liberal economists. LST's aim was to create more inclusive discourses about the reforms to

ensure the rights of the poor and marginalized.

During the Aragalaya and its aftermath, LST worked with other human rights organizations, lawyers and international organizations to provide protection for human rights defenders and activists who were being targeted by the State and subjected to oppression. We believe in the right of citizens to organize, to express themselves, to their right to dissent and to peaceful protest. These are the foundations of a democratic society. LST is committed to intervening, using the law to protect these rights of the people.

LST in coalition with other civil society organizations advocated against government efforts to introduce new repressive laws such as the Anti-Terror Act and government efforts to use the existing, draconian Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA).

LST consistently advocated for a complete repeal of the PTA and campaigned nationally and internationally against the PTA. We remain committed to supporting the struggles of marginalized communities - justice for war victims, political prisoners, the *Malayaha Makka*, LGBTIQ communities and other groups who have been denied their rights for generations.

In retrospect, the year 2022 had been challenging, even chaotic but it has presented us with many opportunities too. Most of all, it gave us hope to believe that change was possible. The ability of Sri Lankans to maximize these opportunities may result in a new country, as Aragalaya has envisaged. It will be challenging because the forces against realising those hopes have regrouped to fight back.

Civil society must trust in the power of ordinary people and work with them. The successes and failures of 2022 will guide the work of LST to be more relevant and have an impact in the coming year.

Sandun Thudugala
Director of Programme

Overview of the Law and Society Trust's work in 2022

In 2022, LST continued its commitment 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.

LST's objectives for 2022: recognise and support intersectional

In this context, LST engaged with the community to articulate issues relating to governance, the economy and social relations. Issues relating to the law, the economy, society and governance overlap and intersect at many levels. To make an impact on change and transformation this must be recognised and interventions calibrated accordingly.

People of all identities are working together for a society that recognizes and respects

LST's overarching goal is to ensure a society free from violent conflict, discrimination and social injustice and based upon human dignity for all.

plurality, equality, and justice for all (Law and Society);

Women, youth, workers, and rural communities are able to influence policy, legal and system reforms to ensure economic justice and environmental sustainability (Law and Economy);

Citizens and civil society organizations have the information, knowledge and skills to advocate for democratic governance reforms at the national and local levels (Law and Governance).

Generating dialogues, opening the civic space seeking opportunities to improve lives

LST worked with women workers, including manpower workers, in free trade zones other informal sector workers who were extremely vulnerable and during the pandemic and later the economic crisis as they were at risk of losing their employment. They suffered additional vulnerabilities during the pandemic as many of them were not in their villages and did not qualify for assistance. Recognising that the ban on chemical fertilizers and pesticides, and shortages of

fuel had a very profound and negative impact on agriculture, on livelihoods based on agriculture and on food security, LST engaged with farmers and rural communities to discuss issues relating to livelihoods, the rural economy and the food security situation of the country worsened.

While ethnic and religious harmony, reconciliation and anti-racism were prominent slogans of the protest movement

and mixed community participation in Aragalaya was visible, there were mixed reactions from the ethnic minorities (especially the Tamils from North and East) to the protest movements. Some view it as a positive trend and a new opportunity to build connections between ethnic groups and their struggle, while others were less hopeful and hesitant to engage. They noted that people from the South lacked empathy and interest in the struggles of the ethnic minorities for many years and this has prevented some minority groups from trusting in the current protest movement. The latest UN resolution on Sri Lanka highlighted the need to improve the rights of ethnic minorities but the impact of the resolution on reconciliation and on the process of accountability are yet to be seen. LST engaged with communities to ascertain whether these slogans and symbolic gestures had any impact on the deep-rooted majoritarian ideologies in the society as they are yet to be tested.

The economic crisis has also increased the risk of environmental degradation and destruction. Many communities are trying to expand their agricultural lands to cope with the increased economic pressures and the government too has increased efforts to sell large areas of land to private companies for investments. With the economic and political crisis at the forefront, the attention on environmental issues and conservation has been reduced.

As a result of the Aragalaya, and after many years, citizens of this country have an opportunity to push an agenda based on their needs and aspirations. They have shown the power of organized people's actions in 2022. LST maximized this opportunity to build platforms for more integrated and inclusive community-based dialogues and engagement processes that would lead to generating a people-centered reform agenda for Sri Lanka.

In the midst of all the challenges posed by various crises, LST continued to work with

local communities, civil society organizations, social movements, and activists, mainly in the North, East, North Central, Central and Uva Provinces. Due to the prevalent political situation, there were significant challenges to engaging with policymakers and government authorities at the national level. During this time LST continued to work with pressure groups engaged in people's protest movements, and this included lawyers' groups, trade unions, youth activists, and student movements. LST engaged with them to advance the process of developing a comprehensive reform agenda. LST also played an active role in protecting the rights of these groups in the midst of a government crackdown.

During this period, LST prioritized bringing to the forefront the issues faced by most marginalized and oppressed communities during the economic crises and the pandemic. These included the issues faced by human rights defenders, female workers in free trade zone, women farmers and rural workers who are in distress with micro-credit indebtedness, and plantation workers.

LST also intervened to raise the issues of human rights violations and the shrinking of democratic and civic spaces at the macro level. LST engaged in the critique of the existing constitutional structures and in advocacy for constitutional development and reform processes. LST also engaged in collective advocacy against the restrictive regulatory framework for CSOs, proposed by the government and made regular commentaries and public interventions on issues such as militarization and the centralization of power. These are some key areas of intervention in this regard.

LST project outreach in 2022.

Project	Men	Women	Intersex	Total
EU - Transform	950	1600	20	2570
National Endowment for Democracy	980	785		1765
We Effect	260	745		1005
LST Social media platform reach				55,000
Diakonia (including LST publications)				25,000
Reach of social media pages created for PARL, Citizen's Dialogue and TRANSFORM projects				465,000
Total	2190	3130	20	547,770

The Intersection of Law, the Economy, Society and Governance

Support to improve participation of women and people of all identities at all decision-making levels in the economic and political spaces.

LST's engagements in developing women's leadership at the local governance level in the Northern Province through Community Governance Platforms (CGP) have enabled women to play an active role in formal and informal spaces at the local level.

- Approximately 25 women leaders of CGP are actively participating in local-level decision-making committees, Sexual and Gender-based violence (SGBV) forums and other Pradeshiya Sabha-level stakeholder meetings. There they bring the issues related to domestic violence and other SGBV cases (e.g.: child marriages in Mannar and youth addiction to drugs etc) to the table and push others to make effective decisions.
- CGP empowered women to understand their rights and engage in the political sphere. More than 15 women members of CGP will contest for 2023 local government elections, representing their communities.
- Some women leaders use RTI as a tool to access justice. Kalachchelvi from Mullaitivu district influences the local authorities to ensure the transparency of the relief allocation process referring to beneficiary lists that she obtained through RTI. She engages in small-scale advocacy initiatives such as pocket meetings at the ground level with marginalized communities to use RTI as a tool.
- Based on the research published on the rights of women farmers, LST created a broader public discussion on the importance of women farmers in Sri Lanka's agriculture system. Policy proposals to recognize women farmers within the new agriculture policy were submitted to the Government in early 2022.
- The Ministry of Agriculture, the Department of Agrarian Services and the Ministry of Land in the Eastern Province have agreed to develop a common action plan to support women farmers in the 2023/24 period.
- 30 women leaders who were part of LST's women's leadership development program have initiated their own actions to protect the rights of women in their communities. They are even recognised as national leaders who advocate for women's rights. We share below some of the cases of empowerment and leadership:
 - Megala from Trincomalee formed a milk society named 'Pasunthaleer' with 30 women and 05 men.
 - Aariyawathy in Kekirawa formed "Punchi Samaja" to sell agricultural produce directly to consumers.

- Three women farmers in Maskeliya are leading the women and youth wing of the Movement for Plantation People's Land Rights.
- 50 women in Welioya have successfully developed a society to produce organic fertilizer.
- National Women's Economic Forum was established as a national forum for these women leaders to advocate for their rights.
- LST facilitated 12 innovative action plans (one per province) that promote women's economic rights. They were formed to identify and address major problems in their area. The 12 action plans developed covered microfinance issues, women's land ownership issues, agriculture-related issues such as seed protection, fertilizer production, and marketing issues, resettled people issues, and the issues of women workers in small-scale industries.
- The women's groups liaise with government and non-government organizations to resolve their issues. Most of the women's groups receive assistance and services through the Pradeshiya Sabha. They established linkages with the Mahaweli Authority, Agriculture Departments, and many NGOs and therefore the accountability of the community towards these groups has increased.
- 8 policy briefs were prepared on women's farmer's rights-based issues and microfinance issues. Meetings to disseminate and discuss the policy briefs were held with the community-level stakeholders and government officers.
- As part of LST's capacity-building program, women members of local government authorities of Eastern province submitted proposals to the local government institutions (LGI) institution and provincial local government departments to get funds for women's development in the selected villages.
- 10 women members in Ottamavadi, Chenkaladi, Eravur, Kokkatichcholai, Kalavanchikudi, Verugal, Pulmottai Kattankudy, and Thambalagamam submitted their proposals.
- One of the members, Saraswathy received 02 million rupees to support women's development in Chenkaladi Pradeshiya sabha.
- Megala's proposal was approved by the Provincial LGI department and released 400,000.00 for women farmers' development.
- **Land Development Ordinance (LDO) reforms** were approved by Parliament in March 2022. This reform resulted in the removal of the gender-discriminatory provisions of the Ordinance which were the main obstacle to ensuring women's land rights in Sri Lanka. This marks a significant achievement towards ensuring women's land rights.

Responding to gender-based violence

There is a culture of silence around gender-based violence and that has resulted in a high rate of incidents of gender-based violence, and the rates of legal recourse/ redress supporting survivors are low. Change and transformation are possible only when men, women and others come together to create an enabling environment that is against SGBV and promotes access to justice and protection for everyone.

- LST undertook formative research on “Gender discriminatory social norms and their impacts on rights and freedoms of women” which was completed and the research report and infographics were printed in all three languages and distributed. Research findings were discussed and reflected among different sectors of the community in the Northern province such as fishery women, LGBTQI communities, preschool teachers, Midwives, policymakers, youth etc. Research findings were discussed and distributed through online dialogues, symposiums, and creative media campaigns.
- This transformative research has become a resource document for new research and advocacy initiatives in the northern province. A new research area was discovered and initiated by the University of Jaffna based on these research findings. The research is about “the prevalence of gender discriminatory social norms in the University environment.
- LST research was used as a resource document for developing manuals for trainers in a workshop on “Changing prevalent beliefs and

attitudes that reinforce harmful norms and behaviors contributing to violence against women” organized by the United Nations Population Fund.

- The research findings were disseminated among 478 participants in districts, regional and national level 10 symposiums. Contents created based on the above-mentioned research findings have reached around 356,044 people through social and mainstream media and through theatre forums. Around 1480 people were reached through 20 theatre forums in the Northern province which covered 5 districts. In the theatre forums, the audience directly interacted with the dramatists and shared their ideas on how gender-discriminatory social norms can be transformed.
- Based on the discussions and outcomes of research symposiums LST has prepared an action plan to implement research findings. During the next project cycle, LST will work with national and provincial authorities, the Ministry of Women Affairs, the Ministry of Education, other relevant ministries and the University of Jaffna to implement the recommendations of the action plan.
- Mainstream and creative media was used to share research findings with a wider range of audiences and create a public discussion on the gender-based social norms in the Northern Province.

Responding to violations of land rights and the right to information

Human Rights defenders have been under siege in Sri Lanka and many cases of wide-ranging human rights violations are reported. Responding to this, LST established a referral network with human rights defenders (HRDs) to create a wider membership network that included: journalists, farmer activists, fisheries, youths and members of the LGBTQI community. This has enhanced the network's capacities for documenting

and reporting on SGBV cases and on other human rights violations. The capacities of the journalists who are affiliated with referral networks were also enhanced through their exposure to the network as they are able to give publicity to a range of human rights violations. There are around 75 cases on land and the Right to Information (RTI) cases that have been recorded so far through this network.

Increased number of women and others accepted in and participating in spaces traditionally dominated by males

Traditional patriarchal structures are further reinforced by negative religious ideologies and practices that hinder the rights of women and others. To challenge this, LST has continued to work with trade unions and civil society organizations in the FTZs, supporting their advocacy on the rights of workers to protection during the pandemic and economic crises.

LST has supported these organizations to engage with the UN (through the UPR process) and other human rights organizations (such as Forum Asia, Business

and Human Rights Centre, and the UN working group on business and human rights).

Women-led Trade Unions and CSOs working in FTZs, which were supported by LST, have now built strong connections and are actively engaged in national and international forums on issues related to the rights of workers. A women trade union activist who has been working with LST and was a part of the leadership network has been appointed as the first woman representative of the National Labour Advisory Committee.

Resilient communities of rights holders are living in respectful coexistence.

Sri Lanka is marred by ethno-religious tensions and divisions, which are exacerbated in times of economic crisis and insecurity. Communities are divided and there is no acceptance of the "other", and these barriers make it difficult to prevent and

even mitigate conflict. In this context, LST has published research on these matters and conducted interviews and dialogues around the need to anticipate and prevent ethno-religious conflict.

Minority rights protected

LST developed a publication on hate speech in collaboration with the Minority Rights Group and the South Asia Collective. The South Asia Collective is part of a regional consortium that has provided documentation of human rights violations against minorities. It is envisaged that this documentation will be

a resource when advocating for the protection of the rights of minorities. It is envisaged that this documentation will be a resource when advocating for the protection of the rights of minorities.

LST conducted a series of interviews with youth from tea plantations around the country. The main focus of this study was to understand the ambitions and aspirations of these youth, what they feel about their future if their aspirations changed and the causes

Fundamental Rights respected

LST worked with the Young Lawyers Association and other independent lawyers to provide legal support for more than 20 students and activists arrested arbitrarily during the recent protest movements. The lawyers acted pro-bona on these cases, but LST supported the legal intervention by supporting the costs of documentation and filing fees, and travelling expenses of lawyers.

LST also acted as a coordination center to facilitate lawyer visits, accompanied students to court dates, and supported them with their transport and meals, as they had to travel from universities around the country.

LST also supported the lawyers to file fundamental rights petitions against the arbitrary imposition of emergency regulations, and the arbitrary arrests of Joseph Stalin (Trade Union leader), and of student leaders under the Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA). LST facilitated numerous visits between the students and Bill (those that empowered the Government to detain the families of protestors and deemed they were in need of rehabilitation) were unconstitutional.

Land Rights safeguarded

As a result of the support of LST and the intervention of People's Alliance for the Right to Land (PARL) members, communities were able to gain a number of major successes in key land rights struggles during 2022.

- More than 25 LDO land disputes in Polonnaruwa district were resolved with the intervention of the Provincial Land Commissioner and respective divisional secretaries

for these changes. The experiences of the young Tamils working in the plantation sector are rarely documented and the barriers that are unique to the Malayaha community are not researched and understood.

the families of detained student leaders and engaged with diplomatic missions and the United Nations to raise their concerns regarding the threats and repression these people were facing at the hands of the State, and advocated for the release of the student leaders who were unlawfully detained under the draconian PTA.

LST facilitation enabled a broader collective to emerge that includes lawyers, activists, CSOs and members of social movements, to protect the rights of people who were engaged in the people's protest movement – i.e., popularly known in Sri Lanka as the Aragalaya / Porattum.

LST also supported the lawyers to file Fundamental Rights Petitions challenging the Bureau of Rehabilitation Bill. Legal intervention in the case of the Rehabilitation Bill resulted in Supreme Court deciding that protestors and other people who dissented against government action had a right to dissent and that certain provisions of the Bill were unconstitutional. With one student leader still in detention, the national and international campaign against these laws has gained momentum

- Supreme Court provided farmers in Yaanoya asking for alternative land as compensation with the leave to proceed with their fundamental rights petitions. The relevant officers have promised to provide proper compensation to farmers.
- In Baranda Estate, the Supreme Court prevented the efforts from the owners to evict workers from the land

- In Paanama (Ampara), the Supreme Court ordered the Government to handover the land to the farmers as promised by the cabinet decision in 2015
- Large-scale land acquisitions for aloe vera and sugar cane plantations in

Anuradhapura and Badulla districts have been halted through farmers' protest campaigns

- More than 50 families in the Pelawatta sugar plantation in Monaragala have received land permits for their land

Provincial networks strengthened

Strengthening PARL's provincial-level PARL networks has been a key priority in the PARL strategy. Accordingly, Provincial PARL networks in North, East, North Central, Central, and Uva Provinces were established. Currently, around 72 CSOs and community

organizations are part of these 5 networks. These regional networks provided a platform for communities with similar land struggles within the province to meet each other, discuss their struggles and learn from each other's struggles.

Advocacy around Economic, Social, and Cultural rights (ESCR)

Since 2015 LST has continuously worked to raise the importance of ensuring economic, social, and cultural rights (ESCR) as fundamental human rights in Sri Lanka and this remains central to LST advocacy. It has resulted in a formation of a broader network of CSOs, Trade Unions, student organizations, and other activists who also actively engage on ESCR issues at the local and international levels. LST's facilitation has enabled greater connections between the UN and other human rights

organizations with student movements, trade unions, and other activist groups, who were previously not considered to be traditional 'human rights defenders. This has resulted in some critical interventions by UN agencies and other human rights organizations on the issues of protection of these activists, and the right to protest, during the period of the People's Protest movement. The latest UN resolution on Sri Lanka and the report of the High Commissioner on Human Rights have strongly raised these issues.

Support for climate-friendly development

LST worked with civil society and rights holders on policy implementation and enforcement. Specifically, LST worked to increase their awareness and knowledge of existing statutes, policies, laws and regulations relating to the environment, thereby increasing their capacities to engage with the state.

LST submitted recommendations to the Forest Conservation Department for the draft policy on the proposed conservation of environmentally sensitive areas. The value of the recommendations was acknowledged and a discussion was

initiated among the other environmental organizations and LST on the importance of further studying the impacts of upcoming development projects from the perspective of environmental sustainability. The Ministry of Environment accepted the rights-based comments made by LST on the National Environmental Policy and the National Policy on Environmentally Sensitive Areas and informed LST that they will incorporate them into the relevant policies.

LST provided the research, communication and media support to the Walsapugala farmer's protest, which publicised the demands of the farmers at the national level and the Walsapugala farmers' protest gained nationwide recognition as an environmental rights struggle. The farmers were demanding the demarcation of wildlife conservation areas and the removal of unauthorised farming and other commercial activities supported by businesses and local politicians within the reservation. The government had delayed demarcating and gazetting land as wildlife reservations and constructing the elephant fence around it as a result of these unauthorised occupations. Failure to create wildlife reservation resulted in a large increase in the number of wild elephant attacks on villages and the extensive destruction of their farmlands. As a result of the protests, the Government declared the area a wildlife conservation area and constructed an

elephant fence around it taking the required major steps to implement the demands of the farmers.

An article was published in Environ Dev Sustain (2023) based on LST research on the Norochcholai coal power plant and the journal article animated a discussion among other researchers through LinkedIn. Furthermore, academics from the engineering community in India have initiated discussions with the author to further understand the social issues related to the communities in the vicinity of the coal power plant.

LST has made a contribution to socio-ecological practice research through further research on "The role of institutions in addressing small-scale fishery predicaments: a case of fisheries cooperative societies in Northern Sri Lanka." The research is under review for publication.

Sustainable Development and Environmental Impact

As women are the backbone of rural communities and rural livelihoods, they are directly linked with environmental systems. Thus, it is essential that environmental sustainability is ensured when creating sustainable livelihoods for women.

LST's program interventions highlighted the importance of creating sustainable livelihoods and the focus on 'sustainable livelihoods' necessarily requires a focus on environmental sustainability too

Focus on vulnerable groups as rights holders

The pandemic and economic crisis has severely impacted people's lives and livelihoods. Rights holders had no sustained family income in several areas.

The Civic Watch on the pandemic (initiated by LST in 2021) gained the attention of the Bank Information Center (BIC - an INGO based in the USA) monitoring World Bank support for countries during the pandemic. LST was

supported to specifically review the World Bank support in Sri Lanka and LST developed a report and a policy proposal for the consideration of the Government of Sri Lanka and the World Bank to enable them to provide more targeted and effective social security support in Sri Lanka

A policy brief and an elaborated version of the brief on Universal Social Protection

were developed and the objective was to feed this into the ongoing discussions on social protection.

Publications and video documentaries produced by LST on the economic crisis have been used by a number of trade unions and other CSOs to initiate discussions around solutions for the economic crises within their circles. Alliance of Trade Unions and Mass Organizations, which is a collective of more than 50 trade unions and CSOs has made a couple of statements using the content from LST publications on the need for a broader discussion on economic reforms.

LST conducted a survey on the decline of trade union membership (the survey was conducted at the Katunayake EPZ) and using that as a resource, a research report was published. The report emphasized the need for trade unions to address the welfare needs of the workers (both in the formal and informal sectors) going beyond the traditional trade union activities in order to attract the support of more workers. The report also highlighted that trade unions need to proactively engage in other rights-based struggles in the country, partnering with civil society outside their workplaces.

Making public services accessible: Increased engagement with government institutions and departments on improving accessibility

Through its work, LST highlighted the need for making public services accessible and for transparency and accountability in decision-making in development processes. LST also prioritised addressing the national question and called on the government to demonstrate the political will required to address reconciliation through inclusive processes as such approaches benefit society generally.

Trade Unions and labour rights

LST continued to engage with trade unions and facilitate trade unions to develop the network with other civil society networks to be engaged with a broader range of human rights issues.

LST provided research and advocacy support for a joint trade union alliance (Alliance of Trade Union and Mass Organizations) to build a campaign on the rights of workers during the economic crisis. With the interventions of LST, the alliance was able to build linkages with international organizations such as Debt Justice (Formerly Jubilee Debt Campaign) and Committee for the Abolition of Illegitimate Debt to enhance their understanding of the broader and deeper issues surrounding Sri Lanka's crippling debt, and the role of business in the economic crises in Sri Lanka and the need to initiate collective actions on this issue. Alliance of Trade Unions and Mass Organizations is now considered one of the key pressure groups that campaign and advocate for the rights of workers and for economic reforms based on justice and equity during the pandemic and the economic crisis. Their statements on the economic crises have received wide publicity in the media and are regularly discussed at the Parliament and other political circles.

The women leaders trained by LST and their groups have liaised with government and non-government organizations to resolve their issues. Most of the women's groups receive assistance and services through the Pradeshiya Sabha. Similarly, these groups have established linkages with Mahaweli Authority, Agriculture Departments and many NGOs. The accountability of government agencies

towards these groups has increased and so has the communities' respect towards them.

Two trainings were provided to the LGI members, secretaries and the chairmen on participatory budgeting and gender budgeting in Trincomalee and Batticaloa. A two-day training was provided to the elected women members on identifying development issues and proposal writing in the same districts. Kekirawa and Kalladi women farmers got a piece of land through their LGI members to enable them to continue to sell their agricultural products at the road junction.

The women members submitted proposals to the LGI institutions and provincial local governance departments to get funds for women's development projects in the selected villages. 10 women members in Ottamavadi, Chenkaladi, Eravur, Kokkatcholai, Kalavanchikudi, Kattankudy, Verugal, Thambalagamam and Pulmottai submitted the proposals. One of the members, Saraswathy received 2 million rupees to support women-related development from the Chenkaladi Pradeshia Sabha. Megala's proposal was approved by the Provincial LGI department and 400,000 was released for women farmers' development projects.

During the Aragalaya (the struggle) when people gathered in public spaces and voiced their discontent, LST was present, interviewing people and engaging with them and gathering the ideas and proposals of the people about the reforms Sri Lanka needs to overcome the current economic, social and political crises that face Sri Lanka. LST created a forum for free expression that was soon referred to as "The People's Parliament".

The People's Parliament

This People's Parliament was initiated parallel to the Occupy Galle Face protest movement that was launched against the Sri Lankan Government. The Peoples Parliament thus took the struggle beyond protest and created a space to articulate economic strategies and political reforms in the context of the broadening economic and political crisis. As the resistance movements were expanding and promoting multiple goals, it was important to have a long-term and farsighted plan to overcome the political and economic challenges. Given that people felt alienated from the existing political and representative institutions, the People's Parliament created an open space from which public engagement was launched and public opinion relevant to frame the much-needed reforms and the future political direction of Sri Lanka was crystalized. The People's Parliament became the mechanism for hearing the voices of anger and frustration and creating forums from which specific ideas and positive actions were formulated.

People's Parliament sessions were conducted at the Gotagogama protest sites in Galle Face, Galle and Kandy. LST also met with communities who have been engaged in longer-term struggles for justice in Jaffna, Mannar, Kilinochchi, Mulaithivu, in the plantation areas (Udapussellawa, Nuwara eliya, Thalawakale, and Maskeliya), and in the farming areas of Polonnaruwa, Ampara and Batticaloa to bring their views into the discussions.

The People's Protest movement in 2022 created new spaces for people from various ethnic groups to come together around a common agenda. The People's Parliament initiated by LST expects to create similar common platforms for people who have been affected by the dominant social, economic, and political systems to envision and develop their

own views on the reform agenda for Sri Lanka. Such common platforms will enable these communities to increase their understanding of and confidence in each other too.

Law and Society Trust at forty-one years

Law and Society Trust was established forty-one years ago and has been working on human rights research and advocacy mainstreaming gender, conflict and environment issues, advocacy, and improving communications.

LST has a core staff of professionals and experienced and committed researchers who are also motivated by social issues. They form the backbone of LST's research team. The Executive Director has a PhD in Jurisprudence and has worked previously at the UN and other international NGOs and the Director of Programmes has extensive experience working with civil society having worked previously with OXFAM and with several national networks. They coalesce to provide guidance and support to the research team. LST has a good finance team who have managed and reported on budgets effectively. LST teams are multi-disciplinary and bring a variety of perspectives and experiences to the organization and its work.

LST has an inclusive policy towards recruitment, encouraging people from all ethnicities, faiths and genders and ages to work at LST. We work with a wide array of partner organizations across the country and LST is recognized for its expertise on socio-economic rights, especially relating to land, sustainable livelihoods and we are also recognized for the support given on human rights issues. LST attracts interest from the universities especially the faculty of law which has expressed interest to ensure that students have internship and research opportunities at LST.

In essence, The People's Parliament created a space to imagine "what could be" and "what should be".

LST's programs focus on addressing the deep-rooted, underlying causes of conflicts. Advocating for a pluralistic vision of society that is based on democratic principles and human rights is the key mandate of LST. Consequently, LST has actively engaged in protecting the rights of minorities through its research and advocacy work. LST defines minorities broadly going beyond ethnicity, religion and regional differentiations to focus on vulnerability and marginalisation and accordingly addresses gender and sexual orientation and the rights of vulnerable populations such as migrant workers, and free trade zone workers among others.

Through its publications, articles and discussions LST was able to broaden the environmental discourse to identify it as a human rights issue and also to recognize the interconnections between the environment and the development and economic policy approaches of the country. LST will remain engaged with other CSOs, activists and policymakers to develop an overall framework which captures environmental rights within a broader economic, cultural and social rights framework.

We are operating in an uncertain and unpredictable environment and there are no tried and blueprints or methodologies at hand to navigate us. We recognise that researchers and citizens alike need more understanding of economic issues and of alternative development strategies and these are areas that we will keep in mind in the next years.

The need of the times: A values-based education

The lack of community-based education as well as formal education on human rights and on human values has had an impact on Sri Lankan society. Since independence, we have moved away from every semblance of a pluralistic or inclusive society.

Indeed, the need of the times: value-based education promoting democracy, rule of law, and inclusivity.

LST has been maintaining the Citizen's Dialogue online platform to gather people's voices on various issues that

are concerning to them. In 2022 LST conducted a series of interviews on issues related to the economic crisis, food crisis, and workers' rights and published the findings to raise awareness.

These publications and writings highlight critical issues relating to human rights, governance, and the rule of law. They create a knowledge and information base important to lawyers, researchers, activists and students.

Challenges Faced in 2022

Due to Covid, the economic crisis and the political disruptions many of the projects requiring travel were disrupted or had to be re-aligned. However, these changes also created opportunities and were flexible and interpreted the broad parameters of our programs to change activities where needed. For instance, the idea of recognizing and tracking the People's Parliament was not envisaged previously.

Some of the advocacy initiatives that have been planned were not carried out because of the challenges of engaging with politicians and authorities due to the prevailing political context.

We recognize that it is best to conceptualize programming on broad terms and be ready to change course to respond to emerging developments. Given the turmoil in the country during 2022 we adopted such an approach and therefore continued to have relevance. Furthermore, we dialogued with our donors, and LST was able to make adjustments to its programmes.

The projects that were postponed in 2022

Development and implementation of training programs for LGBTQI + rights activists (at the community and national)

LST did initial planning for this activity during 2022 but was not able to develop the complete program. Discussions with LGBTIQ rights groups are ongoing and will implement the research activity in 2023

Capacity-building programs for business leaders, trade unions and civil society leaders on business and human rights frameworks including monitoring of human rights protections in relation to business Due to the economic crises, we were not able to implement this activity within 2022

Off-GRID project activities related to PARL

These activities were not carried out due to the delay in fund transfers from the donor, expect to implement them in 2023

Conduct land rights clinics in identified Divisional Secretariats

We had hoped to conduct both divisional-level multi-stakeholder meetings and district-level multi-stakeholder meetings and provide support for land Kachcheries, by printing land manuals and other handbooks and using them as tools. But we were not able to conduct programs with government officers due to the prevailing political situation in the country.

“Lessons Learnt” during the reporting period

The value of Participatory research

When planning research, it's always useful to engage with communities from the planning process itself, rather than just using them as research 'subjects'. Adopting

participatory research methodologies ensures the ownership of communities to the research and follow-up processes.

Long-term investments

Citizen's activism during Aragalaya has shed new light on the issues of justice, good governance, and democracy. It also showed the impact of long-term work CSOs have done in Sri Lanka on these issues to keep the discussion going. It shows the impact

of long-term programming and engagement on critical issues, which may not achieve or demonstrate immediate results but build the foundation towards a more long-term impact.

Value of creating common spaces

Though Aragalaya has opened up the space to discuss issues about the rights of minorities in the South, divisions between people's struggles in the South and North are still wide

apart. CSOs have a big role to play in creating common spaces so these groups can come together and build collective actions to address their issues.

Support for sustainable development in tangible ways

With the current economic and food crisis it is imperative that we invest more in developing local sustainable food systems. Based on our experience through the project communities who have developed their own sustainable agriculture

systems are been able to cope with the current crisis.

Library

By the end of 2022, the Law and Society Trust Library had 9612 reference books. The

Electronic Resources

The library has subscribed to the JSTOR (a digital library) and Law Lanka Databases which provides full-text contents of the Latest Acts, Consolidated Legislative Enactments, Amended Acts, New Law Reports (NLR) & Sri Lanka Law Reports (SLR) & Supreme Court Law.

KOHA Integrated Library Management System

KOHA Integrated Library Management System was established in 2020. A new Librarian was recruited in November 2022. She has modified and re-designed the interface of KOHA as outlined below

library also maintains a collection of every LST publication.

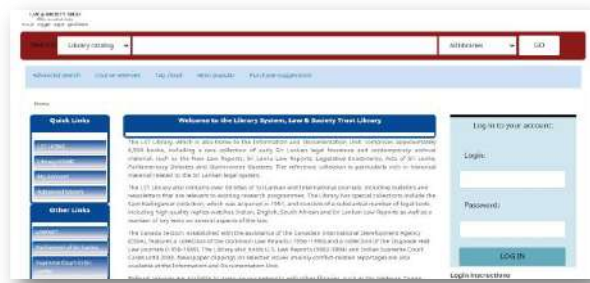
Updates on KOHA in 2022

By the end of 2022, 7857 bibliographic records were entered into the Koha system and 28 new users enrolled by the end of the year 2022.

A new Librarian was recruited in November 2022 and the process of entering New Records (Books) New Patrons (Users) 24, and editing old records continued through to the end of the

The Koha system enables Online Public Access to the Catalogue through the URL below:

<http://library.lstlanka.org/>



LST publications in 2022

LST publications, social media content and other media products have reached around 400,000 people during the year 2022

LST publications in 2022

- **Let's talk to the People: COVID-19 through the people's voices in Sri Lanka**, July 2022.
- **Let's Talk About Equity in Education in Times of COVID**, July 2022.
- **Policy Brief on education reforms**, May 2022
- **Impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic on Lives of People: A General public survey in Sri Lanka**, May 2022.
- **Environmental Destruction Related to the pandemic and economic Crisis in Sri Lanka: Policy Brief**, By Hemantha Withanage, Indika Rajapaksha, Samadhi Hansani Premasiri, and Centre for Environmental Justice, March 2022.
- **Agriculture and Food Security – Recommendations to address Sri Lanka's Looming Crises: Policy Brief**, March 2022.
- **Coping with The Effects of the Covid-19 Pandemic: Recommendations for the Sri Lankan fisheries sector**, February 2022.
- **Let's talk about the Sri Lankan state and our personal liberties in times of COVID-19**, January 2022.
- **Let's Talk About Borders: Tourism, Citizenship, and COVID—the Sri Lankan Response**, January 2022.
- **Let's talk about how we can protect the rights of Children during this pandemic**, January 2022.
- **Let's talk about education in Sri Lanka during COVID-19**, January 2022.

Collaborative Publications

- **South Asia State of Minorities Report 2021: Hate Speech Against Minorities**, The South Asia Collective, edited by a team at Social Science Baha, Kathmandu, consisting of Sudeshna Thapa, Saphala Dhital, Khem Shreesh, Sunil

Tamang, Manesh Shrestha, and
Deepak Thapa, January 2022

Reports

- **Growing the Alternative and Nourishing Hope: Collective farming experiences of women farmers in Sri Lanka**, By Ponni Arasu and Sarala Emmanuel, 2022 (Published in Tamil, English & Sinhala languages)
- **Gender Discriminatory Social Norms and their Impact on Rights and Freedoms of Women: A Participatory Research Carried Out in the Northern Province**, July 2022. (Published in Tamil, English & Sinhala languages)
- **What is the Sri Lanka Crisis** Discussion with Kaushalya Ariyaratne, 07, May 2022 (Published in Sinhala)
- **What is the Sri Lanka Crisis** Discussion with Sumith Chaminda, - 06, May 2022
- **What is the Sri Lanka Crisis** Discussion with Kalpa Rajapakse, 05, May 2022
- **What is the Sri Lanka Crisis** Discussion with Niyanthini Kadirgamar, 04, May 2022
- **What is the Sri Lanka Crisis** Discussion with Prof. Sumanasiri Liyanage, -03, May 2022
- **What is the Sri Lanka Crisis** Discussion with Dr. Ahilan Kadirgamar, 02, May 2022
- **What is the Sri Lanka Crisis** Discussion with Ramindu Perera, 01, May 2022

Communications

In 2022 LST launched a revised website.

During this period, efforts were made to populate and release regular articles on burning issues by the Executive Director and staff members and other writers on the LST blog, and further dissemination of these articles.

Furthermore, the communications team worked closely with the programmes to finalise, release and disseminate publications related to the core programmes.

During this period the Communications team released a series of reports on COVID's impact on various sectors of the population and policy briefs on its impact on spheres of society. These included: COVID watch – informational videos disseminated on Facebook and YouTube

Furthermore, LST released reports and disseminated information excerpts from the project on social norms and gender stereotypes in the Northern Province.

LST released reports and disseminated information excerpts from the fact-finding mission to Batticaloa after the Easter Sunday attacks, and infographics and videos on women farmers – Harvests of Equality animated video on Facebook and YouTube.

LST released a series of videos and accompanying reports released on social media on the crisis facing farmers and the rural economy. 'What is the crisis – where do we go from here?'

During this period the initial planning and timeline formation for the fact-finding mission around COVID impact on apparel industry workers was undertaken. The study is done in collaboration with Forum Asia to highlight the plight of workers in this industry.

This was a period of transition and LST made efforts to integrate its communications content on the website, social media and email channels and ensure that the website is updated and a complete digital archive is installed.

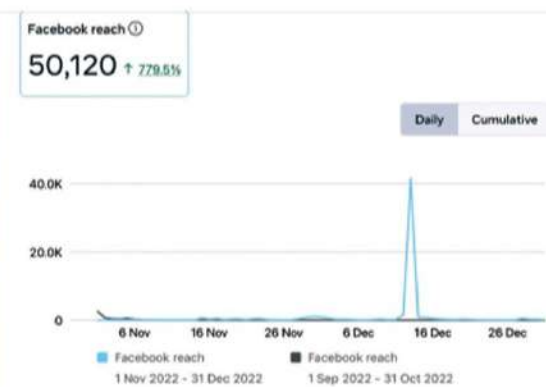
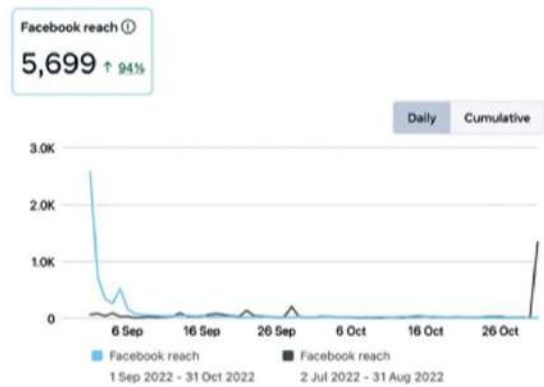
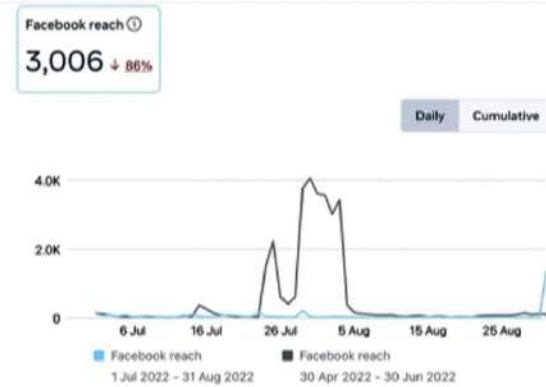
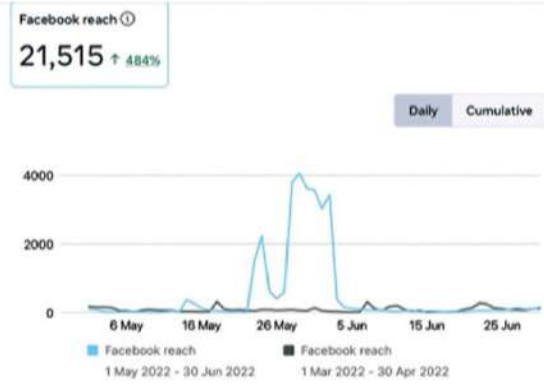
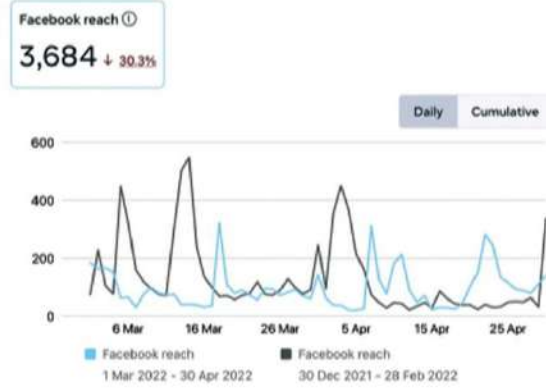
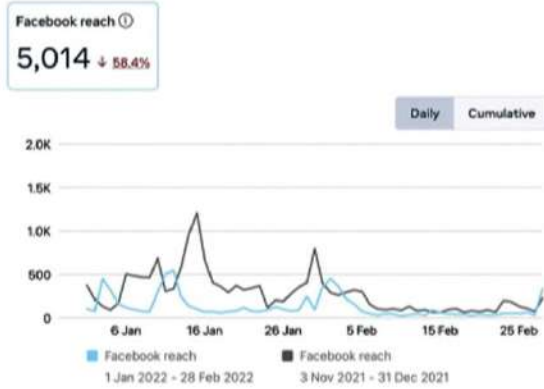
Regrettably, there remain many challenges in our communications outreach, including the design failure to track the usage of the website and this has impacted our ability to monitor outreach. This will be addressed in the coming year.

Analytics – Social Media

January 2022 – December 2022

Facebook Page – Law & Society Trust

"Law and Society Trust" Facebook page reached more than 80,000 persons in the year 2022

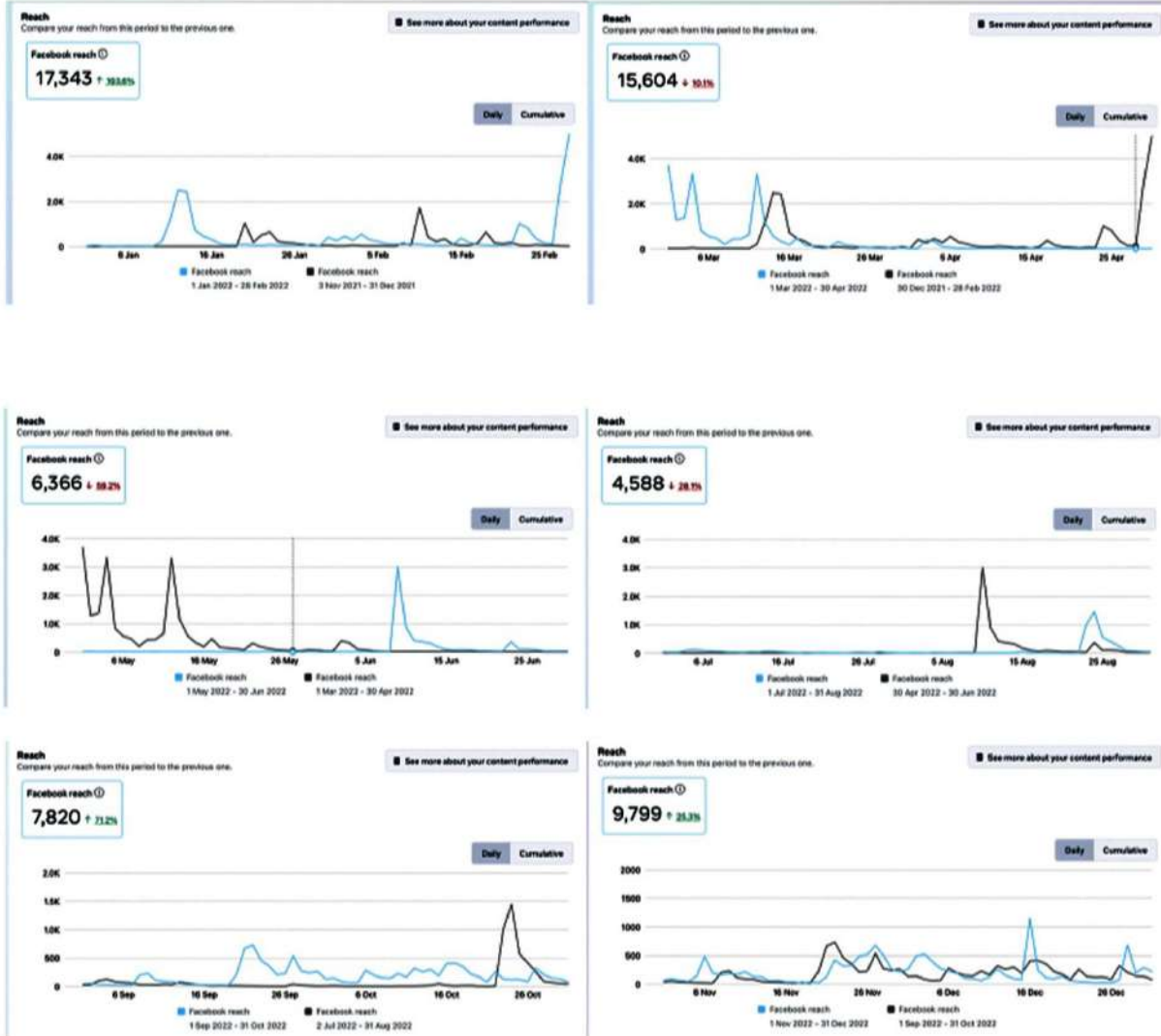


Analytics – Social Media

January 2022 – December 2022

Facebook Page – PARL

"PARL" Facebook page reached more than 60,000 persons in the year 2022

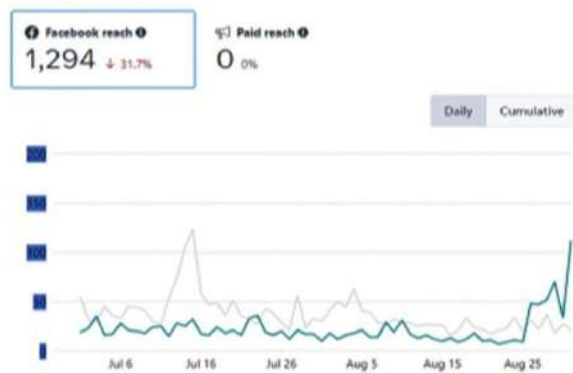
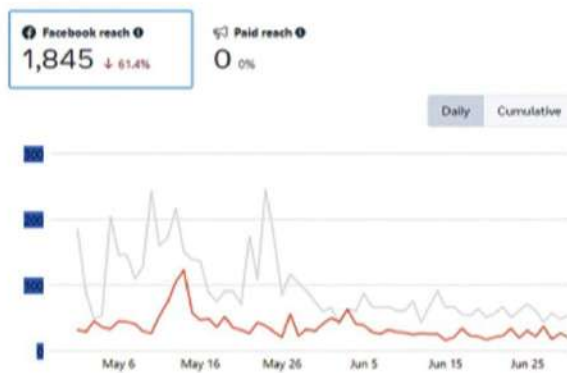
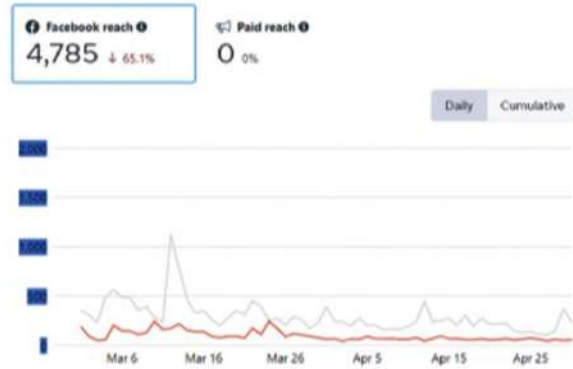
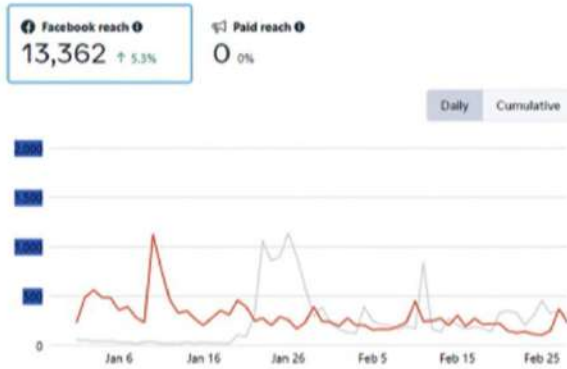


Analytics - Social Media

January 2022 - December 2022

Facebook Page - Citizens' Dialogue

"Citizen's Dialogue" Facebook page reached more than 20,000 persons in the year 2022



Donors and Partners

In 2022, LST was privileged to receive programme and long-term support from donors and partners committed to our values and objectives.

International Donors

Asia Foundation
Bank Information Center
CAFOD (Catholic Agency for Overseas Development)
Diakonia
European Union
Ford Foundation
IDEA-MSI (IDEA- Increased Demand and Engagement for Accountability) - (MSI - Systems International

NED (National Endowment for Democracy)
Open Society Foundation
WE Effect

National Donors

Neelan Tiruchelvam Trust

International Partners

Business and Human Rights Resource Centre
Forum Asia
Minority Rights Group
South Asia Collective
ESCR-Net

National Partners

People's Alliance for Right to Land
Chrysalis
Savistri Women's Movement
National Fisheries Solidarity Movement (NAFSO)
Centre for Society and Religion (CSR)

International Research Partners

University of Edinburgh

Financial Highlights

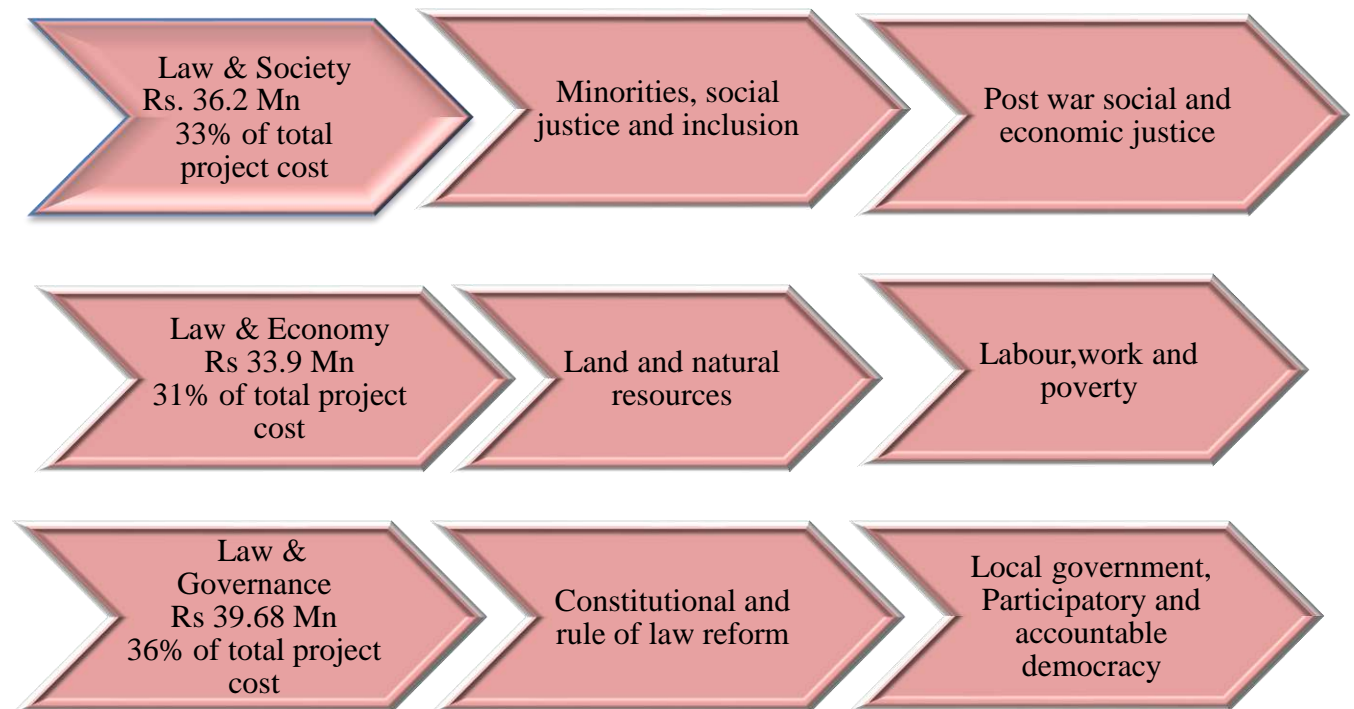
	2020	Percentage increase /(decrease) year on year	2021	Percentage increase /(decrease) year on year	2022	Percentage increase /(decrease) year on year
Income						
Grant Income	54,512	-30%	81,056	49%	108,060	33%*
Publication Income	26	-60%	14	(-46%)	47	236%
Interest Income	4,165	-18%	2,627	(-37%)	4,746	81%**
	2020	Percentage increase /(decrease) year on year	2021	Percentage increase /(decrease) year on year	2022	Percentage increase /(decrease) year on year
Net Surplus/ (Deficit)	(2,423)	39%	(2,508)	4%	10,976	338%***
Total Assets	109,854	1%	114,324	4%	123,173	8%

* The increase in grant income is attributable due to LST secured contracts with several new donors, namely NTT, Asia Foundation, Forum Asia, BIC and WFP; and LST obtained a significant exchange gain income due to the fluctuation of the exchange rate.

**The interest income has increased by 81% in 2022. This is because of the substantial increase in interest rates by the banks. (The interest rates of FDs were 10% - 14% in 2021 and they increased to 22% - 24% in 2022)

*** The net surplus increased by 338% in 2022 due to the exchange gain income. This is not a real gain from the grant income, but rather a foreign currency translation gain.

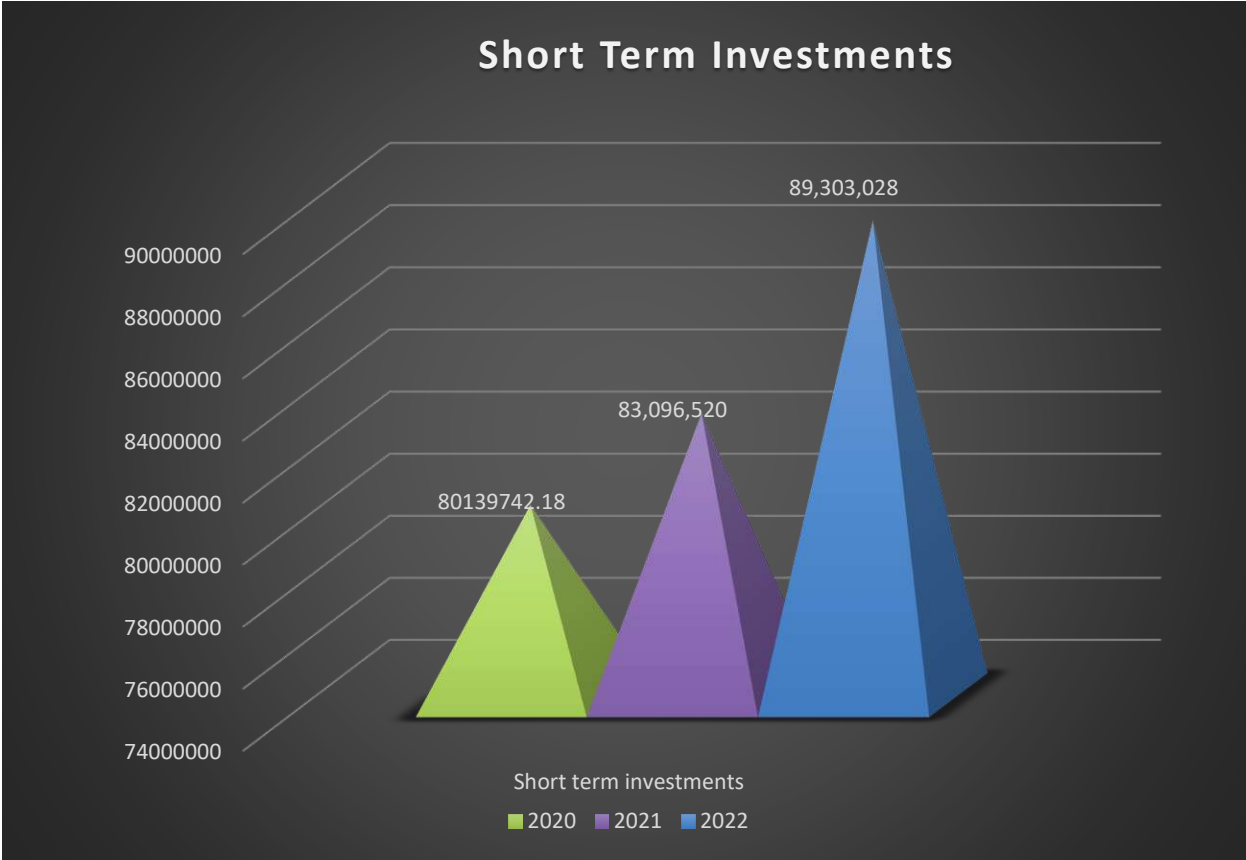
Performance vis-a-vis Strategic Plan Implementation

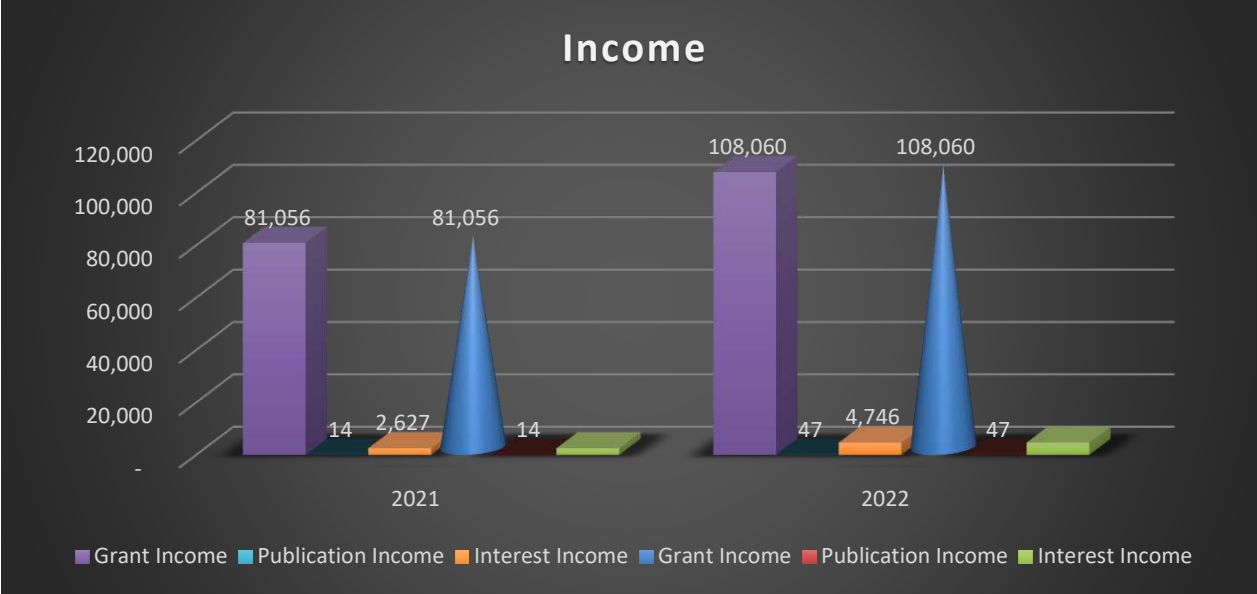


Strengthening Financial Reserves and Sustainability

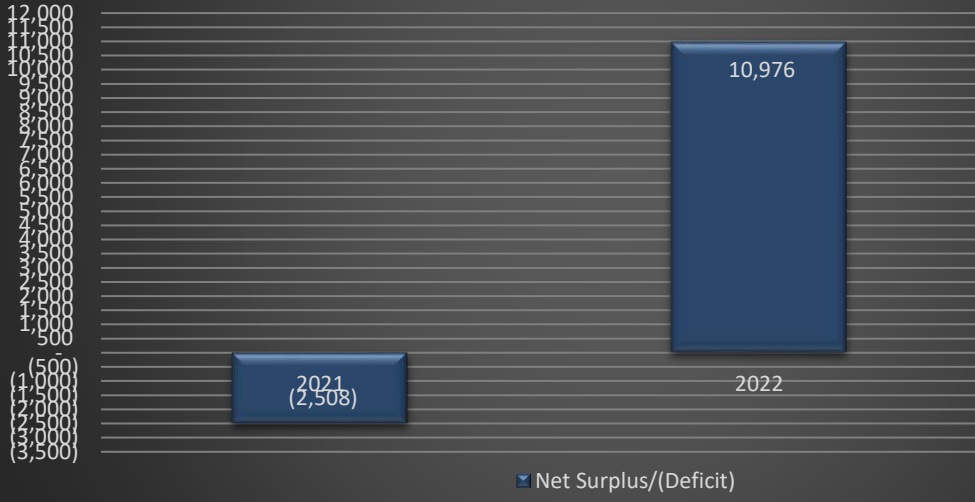
*Amounts are shown in the thousands

Reserves	2021	2022	Percentage increase / (decrease) year on year
Restricted Funds	13,118	5,661	(-57%)
Unrestricted Funds	49,300	60,276	22%
Endowment Fund	37,988	41,010	8%





Net Surplus/(Deficit)



Annual Report of the Directors for The Year Ended 31st December 2022

The Directors present herewith the Annual Report of the Board of Directors of the Law & Society Trust for the year ended 31 December 2022.

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 centers 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 cooperation in 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 the protection of human rights, acquisition and diffusion of knowledge among the masses.

Financial Statements

The financial statements of the Law & Society Trust for the year ended 31 December 2022 include the Income Statement, Statement of Financial Position and the notes to the financial statements as set out on pages 3 to 20 of the audited financial statements.

Auditor's Report

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

Accounting Policies

Accounting policies used are summarized in Note 2 to 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 of 31st December 2022 were as follows:

Dr. J A S Felix
Mr. G J T Alagaratnam
Prof. F F Haniffa
Miss. Anushya Coomaraswamy Mr.
Tissa Jayatilaka
Prof. R S Scharenguivel

Miss Anushya Coomaraswamy and Fr. 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 Mr. G J T Alagaratnam who are over 70 years will be proposed at the AGM of the Trust.

Amounts payable to the firm holding office as External Auditor

The remuneration payable by the Trust to the external auditor is given in Note 6 to the financial statements.

Auditor's relationship or any interest in 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 has a 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.

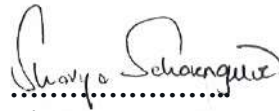
Appointment of Auditors

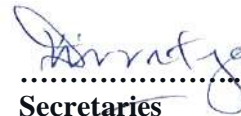
The Board has recommended a change of auditors to the members at the Annual General Meeting of the Company in keeping with corporate governance best practices. Accordingly, the Board recommends the appointment of Messrs. Ernst & Young, Chartered Accountants as Auditors of the Trust.

A resolution to appoint Messrs. Ernst & Young, 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 August 2023



LAW & SOCIETY TRUST
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சட்டம் மற்றும் சமூக நம்பிக்கை

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