



Annual Report

Law & Society Trust

2016

Law & Society Trust
No. 3, Kynsey Terrace, Colombo 08
0112 684 845
admin@lawandsocietytrust.org/
lstadmin@slt.net.lk

2016 was a year of reckoning for Sri Lanka’s civil society in multiple ways. The new regime—ushered in on a platform of good governance, transparency and accountability—was expected to make good on its election promises and international commitments. However, multiple fronts of contestation continued to emerge and besiege the hard-pressed regime. The Law & Society Trust’s work focused on these contestations in a number of ways throughout the year.

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Message from the Executive Director

2016 was a year of compromises. The Government, ushered in on a promise of good governance, accountability and transparency, was expected to make good on its election promises and international commitments. The year was marked by an unfortunate juxtaposition of progress and vacillation on different fronts. For example, the Constitutional Reform process, the passing of the Right to Information Act, ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the Consultation Task Force on Reconciliation Mechanisms, all provided hope for those who value democratic ideals, human rights and social justice principles. On the other hand, the delays in prosecuting those conspicuously involved in corruption, the new 'draft Counter Terrorism Law' that leaked a more ominous agenda of surveillance and denial of Rule of Law, the draft amendment to the Criminal Procedure Code in a similar vein, the delays, secrecy and veiling of the Constitutional Reform process, the dichotomy between the international face and domestic face of Sri Lanka's human rights commitments, all sent worrying signals of internal strife and challenges of a fragile political alliance between traditional political opponents.

In this context, the work of LST has structured itself around some of the contestations that emerged in law and society relations. In operationalising our strategic priorities, and in keeping with the strategic plan launched in June 2016, LST concentrated on three areas of emphasis; law and governance, law and the economy and law and society. In these areas of concentration, some of our bigger investments were in the areas of labour and land as factors of production and sources of livelihood.

To give effect to these important programmatic priorities, LST strengthened its core management team with the recruitment of Vijay Nagaraj as Head of Research in May 2016 and Sandun Thudugala as Head of Programmes in August 2016. The Trust continues to build its core team of researchers and programme staff, as it implements the core commitments included in its operational and strategic plans.

LST was also able to strengthen its financial position, reversing its deficit in 2015 into a net surplus in the year 2016.

A significant achievement in 2016 was the initiation of a small endowment fund for the Trust. LST gratefully acknowledges the May 18 Foundation, South Korea, for this pledge of faith in the importance of LST's continuity and its work in Sri Lanka.

With the addition of several new donors to support LST's work, the strengthened financial position is a significant gain for the Trust and bears testimony to the improved professionalisation of systems and operations at the Trust. It also reflects on the improved effectiveness of its substantive interventions. The continued support of key donors like Diakonia and Ford Foundation, CCFD Terres Solidaire and CAFOD deserves special mention. The addition of new partnerships with the National Endowment for Democracy, the American Bar Association, and a new partnership beginning in 2017 with the UN Democracy Fund, are significant relationships fostered during the year.

As part of its improved governance structures and professionalising of operations, in 2015 and early 2016, LST conducted a full review of the operational manuals and policies and procedures with the assistance of KPMG. This enabled the Trust to improve its governance measures and accountability internally. These new policies and Standard Operating Procedures were piloted in the last quarter of 2016 and come into full effect from 1.1.2017. Reporting, monitoring and evaluation have also received considerable attention from senior management as a priority concern to ensure compliance with all statutory, donor and public obligations of the Trust.

It is therefore with a sense of modest achievement and pride that the Management and Staff present the foregoing details of our work in the year 2016.

Dinushika Dissanayake

Executive Director

About the Trust

The Law & Society Trust is a non-profit organisation committed to improving public awareness on civil and political rights, social, economic and cultural rights and human rights in conflict. The Trust has played a leading role in promoting co-operation between government and society in Sri Lanka on questions relating to human rights, democracy and minority protection. The Trust has participated in initiatives to develop a domestic and globally relevant intellectual and policy agenda.

LST works to fulfil its vision through utilising rights-based strategies in research, documentation and advocacy to promote the full realisation of the rule of law, justiciability of rights and public accountability.

The trust LST enjoys within this community was built by implementing effective programmes, engaging in advocacy based on sound research and operating consistently in democratic spaces wherever they existed, to strengthen institutions and promote equal access and uphold good governance by persistent questioning, honesty and transparency.

The interventions have included rights education, advocacy and lobbying amongst the following target groups: Community-based organisations, duty bearers at the district and national levels, judges, lawyers and opinion leaders. The knowledge gained through these efforts has shaped the strategies and informed the approaches followed in all of the programmes.

The late Dr. Neelan Tiruchelvam founded the Law & Society Trust in 1982 under the Trusts 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 under the new Companies Act No.07 of 2007 as required by law.

Vision

"A Society which upholds human rights and dignity for all, free of social injustice and violence; through research, documentation and advocacy, hold executive, legislature, judiciary, public and media accountable."

Mission

"To promote the full realization of the rule of law, justiciability of rights and public accountability by effectively engaging in research, documentation and advocacy"

Goals and Objectives

The Law & Society Trust promotes human rights, social justice and the rule of law. It carries out research, documentation and advocacy, and utilises the law to achieve social and economic transformation.

The knowledge gained through research informs the general public through influencing policy recommendations, shaping the strategies and approaches and influencing internal decisions on programme development and resource allocation.

Specifically, LST through its programming areas aims to:

- Increase awareness and understanding on human rights issues amongst public officials, civil society activists and the media;
- Strengthen local administrative structures on laws and good governance;
- Strengthen civil society actors working for human rights;
- Broaden and deepen the discourse and practice of human rights to include the right to development and social justice as well as rights within the development process.
- Increase networking and collaborations in the Asia region and especially South Asia.

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. *Effective accountability with good governance, transparency, equality and social justice;*
5. *To empower and build the capacity of rights holders;*

Board of Directors

LST's Board of Directors meets once in two months.

They are:

1. **Mr. Chandra Jayaratne (Chairman)**
2. Dr. G. Uswatte-Aratchi
3. Prof. W.I. Siriweera
4. Mr. G.J.T. Alagaratnam, PC
5. Dr. Shivaji Felix
6. Dr. Harini Amarasuriya

COMPANY SECRETARY

The Company Secretaries of the Trust is Secretarius (Private) Limited.

AUDITORS

The Auditors of the Trust are appointed annually by the Members of the Trust at its annual general meeting. The Auditors for the year 2016 were KPMG.

Staff

Senior Management Team

- Dinushika Dissanayake - Executive Director
- Sandun Thudugala - Head of Programmes (from August 2016)
- Vijay Nagaraj - Head of Research (from May 2016)

Programme and Research Staff-

- Programme Co-ordinator - P.M. Senarathne
- Research Officer - Anushka Kahandagama
- Research Officer - Prashanthi Jayasekara (from October 2016)
- Programme Co-ordinator - Jegan Prakash (from April 2016)
- Senior Programme Officer - Buddhima Padamasiri (March 2016 - August 2016)
- Senior Programme Officer - Aingaran Kugathanan (until 31st December 2016)
- Programme Co-ordinator - Sabra Zahid (until 31st December 2016)
- Research Officer - Niroshika Wegiriya (until November 2016)

Publications

- Editor (In-House) - Dilhara Pathirana
- Editor (LST Review)- Rasika Mendis (until April 2016); Juanita Arulanathan and Thiagi Piyadasa (from May 2016)
- Editor (State of Human Rights)- Dr. Dinesha Samararatne

Library Services

- Librarian and Information Officer - Harshani Connel

HR and Admin

- HR and Admin Officer - Janaki Dharmasena

Finance Unit

- Finance Manager - Jayasinghe & Co., Hasara Fernando
- Accounts Assistant - Prasanna Gajaweera

Office Assistant

M. Sunandane

Program Achievements, Challenges and Opportunities

One of the key changes made by LST to its working structures in 2016 was the reduction of programmatic divisions in order to benefit cross-team collaboration and allow for leaner management structures. This has led to improved migration between teams, improved effectiveness and robust teamwork. Therefore the achievements and challenges of 2016 are set out based on interventions and operational priorities rather than by programmatic divisions.

In 2016, LST conducted research, advocacy and citizen empowerment initiatives in different areas of its work. These included cross-cutting features, such as the gender dimensions that relate to reconciliation and the recognition of human rights needs of vulnerable communities. For this purpose, two important areas of research, for which LST have now gathered valuable information through community and stakeholder consultations, were with regard to labour and informal work. These are new areas of intervention and provide cutting-edge research initiatives in areas that are scarcely interrogated by mainstream research entities in Sri Lanka.

The thematic priorities set out in the Strategic Plan of LST have been consolidated and operationalised into three specific operational areas;

- (a) Law and Society
- (b) Law and Governance
- (c) Law and Economy

The Trust is grateful to its donors and partners, especially Diakonia, Ford Foundation, American Jewish World Service (AJWS), National Endowment for Democracy, CCFD Terres Solidaire, USAID

(through the SPICE program and MSI), CAFOD, and the American Bar Association. We are also appreciative of the continuing collaborations with our regional partner, FORUM ASIA. These partnerships have been essential for the Trust to meet its strategic objectives during the year.

Law & Economy

National Consultation on Labor and Informal Work

In December 2016, LST convened a national-level consultation on labour and informal work, at the WERC Auditorium in Colombo. This one-day consultation witnessed the participation of diverse and important stakeholders, including formal and informal trade union representatives and civil society activists. This exercise led to further research areas and questions being formulated by the LST team in order to inform research and advocacy work in 2017 and beyond. These consultations led to an improved understanding of the gender dimensions of labour, and informalisation. This consultation also led to LST defining its work on labour and how it impacts the larger discourse on reconciliation, defined broadly and beyond the narrow definition adopted by the state in terms of reconciliation. It also provided opportunity for network building among important stakeholders in relation to the identified issues.

Documentation of the right to Health and gendered dimensions of CKDu, research and advocacy

LST organised a people's tribunal on agrochemicals in September 2016. The report of the civil society judges was submitted in October 2016 to the Monsanto Tribunal in Geneva, where alleged crimes committed by multinational companies like Monsanto were considered. In December 2016, LST also translated the CKDu research report written as a result of its field research into local languages. These initiatives have led to an improved understanding of the causes, effects and strategies that civil society can use to demand for rights-based agricultural and land use policies to be adopted by the Government as well

as mono-crop cultivating private companies—many of whom are multinationals.

Reduced incidents of illegal land grabs and violent conflict resulting from such land grabs

The work LST undertook in land law literacy in the areas of Lahugala, Muttur and Trincomalee led to an improved understanding of land law amongst government land offices and community leaders and villagers. LST published a compilation of all of the land related gazettes in Sri Lanka on the request of the land officers. Both government and other actors expressed the usefulness of having access to these documents, which often prove elusive. LST has also been campaigning at a broader level for constitutional reforms that include economic, social and cultural rights, such as the right to land and the right to food and water.

In June 2016, LST undertook the secretariat role for the People's Alliance for the Right to Land (PARL) Network. PARL is a broad network of CSOs working on the protection of the right to land in Sri Lanka. This led to various discussions with government officials and with communities, and campaign work, culminating in a court decision that supported the land rights of people. A campaign amongst tourists in the southern and eastern coastal belt further supported the work of land rights awareness organised by this network.

Improving community capacity to defend themselves against illegal land grabs which can result in violent conflict

Over 400 people who attended the land rights training programmes of LST benefited from the trainings on land laws. The trainers themselves were qualified lawyers and/or land officers and both government officers and villagers expressed the increase in their knowledge subsequent to these trainings. In 2017, the villagers have also informed

LST that subsequent to the trainings, several land issues in the area relating to non issue of permits, grants etc., were resolved. Therefore, through this intervention, communities have confirmed that they are now able to protect their right to land, and in areas like Panama, where violent conflict has erupted in the past due to land-related disputes.

National level advocacy for laws amendment and policy-level inclusion of rights-based approach to development

The Trust continued with its lawyers' task force for review of existing laws and legislation in 2016, and has produced a review of such laws related to state land, which are discriminatory—or infringe upon human rights—and therefore warrant amendment. The work of the Trust has led to discussions with the land commissioner in Colombo. The support LST extended to PARL and the advocacy initiatives implemented through PARL have also been supported by the knowledge of the gaps in the law recognised through these initiatives and through discussions and trainings at village level.

Awareness raising and capacity building programs in respect of land law

In 2016, LST conducted grass roots laws and administrative procedures literacy in relation to land law and administration in Thunakkai, Mullaitivu and Vavuniya.

7th AHRDF

From 14-16 November 2016, FORUM-ASIA together with its Sri Lankan members, Inform Human Rights Documentation Centre and LST, hosted the 7th Asian Regional Human Rights Defenders Forum in Colombo, Sri Lanka. The Forum is a biennial meeting, where women human rights defenders (WHRDs) and human rights defenders (HRDs) from Asia and beyond gather to look into patterns and trends of violations. They also review and brainstorm on more effective protection policies and mechanisms. The

theme for this year was '*Towards Effective Protection for Human Rights Defenders/Women Human Rights Defenders: Self Reflection and Moving Forward*'.

Law and Society

Translation and reprint of the Aluthgama Report

The Aluthgama report was compiled subsequent to the Aluthgama riots in 2014. Over the years, it continued to be an important record of yet another dark moment in Sri Lanka's history. In 2015, LST partnered with the Neelan Tiruchelvam Trust and the Office of National Unity and Reconciliation (ONUR) to translate the report into local languages. In 2016, LST launched the translations at a discussion reflecting on the event of 2014 two years on and made the translations available to ONUR for their work *vis-à-vis* national reconciliation.

Through this intervention, LST was able to contribute to outcomes of improved levels of trust between people of different faiths and ethnicities within and between communities due to better-informed citizens and better acknowledgement of the sources and causes of violent conflict in Sri Lanka relating to ethnicity and religion. The discussion around this book launch and the availability of the book in Sinhala and Tamil has improved its access to Sinhala and Tamil-speaking audiences. In our view, the discussion and dissemination of the report contributes to achieving reconciliation, peace and justice amongst communities of different ethnicities and religions in Sri Lanka.

Improving Discourse on Transitional Justice- "Confronting the Complexity of Loss" by Gehan Gunatilleke

Through this intervention, LST was able to contribute to improved understanding of gender dimensions and the context of reconciliation in intervention locations. This document provided vital and emotional

documentation of the lived experiences of families of the disappeared. The prolific crime of enforced disappearances in Sri Lanka means that any transitional justice mechanism must engage with this crime and this documentation in our view would be invaluable in this endeavor.

"The Truth of Truth" – Feldman Lecture Series

In January 2016 LST completed the last lectures of the Feldman Lecture series that began in December 2016. The lectures centered on transitional justice with particular reference to South Africa's experiences. The concluding event was in the form of a street drama on reconciliation held at Kynsey Terrace, outside LST's offices. The Lecture series was held with the generous collaboration of Professor Allen Feldman, Professor of Media, Culture, and Communication at the New York University Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Human Development.

Preliminary Research on Lived Experiences of War-affected Women with Disabilities

This action-based research, which began in 2016, would improve the ability of persons with disabilities to improve the gendered lived experience of disability and to contribute to justice frameworks that are largely blind to the large numbers of war-affected persons with disabilities.

This issue doubly affects women. Therefore this work, it was felt, would fill a void that no other organisation in Sri Lanka appeared willing to address. The result has been that women with disabilities have been trained for action research in the field, led by competent and experienced researchers from both Sri Lanka and Australia. It is expected that the research will provide much needed data and

documentation in 2017, which will in turn support ongoing transitional justice and development aid action by both state and non-state actors. A first consultation in October 2016 on responding to a request for information by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights led to a more focused 5-day workshop on research methodologies with persons with disabilities in December 2016. The field research is to be conducted in 2017. This consultation also led to issues being identified in relation to the lived experiences of war-affected women with disabilities.

The Trust values the voluntary collaboration with the Social Scientists' Association (SSA), Colombo in building the capacity of future researchers at this workshop.

State of Human Rights Publication

The editorial work on the State of Human Rights 2016 continued with Dr. Dinesha Samararatne from the Faculty of Law, University of Colombo, who has been the editor for several years. In the review of 2015, the chapters for the SHR included an overview chapter, transitional justice, international monitoring of human rights and an analysis of the death penalty debate through cartoons.

LST Review, 2016

The LST Review was re-imagined in the year 2016, from the monthly publication that it used to be to a quarterly publication. The new editors of the LST Review, Juanita Arulanathan and Thiagi Piyadasa, both lawyers by profession, have led the Review in the direction of the examination of law and society issues of particular relevance to 2016. These include 'Queering the Law', and economic, social and cultural rights in the Constitution. The Review also highlighted, within its analysis, the various aspects of reconciliation, including submissions by various

groups to the Consultation Task Force on Reconciliation Mechanisms (CTF).

State of Minority Rights Report

The Sri Lanka Chapter for the State of Minority Rights Report was written by LST with the collaboration of an external consultant, Sarita Fonseka. The Report was launched in November 2016 and was also presented to the SAARC Secretary General in Kathmandu, the Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka and the Special Rapporteur for Human Rights Defenders, Michel Forst. This activity contributed to an improved understanding of minority constraints in Sri Lanka's social and cultural milieu and the actions necessary to meet true reconciliation and human rights needs of all minorities.

Recommendations on the Reconciliation mechanisms suitable for Sri Lanka

In relation to recommendations on reconciliation mechanisms in Sri Lanka, LST recognised the low priority given to economic reparations and economic social and cultural rights in the transitional justice and constitutional reform processes. Combined with neo-liberal agendas of powerful lobbyists within and outside government, the possibility of complete removal of these rights issues from transitional justice agendas was a serious concern. LST engaged in 2016 with the Consultative Task Force on pertinent issues relevant to the reconciliation process. In 2016 LST also conducted a discussion in Colombo on Constitutional Reform, Reconciliation and ESC rights for Sri Lanka at the South Asia Partnership Sri Lanka (SAPRI). This discussion informed the ESCR shadow report that LST convened over December 2016 and January 2017 for submission to the UNCESCR (UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights), which will review Sri Lanka in 2017. The discussion resulted in several recommendations that are now

being compiled to be included in the shadow report on the ICESCR in 2017.

Contribute to improved understanding of human rights to include inter-religious harmony, peace and conflict, human rights and business and other issues as is timely

In 2016, LST contracted for the writing of think pieces on transitional justice. They contribute to ongoing discussions on adopting transitional justice mechanisms that are sensitive to the ethnic, religious, gender and social diversity of Sri Lanka. The research think pieces provide critical thinking on issues related to gender, collective identities and reparations amongst other subjects. LST also conducted discussion programmes around issues of truth and justice in the context of reconciliation.

Promoting Sustainable Peace and Reconciliation in Sri Lanka

Supported by our principal donors Diakonia and Ford as well as SPICE-MSI, LST conducted an 8-month project working with journalists to improve their understanding of peace and reconciliation and their ability to respond to needs in terms of reporting on sensitive issues.

Community Consultations on Domestic Violence

LST documented and consulted with various groups in Sri Lanka on domestic violence, in partnership with Chrysalis. The findings were submitted to Chrysalis, to assist in a review of the Domestic Violence Act in Sri Lanka.

Law and Governance

ANNI Report 2016

The ANN annually evaluates the performance of the human rights commissions of Asia. LST contributed the Sri Lanka chapter, which was written by K. Aingkaran and Sabra Zahid, in 2016.

Contribute to Constitutional Reform through Discussion Programs

LST organised a workshop on Constitutional reform in 2016, a first in a number of subsequent meetings and gatherings. At this workshop, many questions and early answers to the pending constitutional reform process at the time were discussed. It led to lively engagements on both the reform process and its impact on transitional justice and social justice for Sri Lanka.

Contribute to International Mechanisms and processes to improve rule of law

In 2016, LST contributed to the civil society shadow report to the Committee on the Convention against Torture (CAT) [the Joint alternative Report from the Sri Lanka NGO Collective to the Committee Against Torture]. The report was instrumental in the objective review of Sri Lanka in November 2016 at the CAT committee deliberations. Several interns and staff of the human rights and reconciliation programme directly contributed to this process.

LST also collaborated with over 80 other groups in September 2016 in providing research support to a public rally to demand the inclusion of social, economic and cultural rights in the Constitution. The initial meeting for this rally, at the Centre for Society

and Religion, attracted a packed audience of trade union representatives, NGO representatives, land rights activists and other activists with diverse backgrounds. This also led to the formation of a broad alliance with a large number of CSOs, Trade Unions and others. Due to this campaign LST's work also received wide media coverage and led to further engagements on numerous occasions on economic, social and cultural rights in Sri Lanka.

The lack of government accountability on economic and social fronts have direct consequences on inter-ethnic and inter-faith harmony due to inherent discriminations that surround non-rights based economic and social policies. Therefore all of these initiatives contributed to holding government accountable for various issues that affect human rights.

Public discussions in relation to improving the Rule of Law and Accountability in Sri Lanka

In 2016, LST also conducted field research in Kandy and Badulla. A research report was produced from this field research in December of 2016. Prior to this, in May 2016, LST convened a meeting for a number of civil society actors as well as government actors to strategise on land use, agricultural policy and non-communicable diseases, like Chronic Kidney Disease of Unknown Etiology in Sri Lanka. This discussion led to an informal coalition of civil society actors coming together from different disciplines to strategise on how to improve accountability in Sri Lanka.

Research on the Everyday Workings of the Criminal Justice System

In October/November 2016, LST began a unique research project on the everyday workings of the criminal justice system, designed to be a longer process over 1 or 2 years.

In meeting this outcome and impact, it was felt that the current context of political developments in Sri Lanka required a different intervention strategy, especially given the pace of Constitutional Reform and public consultations on transitional justice. In this light, the need of the hour was to produce a body of knowledge and public awareness material on economic, social and cultural rights, and the serious erosions to meeting such rights, which have historically contributed to inter-ethnic and inter-religious disharmony. In order to achieve this, LST convened a series of discussions, workshops and processes to document infringement of these rights in Sri Lanka and to combat and challenge the influential neoliberal lobbies that are working to remove ESC rights from the new Constitution.

This includes LST convening a joint civil society shadow report on ESC rights in time for the Committee on ESC rights, which will review Sri Lanka's performance in 2017. Several groups, including disability groups, land rights activists, women's groups and others, have convened with LST for this process along with a New Delhi based organisation specialising in these processes. The expenditure for this activity has increased beyond the

original budgets due to the importance placed on responding to these pressing concerns.

South Asia Judicial Barometer

LST and FORUM-ASIA are collaborating on producing the South Asia Judicial Barometer, a one-of-a-kind publication specifically focusing on the rule of law in South Asia. With chapters for 2016/17 from five South Asian countries at the moment, LST is also writing the Sri Lanka chapter in-house. This is a first for South Asia as far as LST is aware, and focuses on the performance of the judiciary in the region in upholding human rights and social justice.

ABA Project on Anti-Corruption

LST undertook a month-long project with the American Bar Association on documenting and disseminating case law on corruption to make such decided cases accessible and a deterrent. In the fight against corruption this is a mere fragment of support, but in terms of case summaries and reproduction of specific cases, including the only recorded instance of a complaint of a sexual bribe, this section on LST's official website is very significant in our view.

Internal Capacity Development in 2016

In 2016, LST invested heavily in improving its research interventions and hired three sociologists to join the LST team (Anushka Kahandagama [Dec. 2015], Vijay Nagaraj [May 2016] and Prashanthi Jayasekara [October 2016]). LST invested in its staff with 3 staff members receiving training/overseas exposure at full or partial scholarships (2 in South Korea, 1 in Bangkok and 1 in Sri Lanka).

In 2016, LST representatives attended various regional initiatives. P.M. Senaratne, Program Co-ordinator at LST, attended a two-week training programme on Asia and Human Rights in South Korea. Sabra Zahid, also a Program Co-ordinator at LST, applied for and was selected to attend the Glocal leadership training academy in Bangkok, Thailand in August 2016. Niroshika Wegiriya, Research Officer at LST, attended a 2-week training programme on gender and human rights in South Korea. Dinushika Dissanayake, Executive Director, attended the FORUM ASIA General Assembly in January 2016. In addition, she was invited make two presentations at the Grassroots workshop organised by May 18 Foundation, South Korea in May 2016. As a result of these presentations to South Korean donors, LST received substantive funding, which benefited the newly created Endowment Fund of the Trust.

LST has also revised its operational plan and the programme structure to enable the maximum usage of available resources and increase synergies between the programmes. LST has adopted a more flexible structure under the three operational priorities with a fluid structure, which enables the staff to work across the programmes as necessary.

In improving its internal accountability and governance, LST hired professional consultancy services from KPMG to assist in reviewing current policies and procedures of the Trust and to help in developing manuals on HR and Financial functions. This includes partnership and consultancy/associate agreements, procurements, vehicle use, annual procedures etc. The manuals came into full effect from 1st of January 2017 after gradual introduction to the staff in the last quarter of 2016.

LST's management also introduced various policies to streamline its work and improve efficiency as well as accountability. These include an investment policy, a policy for management of the Endowment Fund, a procurement policy and an intern management policy to improve its internship programme. A draft gender policy is to be presented in 2017 for approval to the Board of Directors, along with a draft environmental policy for the organisation.

LST presented its strategic plan to its members in June 2016. With this, LST also prepared an operational plan for the year, which has three major priorities. In line with these priorities, LST is focusing on a number of specific issues already outlined previously, with the biggest interest areas being land and labour.

The Trust has affiliations with a number of talented individuals to work with its team in various capacities, but attracting and retaining high caliber staff despite challenges of funding, remains a priority for the Trust.

Some of the recommendations LST makes with regard to its own capacity-building needs are as follows:

1. Attraction and retention of key, value adding human resources to further LST's strategic priorities;
2. Improved financial and resource mobilisation capacity, including dedicated staff for the

purpose of mobilizing resources to support LST's work;

3. Improved financial stability and diversification of income sources for LST inclusive of the building of the endowment fund of LST;
4. Further capacity development for LST as identified in its capacity development plan of 2017.

Library and Information Services

In 2016, LST undertook several steps to improve its library and information services. The collection includes volumes that date back to the 17th century and the preservation of this important collection is a significant priority for LST's management.

LST fully catalogued its vast collection of human rights, law and sociology books in 2015 and the early months of 2016. Thereafter, the library was professionally valued in the last half of 2016, enabling LST to insure the valuable collection. The collection had not been valued in the recent past and in keeping with accounting standards and for the purpose of insuring the collection, a professional valuation was a necessity. The valuation added an amount of approximately Rs. 2.5 million to our comprehensive income in the year.

Many law students and others use the library services and with the repair of LST's building, the number of users of the library has doubled year on year. LST also applied to the International Law Book Facility in 2015 and received a donation of 28 boxes of law books to replace some of the valuable volumes that were lost in the fire in December 2014. This consignment was cleared and added to our library in March 2016.

LST also updated its website in 2016 and attempted to make information more accessible although some

problems continue to persist in this area, particularly in terms of turnaround time for website updates. These issues are scheduled to be resolved in the coming year, to enable the website to respond better to LST's specific needs.

Harshani Connel, LST's librarian and information officer, attended a digital security training programme in November 2016 in Colombo to improve LST's security of its online information and work. LST's use of social media platforms also significantly improved in 2016 with live tweeting and Facebook updates during events introduced by LST at many of its larger events and public gatherings.

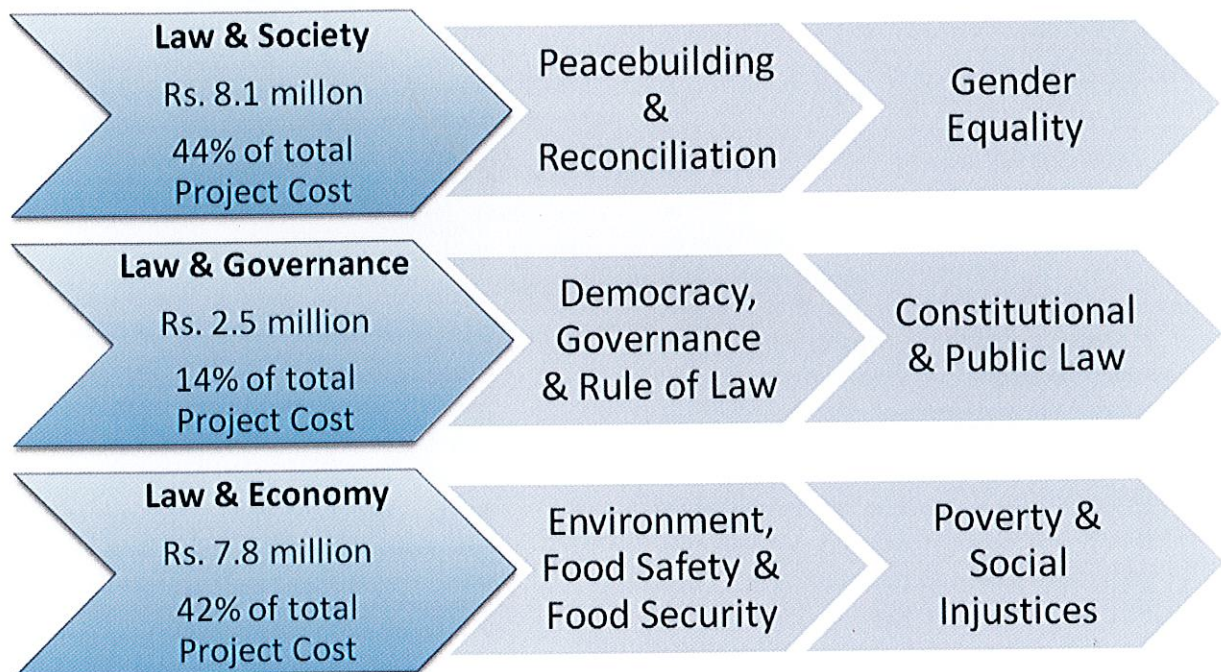
Some of LST's staff has also been trained in 2016 through a digital security clinic held at the 7th AHRDF, to ensure safety of participants who may be at risk, when sharing information and live transmissions at LST events. Securing of digital safety at these gatherings is extremely important since some participants may be at heightened risk due to their human rights activities.

Major Impact & Outcomes from operational activities for the Year 2016

Outcomes

1. Made significant impact on the discourses around national processes such as constitutional reforms, consultation task force on reconciliation and on joint civil society parallel reports for UPR, CAT and ICESCR. LST was instrumental in initiating the dialogue on the need of including ESC justice and rights in the constitution, which was followed by others including National Human Rights commission. LST recommendations were captured in subcommittee reports of the constitutional assembly and CTF report
2. LST was able to facilitate the formation of broad civil society networks to advocate socio, economic and political justice issues. People's Alliance for Right to Land, Action for a People's Constitution, Civil society Collective for ESC Rights are some broad alliances facilitated by LST.
3. In 2016 LST increased the land law literacy of 151 community leaders and 125 Government officers in Lahugala, Muttur and Musali DS divisions. As a result, around 250 families have started the processes of resolving their land issues and obtaining permits for their land.
4. LST supported land struggles in Paanama, Kepapilau, Mullikulam and Valikamam through PARL. LST has played a key role in documenting these issues in a way that can be used in national and international level advocacy.
5. LST facilitated formulation of policy level recommendations to address broader issues related to community land rights being formulated and discussed among other CSOs, Government officers and lawyers.
6. Collaborated with other civil society groups including women's movements, labor movements, disability rights movements and plantation workers organizations to articulate their issues and recommendations to advocate at national and international level. International advocacy efforts through writings, research and programs have included collaboration with FORUM ASIA and its members on regional human rights issues, supporting the 7th Asian Human Rights Defenders' Forum, collaborative in the publication of the South Asia Minority Rights publication and spearheading the South Asia Judicial Barometer.

Performance vis-à-vis Strategic Plan Implementation

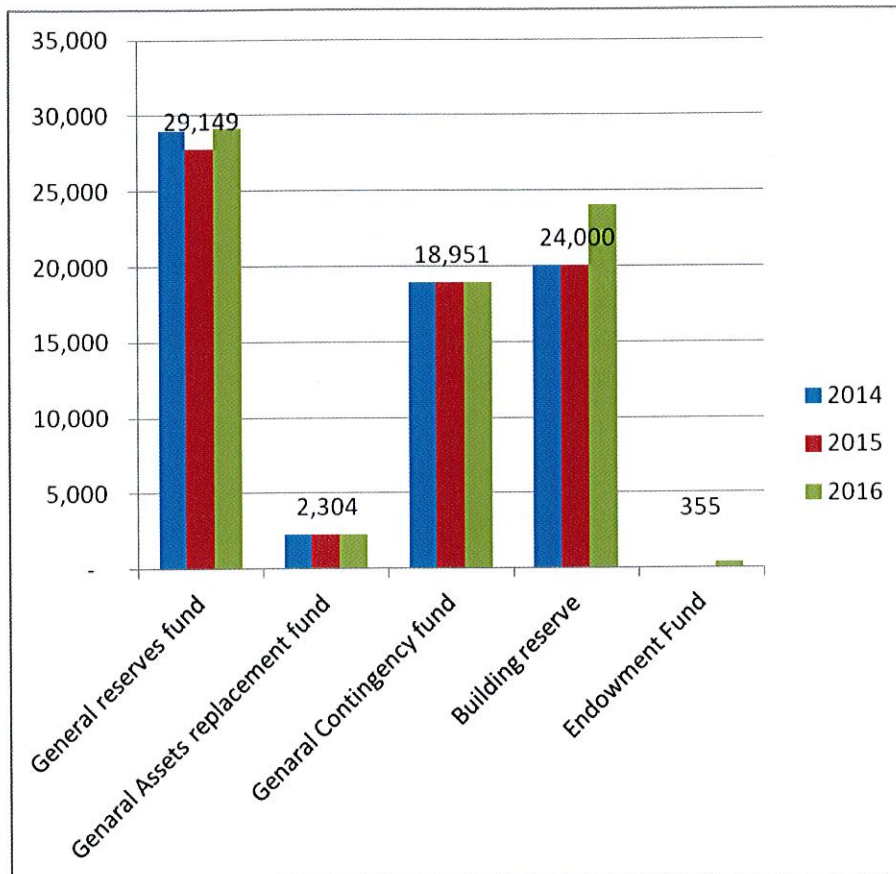


Strengthening Financial Reserves and Sustainability

*Amounts shown in thousands

Reserves	2014	Percentage increase/(decrease) year on year	2015	Percentage increase/(decrease) year on year	2016	Percentage increase/(decrease) year on year
General Reserves Fund	28,955	48%	27,788	(4%)	29,149	5%
General Assets Replacement fund	2,304	-	2,304	-	2,304	-
General Contingency Fund	18,950	-	18,950	-	18,950	-
Building Reserve	20,038	-	20,038	-	24,000	20%
Endowment Fund	-	-	-	-	355	100%

Movement in Reserves



Financial Highlights

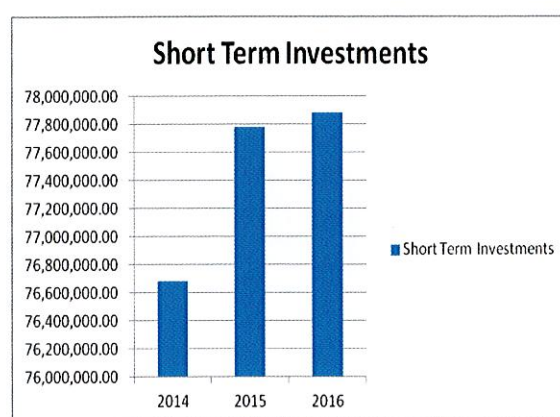
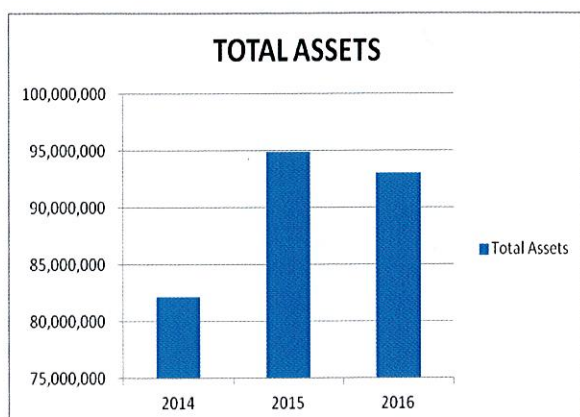
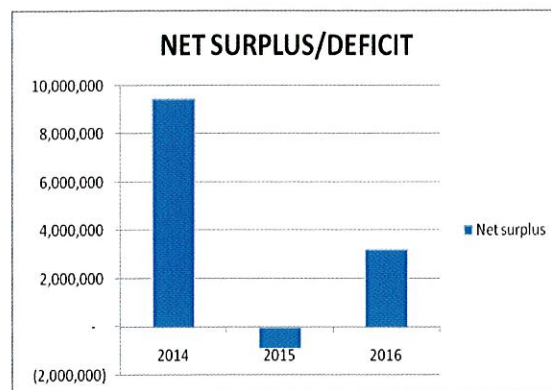
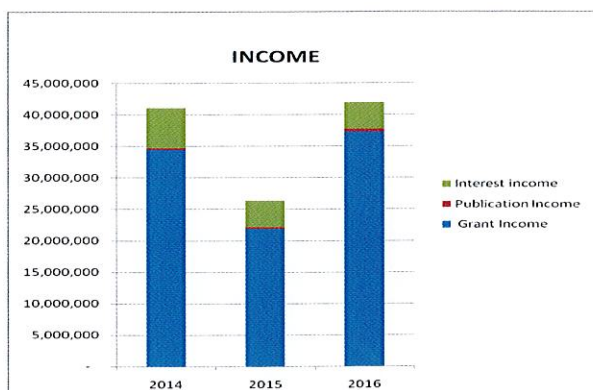
*Amounts shown in thousands

*0% is due to the minute (Rs.13,972/-) year on year decrease.

Income	2014	Percentage increase/(decrease) year on year	2015	Percentage increase/(decrease) year on year	2016	Percentage increase/(decrease) year on year
Grant Income	34,396	(13%)	21,892	(36%)	37,292	70%
Publication Income	245	(50%)	220	(10%)	399	81%
Interest Income	6,386	(22%)	4,190	(34%)	4,176	*0%

	2014	Percentage increase/(decrease) year on year	2015	Percentage increase/(decrease) year on year	2016	Percentage increase/(decrease) year on year
Net Surplus (Deficit)	9,440	41%	(1,167)	(112%)	3,197	374%
Total Assets	82,159	(16%)	94,903	16%	93,037	(2%)†

†2% reduction in 2016 is due to advance receipt of restricted grant funds received in 2015 for utilizing in 2016 projects



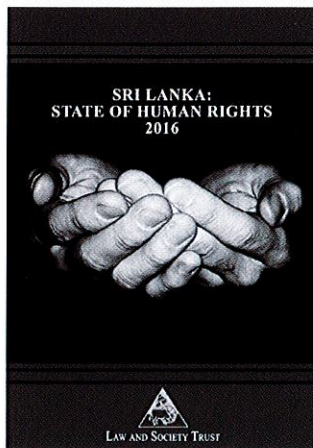
Special notes for attention:

- Office Equipment Purchase are set out in (Note 2 in the Accounts). Most of the equipment acquired therein was equipment either (a) acquired to replace those that were damaged due to the 2014 fire or (b) replacement of unusable capital assets. The acquisitions were largely funded by Donors.
- In relation to LST's restricted fund core grants (Note 9 in the accounts), the Ford Foundation receivable balance of Rs. 2,874,516 remains receivable in the first quarter of 2017. Therefore the balance as of the end of the year is an asset for the Organization.
- The Library Book Valuation was done as at 31st December 2016. LST's Statement of Financial Activities benefited from a valuation gain of Rs. 2,596,530 /-
- Deferred Revenue-(in the Statement of Financial Position)- These are Capital assets funded by Donors and recognized as deferred revenue in the statement of Financial statement and realized to the Statement of financial activities according to the Depreciation method.
- The Bank account representing and overdraft was merely the cashbook balance representing the un-presented cheques float.

Visual Snapshot



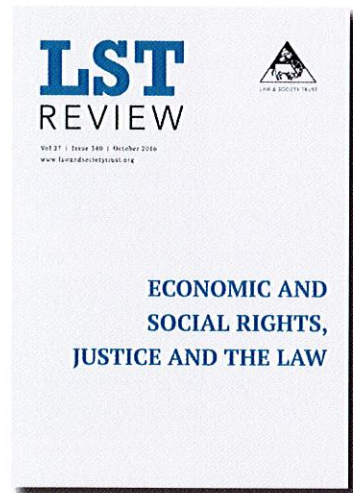
Land Laws Training Programme in Lahugala by Land Project



Cover of Sri Lanka State of Human Rights 2016



Staff Trip to Che Adventure Park, Hanwella, April 2016



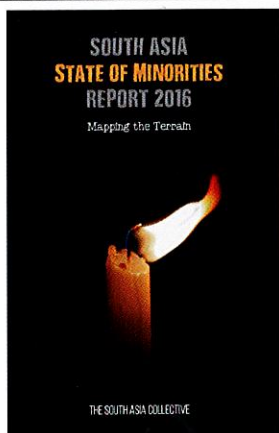
Cover of LST Review, October Edition



Rally held on Constitutional Reform, September 2016



Disability Rights workshop, December 2016



South Asia State of Minorities Report 2016



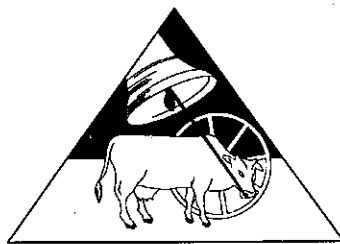
7th Asian Human Rights Defenders Forum, November 2016



Launch of the book “Leonard Woolf as a Judge in Ceylon: A British Civil Servant as a Judge in the Hambantota District of Colonial Sri Lanka (1908-1911)”, October 2016



Conclusion of Feldman Lecture Series on “The Truth of Truth”, Street drama on Reconciliation at Kynsey Terrace, January 2016



LAW & SOCIETY TRUST

Law & Society Trust (LSI)

No. 3, Kynsey Terrace, Colombo 8, Sri Lanka

T: +94112684845, 2691228, 2684853

F: +94112686843

E: lstadmin@sltnet.lk | admin@lawandsocietytrust.org

W: www.lawandsocietytrust.org