# SAFE FOUNDATION
# EMPOWERING CSOS TO COMBAT HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN SRI LANKA (ECCT)

## ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT FY 2023
October 2022 to September 2023

OCTOBER 2023

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# SAFE FOUNDATION

## Annual Progress Report:

## Fiscal Year 2023

## October 2022 to September 2023

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Empowering Civil Society Organizations to Combat Human Trafficking in Sri Lanka

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## CONTENTS


EXECUTIVE SUMMARY ..... 3
CONTEXTUAL CHANGES ..... 5
ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT ..... 7
SUMMARY OF RESULTS ..... 11
CROSS CUTTING THEMES ..... 18
CHALLENGES AND KEY LESSONS ..... 19
FINANCIAL UPDATE ..... 19
ANNEX 1: ECCT RESULTS AGAINST INDICATORS ..... 21
ANNEX 2: PARTNER PROJECT LOCATIONS ..... 25
ANNEX 3: TOR PROGRAM MANAGEMNT AND LEARNING TEAM ..... 26
ANNEX 5: PUBLICITY MATERIALS & MEDIA PUBLICITY FOR THE PROJECT ..... 28
ANNEX 6: SUCCESS STORIES ..... 36

## ACRONYMS

| | |
|---|---|
| CBOs | Community Based Organizations |
| CSOs | Civil Society Organizations |
| ECCT | Empowering CSOs to Combat Human Trafficking in Sri Lanka |
| EDO | Economic Development Officer |
| EOI | Expression of Interest |
| FEDO | Foreign Employment Development Officer |
| FGD | Focus Group Discussion |
| GND | Grama Niladari Division (Village level administrative unit) |
| GOSL | Government of Sri Lanka |
| IEC | Information, Education and Communication |
| KII | Key Informant Interview |
| MWF | Migrant Worker Forums |
| NUPAS | Non-US Organization Pre-Award Survey |
| OECRP | Organization of Environment and Children Rights Preservation |
| PMLT | Program Learning and Management Team |
| PMN | Prathiba Media Network |
| RAHAMA | Recovery and Humanitarian Action Management Agency |
| SHG | Self-Help Groups |
| SLBFE | Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment |
| SM | Safe Migration |
| TIP | Trafficking in Persons |
| USAID | United States Agency for International Development |

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This annual progress report for the fiscal year 23 provides an overview of the progress of the project 'Empowering CSOs to Combat Human Trafficking in Sri Lanka (ECCT)' from October 2022 to September 2023. It gives and overview of the results of the project referring to its outcomes, outputs and activities during the reporting period.

The project's activities continued to be implemented by the coalition of partners headed by SAFE Foundation. The project's core activities such as formation of and Self-Help Groups (SHGs) and Migrant Workers' Forums, the formation of the district and divisional migration forums, conducting training and community awareness programs, capacity building for CSOs and government staff were implemented in each of the districts.

In addition to this, the project also made significant progress at national level connecting with many national level governmental and non-governmental organizations. One of the events that helped networking with such organizations was the commemoration of the 'World Day Against Trafficking' event held in Waters Edge, Colombo. During the event, SAFE was also able to make significant progress on advocacy initiatives with key stakeholders.

## KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

Key achievements by the end of the fiscal year 2023 (FY23) include the following:

- 125 partner CSOs selected and MOUs with roles and responsibilities clearly defined in place
- 1336 SHGs with and 351 MWS with formed at village level through CSO's interventions.
- 22002 persons trained in prevention of human trafficking
- Baseline survey has been completed in all 12 districts and the report is completed.
- A booklet on advocacy demand and summary of the survey findings given to key stakeholders during the commemoration of the 'World Day Against Trafficking' event
- 61 CSOs received capacity-building support to improve organizational performance
- 59 District and Divisional Anti-Trafficking Forum meetings held
- Eight key government stakeholders (measured institution-wise – a tool to be developed) working in collaboration with CSO partners through established cooperation mechanisms
- 18 unique awareness materials designed or adapted through foreign assistance
- A total of 194 Journalists trained in TIP Prevention and Safe Migration at district level by partners.
- 673 youth trained to support TIP prevention

### Visit of the United States Ambassador to Sri Lanka, Hon. Julie J. Chung

The 3rd quarter of 2023 also saw the visit of the United States Ambassador to Sri Lanka, Hon. Julie J. Chung to the SAFE Head Office in Anuradhapura. The visit took place during the final week of April. The Ambassador received an overview of the ECCT project, its progress and other interventions carried out by the SAFE Foundation. She held discussions with representatives from the Anuradhapura CSO network of the ECCT project regarding the effectiveness of the ECCT project, coordination with the government, about the situation of the victims identified, and the difference the project has made in their lives. The Ambassador also had discussions with some victims who were present at the occasion and inquired about how they were assisted through the project's work.

The Ambassador also spoke to beneficiaries of SAFE Foundation's collective livelihood initiatives where she was shown products of the cottage industries of women entrepreneurs from SHGs and MWSs. A video of the visit was made available on social media.[1]




*Picture 1: The Ambassador holding discussions with SAFE and other stakeholders*



*Picture 2: The Ambassador met entrepreneurs from SHGs*



*Picture 3: Group Photograph of the Ambassador's visit*

[1] https://fb.watch/kBC92u1Md6/?mibextid=RUbZ1f

## CONTEXTUAL CHANGES

**Country level changes in context:**
Sri Lanka as a country experienced an unprecedented collapse of its economy coupled with national level political turmoil in 2022. Being already riddled with many challenges such as the aftermath of the Easter attacks the economy took a major blow during the COVID-19 pandemic as the country experienced drastic and sudden drop in its main foreign exchange earning sectors; namely tourism, apparel exports and migrant worker remittances. Due to fast diminishing foreign reserves, the government struggled to import essential goods leading them to limit or halt a wide range of imports resulting in severe shortages of goods across all sectors within the country leading to record high inflation rates. Long queues for buying fuel were a common sight throughout the country while the prices of all common goods including even the most basic food commodities started to skyrocket.

The prevailing economic hardships for all people were so severe that in March 2022, the general public took to the streets on masse to protest against the then-prevailing government, especially targeting the president. The Prime minister, Mahinda Rajapakse resigned as a result of growing opposition by the public in early May 2022. President Gotabaya Rajapakse also resigned as the president in July 2022 whereas Ranil Wickremasinghe was appointed as the new President of Sri Lanka through a parliamentary vote. At the time of reporting it has been well over a year since the Wickremasinghe government took over. The high inflation rates and scarcity of goods prevailed over the months but were reduced gradually as the Wickremasinghe government continued strict cost-cutting methods and increasing government revenue. During the time protests and mass gatherings were suppressed by the government where the international community showed concerns as an undemocratic use of intimidation to quell public freedom of expression.

In 2022, at least half a million people lost their jobs, most of whom were in the industry and services sectors and employed women. Those already classified as poor saw a 65% increase in their cost of living, while the increase was 57% for the non-poor, highlighting the significant loss of welfare for all Sri Lankans. Poverty nearly doubled in Sri Lanka between 2021 and 2022, climbing from 13 to a staggering 25% (using a poverty line of $ 3.65 per person per day), and is projected to increase by more than 2 percentage points in 2023.2 Jobs that generate daily wages were mostly found in the agricultural sector, yet the poor performance of the sector, mostly due to the fertilizer import ban, led to back-up lower-paying agricultural jobs being unavailable for the rural public. This resulted in income losses for rural agricultural communities combined with challenges in food and nutrition security. Combined with increases in the cost of living, this economic contraction led national and urban poverty to double (to 25 percent) and triple (to 15 percent), respectively. The crisis left 52 percent of the population in estate areas living in poverty, exacerbating spatial disparities, and leading to an increase in overall inequality.[3]

The high cost of living, shrinking job markets, and collapse of businesses across many sectors triggered a high rate of migration of Sri Lankans for work. During the year 2022, a total of 911,757 passports have been issued by the Department of Immigration and Emigration.[4] This was an increase of almost 240 percent compared to 2021. The monthly average of departures for foreign employment in 2022 was 25,939. In 2023 the monthly average departures for foreign employment is 24,481 by the end of the 2nd quarter.[5] Total workers' remittances during the first half of 2023 amounted to USD 2,822.6 million[6] whereas total workers' remittances stood at USD 3,789.4 million during the year 2022.[7]

[2] https://blogs.worldbank.org/endpovertyinsouthasia/sri-lankas-crisis-offers-opportunity-reset-its-development-model
[3] https://srilankabrief.org/sri-lanka-poverty-has-doubled-in-the-estate-areas-52-living-in-poverty/
[4] https://www.cbsl.gov.lk/sites/default/files/cbslweb_documents/statistics/sheets/passport_issuance_20230214.xlsx
[5] https://www.cbsl.gov.lk/en/workers-remittances/statistics
[6] https://www.cbsl.gov.lk/sites/default/files/cbslweb_documents/statistics/workers_remittances_and_labour_migration_bulletin_2023_q2_e.pdf
[7] https://www.cbsl.gov.lk/sites/default/files/cbslweb_documents/statistics/workers_remittances_and_labour_migration_bu

In the first half of 2023 Sri Lanka experienced a relatively stable political situation within the country. The government has not undergone any major changes by the first half of the year but the political landscape may change in the remainder when all major parties brace for presidential elections in early 2024. Although there is a slight decline in the number of migrant workers leaving the country compared to 2022, the pattern of many Sri Lankans aspiring to migrate in search of work continues as the majority of people in the country, both urban and rural, still struggle to make ends meet.

**TIP and Safe Labour Migration**

In 2022, Sri Lanka was upgraded to Tier 2 in the US Department of State Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons' 2022 Trafficking in Persons Report on Sri Lanka.[8] Sri Lanka has remained in the Tier 2 Watch List for the previous three years raising concerns about being downgraded to Tier 3 and being subject to certain restrictions on US assistance as well as assistance from multilateral development banks. The US Department of State while observing that the Government of Sri Lanka does not fully meet the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking (required to be placed in Tier 1) has recognized that the country is making significant efforts to do so, having demonstrated overall increasing efforts compared with the previous reporting period, considering the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on its anti-trafficking capacity.[9] The government's efforts which were noted as positive developments included increasing prosecutions and convictions of traffickers and cooperating with foreign officials on human trafficking investigations. The government identified more victims and supported the repatriation of Sri Lankans abroad. One of the main prioritized recommendations to be Government was to increase efforts to investigate and prosecute suspected traffickers.

As the in migration from the country increased, mainly thrust by the economic crisis in the past two years, combatting TIP and promoting safe migration has become highly urgent. Lack of awareness accounts for one of the key reasons individuals become vulnerable to trafficking and unsafe migration practices which may lead to devastating consequences. A knowledge gap is not only observed among the general public but also among government bodies, the private sector, law enforcement, and policymakers.

Thus, the country is seeing increased migration patterns continue among both urban and rural populations. One of the ill effects of this trend is that it has created an informal business industry comprising many informal service providers offering to help those who are aspiring to migrate overseas for work or education purposes. Among them, many are fraudulent and offer false hope promoting wrong and risky pathways for migration. Migrant and aspiring migrants who take these options become more vulnerable to exploitation and becoming victims of Trafficking in Persons (TIP).

## ECCT PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

The ECCT project, implemented in 12 districts, working with grassroots level communities, regional level to national level stakeholders is having a notable impact on the issue of TIP and promoting safe migration in the country. Both in urban and semi-urban situations the number of migrants and aspiring migrants who complain of having become victims to fraudulent middlemen and those who exploit them seems to be increasing as reported by many ECCT project CSOs who are working with the project's partner consortium and SAFE Foundation. There was an overwhelming realization within the first year of the project that the knowledge of TIP at the grassroots level is grossly insufficient despite many decades of promoting safe migration among lower-income households.

As mentioned in the above sections, it is within the context of elevated TIP risks and historically high rates of migration that the SAFE Foundation and partner organizations of the ECCT project is being

lletin_2022_q4_e.pdf

[8] https://www.state.gov/reports/2022-trafficking-in-persons-report/sri-lanka/

[9] https://www.defence.lk/Article/view_article/4718#:~:text=The%20Ministry%20of%20Defence%2C%20as,Sri%20Lanka%20to%20Tier%202.

implemented. Thus, it has found favorable buy-in and enthusiasm of the government to address TIP and safe migration issues in the country. This is also true of the network of 120 CSOs that are working together with SAFE and ECCT partner organizations. National, regional, and local level government counterparts welcome the efforts of ECCT project as a timely initiative and supportive resource to the Government of Sri Lanka (GoSL). This is evident from the solid support various government departments and officials have lent to project activities at local level which included activities such as formation and formalization of district and divisional migration forums and at the national level events such as the Worlds Day Against TIP commemoration in Colombo.

The ECCT support to the National Anti-Trafficking Task Force's (NAHTTF) work is also well received as it helps them progress toward their goals. NAHTTF is tasked with monitoring and combatting human trafficking in Sri Lanka. The operation of the task force is mainly based in accordance with the National Strategic Action Plan 2021 – 2025. Despite growing challenges the task force is aiming for Sri Lanka to be ranked as a Tier 1 country in the TIP report of the US State Department by working on the recommendations of the 2022 Trafficking in Persons Report on Sri Lanka by the US State Department. Hence The Task Force has also requested the civil society to support awareness raising and victim assistance due to unavailability or insufficient funds within the government. Hence there is continued need as observed by the ECCT project to help prevent victimization of those who are seeking to migrate abroad or within the country. The latest planning meeting held in June 2023 highlighted trends such as increase in number of migrant workers and the potential from increased levels of TIP. It was also noted that the implementation of the Standard Operational Procedure (SOP) needs to improve from the side of the government.

At the end of the second year, it was evident from achieved results that the ECCT project is contributing to forming a nation-wide CSO network led by a consortium of partner organization to strengthen the national effort towards combatting human trafficking and promoting safe migration. By the end of the second year this trend continued with a higher momentum with many government stakeholders, at national regional, and local levels, collaborating to enhance the efforts of the project and effective function of their own departments and officers in realizing the common goal of combatting TIP and promoting safe migration. Further to the above there is a renewed enthusiasm of the government to engage in policy discussions which contribute towards policy advocacy activities of the ECCT project.

The ECCT project continues to be implemented by SAFE Foundation and coalition partners together with their civil society partner network. This annual report gives an overview of the achievements of the ECCT project by the end of its second year, FY2023.

## ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT

### PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

The Coalition implementation partners led by SAFE Foundation continued to implement planned activities under the ECCT project in FY23 as well.

**SAFE staffing and administration:**

The first year of the project saw significant time being spent on recruitment of suitable staff to have be best possible organizational structure for project implementation including management of partners and across all 12 districts. During the years 2022 and 2023 there was a notable number of staff turnover. SAFE made arrangements to recruit new staff according to fill the vacancies as and when needed.

By the end of FY23 year some of the key staff positions remain vacant. During FY23 the project

manager, monitoring and evaluation manager, subject specialist and legal advisor positions became vacant. SAFE advertised the position in order to fill the vacancies but was not able to find suitable candidates with required level of qualifications. Those who are qualified and willing to commit to be located in the national office in Anuradhapura for the renumeration that SAFE is presently able to offer under the project are a very limited number of individuals. SAFE has filled two of the above vacancies during the year, which are the positions of Subject Specialist and Legal Advisor. Both the recruits were from Anuradhapura so there is a high chance of them remaining with the organization. In addition to this in FY23 SAFE recruited senior support staff who are able to cover the roles and responsibilities of the vacant positions thus the project can be implemented smoothly and without any hindrance. These positions are,

- Senior Grant Officer
- Senior Communications Officer
- Senior Organizational Development Officer
- Senior Monitoring and Evaluation Officer

Learning from the above challenges SAFE and IDEA in discussion with each other have sought the services of Paltra, a consultancy firm, to research and make recommendations on how the remuneration of SAFE can be improved to become competitive with similar organizations, thus being able to attract higher level staff. Paltra is currently conducting their studies and will make recommendations to SAFE and IDEA on their findings once they have completed their research. Accordingly, steps will be taken to adjust the present salary structure and remuneration based on their recommendations. SAFE hopes that the improved remuneration will be helpful to recruit staff will the desired level of qualification in the future.

Partner Focal Points:
SAFE also allocated focal points per each partner organization for effective, efficient communication. The focal points keep a close connection with the partners with regard to information flow, planning, donor compliance, reporting and monitoring of project activities.

**SAFE National and Regional offices:**
SAFE had completed establishing full equipped regional offices in Polonnaruwa and in Wariyapola by the second year of the project. The Wariyapola office which was the administrative center for Kurunegala and Puttalam project areas was later relocated to a premises in Kurunegala town in August 2023 as it gave easy access to services.

All recommendations in NUPAS were already completed except recruitment and the remuneration package within FY22 and all available manuals i.e. HR, Finance, Procurement, Travel Policy were approved. The asset register was updated and is being maintained properly.

## PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

The ECCT project is implemented as a coalition of partner organizations with SAFE Foundation as the lead applicant heading the coalition. The coalition comprises of four other pre-approved partners who implement the project in allocated districts. All four organizations work in partnership to collaborate and coordinate project activity implementation and reporting. Monthly meetings were conducted with the top management of each partner organization to review progress of the project

Each organization will also partner with 10 CSOs across the selected 12 project districts who are selected through strict criteria and pre-approved thus creating a wide network of CSO partners working together towards project activities.

**TABLE 1: PROJECT LOCATIONS OF THE COALITION PARTNERS**

| Partner | Province | Districts |
|---|---|---|
| SAFE | North-Central | Anuradhapura, Polonnaruwa, |
| | North-West | Puttalam, Kurunegala |
| SAMADANA | Central | Kandy, Nuwara-eliya |
| OECRP | Sabaragamuwa | Rathnapura and Kegalle |
| PMN | South | Matara, Hambanthota |
| RAHAMA | North | Mullaitivu, Vavuniya |
| **Total** | | **12 districts** |

The design of the project was that each partner organization will work with 20 CSOs (10 for each district) through who they will work at the grassroots. By the end of FY 2023 the total number of CSOs who are working with the coalition through formalized contracts is 120. Partner organizations build the capacity of those CSOs throughout the second year of the project. Capacity development included how to increase awareness on Trafficking and safe migration within their communities whilst also building capacities of their organizations through organizational development trainings.

## GRANTS MANAGEMENT

### Organization of Environment and Children Rights Preservation (OECRP)

OECRP was one of the four organizations who signed the agreement to become a coalition partner in the first year of the project and thus launched project activities in the first year itself. The partner agreement was signed on August 24, 2022. OECRP target areas include estate sector communities as well. They are working to make sure that risk groups are well identified, their needs are well noted and suitable implementation methods are undertaken to effectively reach them with project benefits.

### Seemasahitha Samadana Samithiya (Samadan/M)

The SAMADANA agreement was signed on the 22nd of September 2022. They started to implement project activities in FY23.

### Prathiba Media Network (PMN) And Recovery and Humanitarian Action Management Agency (RAHAMA)

Both agreements were signed in the first quarter of FY22. They thus initiated their project activities in the of FY22.

## PARTNER ENGAGEMENT

### Technical Training Workshop for Partners

All partner organizations took part in an introductory technical training workshop on the topic of TIP and safe migration, prior to signing the grants. The following are the technical trainings given to partner staff and SAFE staff during FY22.

- General training on social mobilization
- General training on TIP
- General training on safe migration
- General training on organizational development
- Advanced training on TIP
- Advanced training on safe migration
- Advanced training on organizational development

During this session, all learnings and templates used by SAFE Foundation were shared with partners.

**Program Management and Learning Team**

The Program Management and Learning team established in FY22. A TOR was adopted by the five organizations which govern the function and output of PMLT meetings (see Annex 03). The function of the PMLT is to make collective decisions on program strategy and direction, and to review progress and learnings on a regular basis while also trouble shooting collectively.

During FY22 PMLT met three times to discuss matters related to the project and to plan future action.

- 1st PMLT meeting held in Anuradhapura: During this meeting partners discussed on how to establish MWSs under the project within the SHGs. Partner staff also visited target areas of the Swiss Development Corporation (SDC) project of SAFE which is a project that worked with migrant and returnee population in Anuradhapura district. They had discussions with the CSOs of the project on how to establish MWS taking into consideration the lessons learnt from the SDC project.
- 2nd PMLT Meeting in Avissawella: During the meeting, the TOR for district and divisional migrant forums was discussed and drafted.
- 3rd PMLT meeting held in Colombo: During the meeting a team from USAID who are supporting for the ECCT project trained and educated project staff on the program, financial directions and other important compliance-related topics. The staff and the USAID team also discussed about lesson learnt and challenges of the ECCT project and shared their experience during the session

## SUMMARY OF RESULTS

The ECCT project's results that has been achieved in FY23 under each of the five key outcomes are described in this section. The outcomes are organized under the relevant three sub-purposes of the project. Each Sub purpose includes one or more outcomes. The outcomes include one or more outputs. The results are described against the outcome indicators (OCI) of the ECCT results framework. The outputs are assessed by specific output Indicators (OPI). The results framework of the project is included in Annex 01.

The achievements of the outcomes are explained against the indicators of the outcome (OCIs) at the end of the description of the achievement of the outputs as per their respective OPIs.

### SUB-PURPOSE 1: EXPANDED CIVIL SOCIETY SPACE BY PROMOTING CITIZEN AND GOVERNMENT ENGAGEMENT

### **OUTCOME 1:** A STRONG POLICY FRAMEWORK IN PLACE TO COMBAT TIP AND PROMOTE SAFE MIGRATION WITH AN ACTIVE CIVIL SOCIETY PARTICIPATION IN POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

The above outcome consists of two outputs and the achievements under them are described separately. The **indicator** for this outcome is OCI 1.1.: # of laws, policies, strategies and standard operating procedures adopted and / or implemented with USG assistance.

At the end of the FY23 there are no distinguished laws, policies and strategies adopted at national level under the ECCT project.

**OUTPUT 1.1**: Active discussions and policy advocacy mooted on TIP and safe migration jointly by village self-help groups, migrant worker societies and private sector together with CSO partners at divisional, district and national level

**OPI 1.1.1** # of Village Self-Help groups and Migrant Worker Societies established in targeted GN divisions:

Each coalition partner works in two districts and a selected number of DS divisions which is usually five divisions. They select 10 CSOs for each district to work at the grass-root levels. The selection of the CSOs was based on selection criteria that focused on the capacity and sustainability of the CSOs to become involved in the ECCT project and function as partners who are able to raise and sustain SHGs to accomplish the grass-root level work of the project). By the time of the reporting period the total number of CSOs who have been selected and included in formal contracts with ECCT partners is 120 (Please refer to OCI 3.1).

Within each of the DS division coalition partners along with their CSO partners they have selected 5 Grama Niladari (GN) divisions to work in. Most of the CSOs had their own Self-Help Groups in the selected target GN division with whom they have worked over time. Thus, such SGHs have a significant level of capacity with the investment of CSOs over the years. At times the CSOs have formed new SHGs in some GN divisions in order to implement the project activities. CSOs' approach is to make two SHGs per each GN division.

Thus, by the time of the reporting a total of 1,336 SHGs have been established to become grass-root level implementers of ECCT project activities. The indicator target for this activity is 1,200 thus the achievement under this output has surpassed the target of the project.

In addition to this, 351 Migrant Workers' Societies have been established among the SHGs. Those who are involved in the MWSs are returnees, aspiring migrants and family members of migrants. These individuals are also members of the SHGs. Most CSOs followed the method of using such members from 2 SHGs in a GN division to form MWS.

**OPI 1.1.2**. # of village self-help groups members, migrant worker society members and private sector stakeholders from targeted locations sensitized and trained on TIP and safe migration:

SHG members were trained and sensitized in TIP and safe migration. 1336 SHGs and 351 MWS formed at village level through CSO's interventions.

**OPI 1.1.3.** # of civil society organizations (CSOs) receiving USG assistance engaged in advocacy interventions (DR.4.2-2)

The total number of CSOs finalized to work with the coalition partners of ECCT project is 120 (there have been some CSOs who have dropped out from partnership and new ones added. But the total remains at 120). Thus, 120 CSOs receive USG assistance under the project. Their work in general include awareness raising and training SHG members and MWS members in the grass-roots, representing migration forums at district and divisional level, identification and assisting victims to receive the support they need and contributing to various advocacy initiatives of the project.

CSOs were sensitized to engage on the issue of human trafficking and create awareness among their respective communities and contribute to policy advocacy discussions in the long term which will be a priority in the 3rd year onward of the project. Most CSOs were unaware of the crime and extent of human trafficking and the importance of promoting safe migration at the time of the selection. Thus, capacity building programs have been instrumental for them to increase their knowledge and understanding on TIP and safe migration.

Partners have built the capacity of CSOs to empower them to raise awareness against trafficking and promote safe migration in their constituencies enabling them with the right knowledge and tools to help facilitate local level advocacy. Further, the organization development of the project has increased CSOs capacity to ensure effectiveness of activities and sustainability of their organizations.

CSO selection process involved the use of connecting with the District NGO consortium and District Secretariat for identifying registered CSOs in the districts. Briefing about the project were given to potential CSOs and invited each organization to submit an Expression of Interest (EOI) to join the project. All interested CSOs were visited by partners and conducted a pre-award surveys designed by MSI/IDEA assess their capacity. The Pre-awards survey highlights gaps in organizational systems and structure and provides an assessment of the organizational development needs. Based on the findings of the pre-award surveys selected CSOs were motivated to develop action plans for improvement of their organizations.
Once the CSOs were selected they were invited to sign an MOU Upon signing the MOUs, CSOs agreed upon tasks to complete on a monthly basis. All CSOs send a report of their completed work to partners for approval at the end of each month. The pre agreed monthly payments to CSOs is done at verification of their work as per monthly reports.

**Output 1.2:** Migrant worker society and CSO representation at the Divisional and District Anti-TIP / Migration Forums is ensured by its TORs
The indicator to the above output is **OPI 1.2.1**. # Migrant worker society and CSO members represented in Divisional and District Anti-TIP / Migration forums

ECCT project's coalition partners have liaised with District Secretariats of their respective districts

and their target Divisional Secretariats to formally adopt TORs for the district and divisional migration forums.
As per the TOR MWS representation in district and divisional migration forums has been formally established.

The total number of district and divisional migration forums held by the end of the FY23 is 59 meetings. The total number of Migrant worker society and CSO members represented in Divisional and District Anti-TIP / Migration forums is 26. ECCT coalition partners are working closely with government officers to make sure that the representation of MWSs in each of the forum meetings in ensured. During the first phases of engagement with government stakeholders there was difficulty establishing a relationship with some of the CSOs. This is partly due to some CSOs not being known by government officers from previous contacts and having established a relationship. The other reason for not including CSOs was that there was no formal guiding document for defining who should be included in the forum meetings. As coalition partners worked with the relevant government officers to develop their relationships with the CSOs the introduction and later the adaptation of the TORs greatly aided the representation of MWSs and CSOs in district and divisional migrant forums.

**Commemoration of the World Day Against Trafficking in Persons**

SAFE Foundation, together with its coalition of Civil Society Organizations known as "Unite Against Trafficking", organized an event to commemorate the World Day Against Trafficking in Persons, at the Waters Edge Battaramulla on 30th July. This event was organized to raise awareness about human trafficking and to foster effective cooperation between stakeholders. It was attended by representatives from Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment, Department of immigration and emigration, Ministry of Public Administration and Management, Legal Aid Commission, Department of Labour, members from the National Anti-Trafficking Task Force, Police Department, Department of Registration of Persons, Journalists, representatives from International, Local Non-governmental organizations and many CSOs. The event served an important platform to connect with many stakeholders. Some of these stakeholders are to key to implementing the ECCT project effectively to achieve the highest results.




*(Left) SAFE's Executive Director addressing the gathering, (Right) Panel discussion held on TIP and safe migration trends*

During the event a booklet which contained important advocacy demand for the advancement of the cause of the ECCT project was distributed to all invited government and nongovernmental stakeholders who were present. SAFE Foundation is following up on these advocacy demands to realize them in to policy formulation.
Through an advocacy process SAFE was able to facilitate the establishment of a Safe Migration Unit at the Bandaranayke International Airport to monitor and assist those who migrating making it safer for them. SAFE was also able to advocate to allocating annual budget from the government for the work of the NAHTTF which is led by the Ministry of Defense. At present the MOD is carrying out discussions regarding this with the Budget Department for realizing this goal. SAFE also managed to

advocate to incorporate education about TIP to school syllabuses. As a result, the National Institute for Education is exploring the possibility of incorporating this formally to school curriculums.

SAFE held dialogues with the NAHTTF to include a Counter-Trafficking Officer in each District Secretariat and at the present the task force is collaborating with the Ministry of public Administration to make arrangement for this staff allocation to be possible. In addition to the above, the Police Training centers and Sri Lanka Institute of Development Administration (SLIDA)are also looking in to the possibility of incorporating awareness on TIP to their training curriculums.

### OUTCOME 2: A SYSTEMATIC AND EVIDENCE-BASED INFORMATION DATABASE ESTABLISHED THAT IS CONTRIBUTING TO EFFECTIVE CSO INTERVENTIONS

The indicator for this activity is **OCI 2.1** # of stakeholders receiving periodic reports generated from the information database on TIP /labour migration. The ECCT project reporting receives information from the databases of the partners.

In addition to this, ECCT baseline survey was been completed during 3rd quarter of FY23. The result of the survey was analyzed and a comprehensive report was drawn. The survey makes recommendations with regard to strengthening law enforcement, enhancing public awareness, improving coordination, and expanding support services as key steps towards combating human trafficking, promoting safe labor migration, and upholding the principles of human rights and dignity in Sri Lanka.

The study completed a total of **11,850** questionnaires covering 12 districts. Out of the total 11,850 households participated in the study, **6,291** households (53%) included migrant workers. The total number of DS divisions where the study was carried out is 63 which included 405 GN divisions.

**Key Findings of the Survey**

- 38% of surveyed households were not aware about forced labor or labor exploitation or sexual exploitation.
- 44% of households said that majority of awareness programs regarding TIP were organized by non-governmental organizations.
- 67% of households responded that they became aware of human trafficking through media sources. 62% of them said they became aware through television.
- 55% of households stated that they didn't have any discussion about legal means of going abroad pre-migration
- Regarding safe labor migration, the study revealed several issues faced by migrants, including recruitment-related problems, poor working conditions, limited access to social protection and risk of exploitation. The role of recruitment agencies and intermediaries in the migration process was identified as crucial.
- Further to the above, support services and rehabilitation measures for survivors of trafficking and vulnerable migrants were found to be inadequate.

The study identified poverty, unemployment and lack of awareness, are the main factors contributing to trafficking. Traffickers frequently targeted vulnerable individuals, promising them jobs and then exploited them. The majority of traffickers were found to be local individuals. Most of the respondents revealed that they are keen to migrate due to the current economic crises of the country.

Summary of the findings of the baseline survey

A summary of the survey was included in the booklet 'Advocacy Demands to Combat Human Trafficking in Sri Lanka'
**Output 2.1:** Information database on TIP and labour migration is established

The indicator for the output is **OPI 2.1.1.** # of stakeholders contributing to the information database is nine. By the end of FY23 the project received information regarding TIP, victims of trafficking, migration related statistics from the CSOs of the project, from MWSs and from the FEDOs of respective divisions and districts. The databases are maintained by the partners at district level and they send the data to SAFE at national level to be archived.

## SUB PURPOSE 2: SUPPORT CIVIL SOCIETY CAPACITY BUILDING AND NETWORKING SPACE FOR COLLECTIVE ACTIONS AT NATIONAL AND REGIONAL LEVELS

Strengthening civil society organizations to be empowered and well networked at both national and regional levels is a task that the project has spent a significant amount of effort in. The networks formed will lead to collective action and the formation of a movement of CSOs addressing the issue of anti- trafficking in a broader sense across the country.

### OUTCOME 3: CSO CAPACITY STRENGTHENED, AND EFFECTIVE COOPERATION MECHANISM ESTABLISHED TO REFER AND PROVIDE VICTIM PROTECTION SERVICES AND PROMOTE SAFE MIGRATION

The indicator for this outcome include **OCI 3.1.** # of MOUs signed between partner CSOs and ECCT in place with roles and responsibilities clearly defined.
By the end of FY23 a total of 120 CSOs have singed MOUs with coalition partners with roles and responsibilities clearly defined therein.

**Output 3.1:** Increased capacity of civil society partners to prevent TIP and identify victims and protect survivors
The above outcome includes two indicators, namely, **OPI 3.1.1.** # of people trained in prevention of human trafficking and

With regard to OPI 3.1.1 the project has trained a total of 22,002 on prevention of human trafficking. This is the sum of all the awareness sessions conducted by the coalition partners and CSOs added together.

**OPI 3.1.2**. # of persons trained on TIP victim identification and protection:
During the FY23 there were no persons trained on victim identification and protection.

**Output 3.2** Partnerships established with selected CSOs in target DS divisions and collaborative activities initiated to refer and provide victim protection services and promote safe migration
The performance of the first indicator under this, OPI 3.2.1 # of collaborative activities (at least 2 CSOs collaborate to support survivor) and **OPI 3.2.3.** # Number of TIP victims referred for protection services, is 01 during the reporting period.

The total number of victims who received services (medical, repatriation, legal, transportation, etc.) which is **OPI 3.2.2.** was 85 by the end of the reporting period.

The training included knowledge transfer to CSO partners regarding victim identification and referral mechanisms. Partners used the basic guidelines and formats provided to identify victims. Partners reported details of identified victims to the SAFE Foundation, who further verifies information and made referrals to the relevant authorities. Cases were reported to the relevant law enforcement institutions as necessary. Partner organizations and their CSO networks played a critical role in the identification process. **OPI 3.3** # of CSOs received capacity building support to improve organizational performance is 61 by the end of the reporting period.

## OUTCOME 4: CAPACITY OF GOVERNMENT STAKEHOLDERS TO ADDRESS TIP AND PROMOTE SAFE MIGRATION ENHANCED AND COLLABORATIVE MECHANISM WITH CSOS ESTABLISHED.

**OCI 4.1:** # key government stakeholders (measured institution wise – a tool to be developed) working in collaboration with CSO partners through established cooperation mechanisms
The total number of government stakeholders working in collaboration with CSO partners through established cooperation mechanisms is eight.

During the FY23 SAFE was able to make positive linkages with many government departments. This includes NAHTTF, SLBFE, Department of Immigration and Emigration, Ministry of Labour and Foreign Employment, Department of Social Services, Attorney general department, Legal Aid Commission, NCPA – working on combatting child trafficking in tourism areas, Child and women abuse prevention range, Department of labour, National Authority for protection of victims of crime and witnesses and Samurdhi Department.

SAFE Foundation conducted its first national training session at the Radisson Hotel, Colombo from 18th to 20th September 2023. This was a three-day training, for government officers from SLBFE, Labour Department, and Women Development Officers (WDO), Child Rights Protections Officers (CRPO), Foreign Employment Development Officers (FEDO) and Counselling Officers from the 12 districts where the ECCT project is being implemented. The aim of the training was to impart knowledge on trends in TIP, to make links to victim assistance by selected government agencies, capacitating the officers to train others in victim identification and screening, intervene in victim protection process and to link with CSOs at district and divisional levels in combatting TIP and promoting safe migration. 43 individuals including 30 female government staff took part in the training.



*Anuradhapura Counselling Officer who took part in one of ECCT's training programs educating school children on TIP and safe migration*

The sessions were conducted through 15 resource persons, which included 09 females, from various institutions such as Ministry of Labour and Foreign Employment, Ministry of Defence, Open University of Sri Lanka, Department of Immigration and Emigration, Human Trafficking, Smuggling and Maritime Crimes Investigation Division, Bureau for the Prevention of Abuse of Children and Women, Attorney General Department, National Authority for the Protection of Victims, Crime and Witnesses, Labour Department, and Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment.
So What? The participants of the event represented important key personnel with leading roles in the district and divisional migration forums that have been set up to combat TIP and promote safe migration. Several officers who took part in the training conducted their own awareness sessions in their capacities to various groups including school children and youths (See Annex 6: 'Trained Government Officers Take Initiative to Raise Awareness on TIP and Safe Migration' for more details)

**OCI 4.2** # of service providers that receive training, technical assistance, or capacity building in victim-centered and trauma-informed services has not taken place during the time of the reporting period.

**Output 4.1:** Newly established /or reactivated intra-governmental cooperation mechanisms in the form of Divisional / District Anti-TIP and Migration Forums with clearly defined TOR.

OPI 4.1.2 # of TIP and safe migration forum meetings held during the reporting period is 59 meetings.

## SUB PURPOSE 3: INCREASE CIVIL SOCIETY SUPPORT FOR MORE INCLUSIVE, SUSTAINABLE DEMOCRATIC AND ECONOMIC GOVERNANCE

This sub purpose includes one outcome. The achievement of the outcome is measured against OCI 5.1 # of electronic and print media publications / broadcasts created by the sensitized media community on TIP and safe migration.

### OUTCOME 5: TIP SENSITIVE MEDIA COMMUNITY ESTABLISHED THAT EFFECTIVELY CONTRIBUTES TO COMBATTING TIP AND PROMOTE SAFE MIGRATION

OCI 5.1: # of electronic and print media publications / broadcasts created by the sensitized media community on TIP and safe migration is five by the end of the FY23.

There are three outputs contributing to this outcome.
**Output 5.1** Increased awareness and information on safe migration, TIP and redress mechanisms through media campaigns
Indicator **OPI 5.1.1**: # of unique awareness materials designed or adopted through foreign assistance:
The total number of unique awareness materials designed at the time of reporting is 18. (Please see Annex 04 for examples). The number of times awareness materials have been broadcasted or published (OIP 5.1.2) is five times.

**OPI 5.1.3:** # of individuals reached via media campaigns
SAMADANA/M and PMN held a series of radio discussion programs over the course of the on awareness raising on TIP and safe migration through regional radio stations. PMN's work consisted of interviewing people from MWSs in each of their target DS divisions. The discussions were later broadcasted through radio.
In addition to this, RAHAMA also used radio channels in the northern area to send messages to listeners about TIP and safe migration.
Overall, the total number of listeners who have benefitted through these activities are in the

thousands. The discussion programs would have communicated more information to listeners compared to short messages.

**Output 5.2** Increased capacity of journalists to report on and support TIP prevention and promote safe migration
**OPI 5.2.1** # Number of journalists trained on TIP prevention and promote safe migration
A total of 194 Journalists were trained in TIP Prevention and Safe Migration at district level by ECCT partners. The training for journalists often took the form of discussions and they included tailor-made sessions focusing on ethical reporting, victim identification, media activities, and assuming accountability for maintaining grievance procedures and news publishing. The aim was to equip journalists with the necessary skills to responsibly address human trafficking issues through their reporting. The training sought to empower journalists to effectively contribute to raising awareness and combating human trafficking through their media activities. Multiple partners have reported how the media community has made positive contribution to create awareness among the general public about TIP and safe migration. In addition, some articles and news reporting done by a few journalists have contributed to expediting of solving victim cases and making their voice heard in cases of injustice to them.

**Output 5.3** Increased capacity of youth to conduct media outreach and awareness activities to support TIP prevention.
**OPI 5.3.1:** # of youth trained to support TIP prevention
A total of 673 youth have been trained on TIP and safe migration. Some partners have conducted TOT trainings for youth and the trained youth are engaged in making more youth aware on safe migration and TIP prevention.
The project continued to raise awareness on TIP and Safe Migration among many target groups. These groups include, TIP survivors, Youth groups, SHGs and members of MWSs, members of at-risk communities, personnel in the health sector, school teachers, students, university staff and students and government department staff.

## CROSS CUTTING THEMES

**Inclusion**
LGBTQI: The inclusion of the LGBTQI community was ensured during the CSO selection process. CSOs which engage in this topic were not excluded. One selected CSO from Anuradhapura district addresses marginalized groups, especially the rights of the LGBTQI community in Anuradhapura and Puttalam districts. This CSO will be given technical guidance on understanding and addressing the nuances and risks of trafficking within the LGBTIQ community.

Disability: A CSO working on the rights and welfare of disabled communities from Anuradhapura named Sahana Association for the Disabled was selected as a partner CSO on the ECCT project.

Youth: The project partners have also prioritized on training youth within the project to be involved in the work of combatting trafficking and promoting safe migration. The total number of youth trained by the end of FY23 is 673.

**Gender considerations**
CSO selection: During the selection of the CSOs priority was given to women empowerment. Thus, CSOs that represent women and/ or led by women were strongly considered to be included in the project. There were 09 CSOs which are led by women who have been selected to be included in the project.

- Polonnaruwa – 01
- Kurunegala – 02

- Puttalam – 02
- Kegalle and Rathnapura - 04

These organizations will continue to serve women in their districts and will indirectly contribute towards empowering vulnerable women who are a target group of the of ECCT project. In addition, all partners of the ECCT project have maintained gender balance in the activities of the project making sure, as far as possible, to include an equal number of women or more in all instances.

## CHALLENGES AND KEY LESSONS

### CHALLENGES

Working towards advocacy and policy dialogue is a slow process thus the project's advocacy and policy components' performance is heavily dependent on the response and institutional operation capacity of stakeholders, especially government stakeholders
The knowledge gaps at institutional level and at grass-root levels is something that the project encountered when dealing with government departments and officers. This includes law enforcement as well.

Lack of staff dedicated to combatting TIP and promoting safe migration: District and divisional FEDOs are not able to cover the large population in their working areas with knowledge and awareness, especially if it an area that has a high rate of migration. They are also not capable of following up victim cases closely as they do not have the resources to do so.

Lack of data and practical difficulties to trace the migrant rates in target area mostly due to some not registering with SLBFE and some leaving the country on visitor visa. The suitable means need to be in place to trace the migration of individuals at district levels CSOs are a key component in the sustainability and effective result generation of the project's work at the grass-roots. The sustainability of the CSOs depend mostly on the livelihood initiatives they are involved in. The project relies on the sustainability and healthy function to sustain the results of the project. Thus, limitations in the former sometimes effects the latter, such as staff turnover, shifting of priorities etc.

### KEY LESSONS

One of the key lessons learnt is that most of the activities, especially the capacity building and awareness raising activities generate results with time. Thus, it is difficult to capture their results immediately. Special emphasis needs to be put in to tools that are able to effectively capture results both in qualitative and quantitatively periodically.

Further, it can also be noted that the knowledge among primary beneficiaries of the project as well as key stakeholders is stronger when comes to being aware of TIP that can take place within the migrant worker community. But it should be noted that there are many instances of internal trafficking of people and even children such as child trafficking, forced child labor, labour exploitation, sexual exploitation, and organ removal. Another such example is the trafficking incidents reported from Free Trade Zones (FTZs). This prevailing context of the country also need to be taken in to account. These types of trafficking incidents may go unnoticed if adequate awareness raising is not included within the project to educate all stakeholders accordingly.

## FINANCIAL UPDATE

Project expenditures through the end of FY2023 totaled LKR
Additional details are given in the below table.

**TABLE 3. FINANCIAL REPORT – Fiscal Year 2023**

| A | B | C | D | E | F= (B+C+D+E) | G= (A-F) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Award Total | Total Expenditures (end of FY22' 23/Q1) | Total Expenditures (end of FY22' 23/Q2) | Total Expenditures (end of FY22' 23/Q3) | Total Expenditures (end of FY22' 23/Q4) | Cumulative Expenditures (up to end of FY23/Q4) | Award Balance (end of FY23/Q4) |
| Total USAID Contribution: LKR 785,700,800 (USD 3,928,504) | LKR 76,574,934 | LKR 70,439,765 | LKR 55,160,494 | LKR 110,545,191 | LKR 312,720,384 | LKR 472,980,416 |
| Cost Share Amount: LKR 25,844,200 (USD129,221) | - | - | - | LKR 12,014,206 | LKR 12,014,206 | LKR 13,829,994 |
| Total Estimated Amount (TEA): LKR 811,545,000 USD 4,057,725 | LKR 76,574,934 | LKR 70,439,765 | LKR 55,160,494 | LKR 122,559,397 | LKR 324,734,590 | LKR 486,810,410 |

Note: Exchange rate LKR 200 as per the beginning of the project Y1 and Y2 exchange rate LKR 350.

## ANNEX I: ECCT RESULTS AGAINST INDICATORS

**ACHIEVEMENTS AGAINST INDICATORS (Quarterly Progress in FY23)**

| Indicator Code | Indicator Name | FY 2023 Target | Progress - Q1 of FY 2023 | Progress - Q2 of FY 2023 | Progress - Q3 of FY 2023 | Progress - Q4 of FY 2023 | Cumulative Achievement up to June 2023 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| OCI 1.1. | No. of policies and legislation amended/developed on TIP and safe migration | 0 | - | - | 0 | - | - |
| OPI 1.1.1 | No. of Village Self-Help groups and | 1200 | SHG - 382 | SHG - 361 | SHG - 380 | SHG- 213 | SHG – 1336 |
| | Migrant Worker Societies established in targeted GN divisions | | MWS - 0 | MWS - 67 | MWS - 83 | MWS- 201 | MWS – 351 |
| OPI 1.1.3 | No. of civil society organizations (CSOs) receiving USG assistance engaged in advocacy interventions (DR.4.2-2) | 10 | - | - | - | - | - |
| OPI 1.2.1. | No. of Migrant worker society and CSO members represented in Divisional and District Anti-TIP / Migration forums. | 20 | 4 | 20 | - | 2 | 26 |

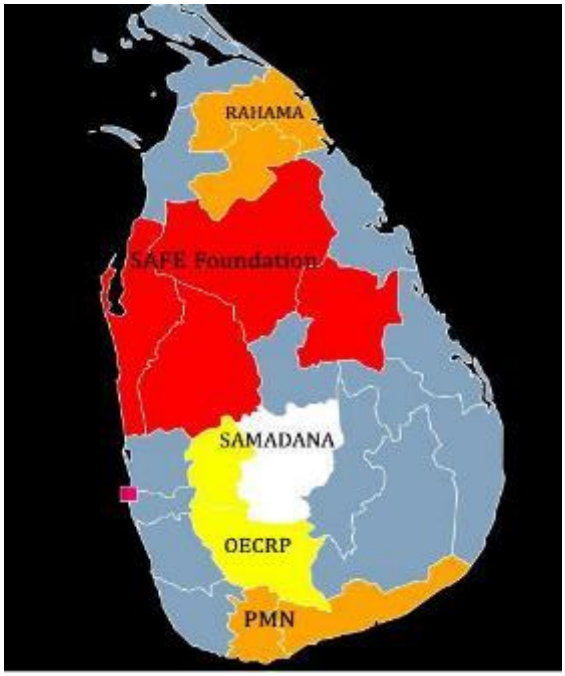
| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| OCI 2.1. | No. of stakeholders receiving periodic reports generated from the information database on TIP /labour migration | 25 | - | - | - | - | - |
| OCI 2.2. | No. of divisional level CSO partners who initiate TIP and safe migration interventions based on the information database | 24 | - | - | - | - | - |
| OPI 2.1.1. | No. of stakeholders contributing to the information database | 120 | - | 3 | 5 | 1 | 9 |
| OCI 3.1 | No. of partner CSOs selected and MoUs with roles and responsibilities clearly defined in place | 120 | 111 | 9 | 5 | 0 | 125 |
| OPI 3.1.1. | No. of persons trained in prevention of human trafficking (PS 5.3-15) | 4970 | 1111 | 7118 | 4666 | 9107 | 22002 |
| OPI 3.1.2. | No. of persons trained on TIP victim identification and protection | 9000 | - | - | | - | - |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| OPI 3.2.1 | No. of collaborative activities (at least 2 CSOs collaborate to support survivor) to refer and provide survivor protection services and promote safe migration | 40 | - | - | 01 | - | 01 |
| OPI 3.2.2. | No. of victims receiving services (medical, repatriation, legal, transportation, etc.) (PS.5.1-25) | 240 | - | 33 | 11 | 41 | 85 |
| OPI 3.3 | No. of CSOs received capacity building support to improve organizational performances | 125 | | | 61 | | 61 |
| OCI 4.1. | No. key government stakeholders (measured institution wise – a tool to be developed) working in collaboration with CSO partners through established cooperation mechanisms | 10 | 8 | - | | - | 8 |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| OCI 4.2. | No. of service providers that receive training, technical assistance, or capacity building in victim-centered and trauma-informed services (PS.5.1-24) | 220 | - | - | - | - | - |
| OPI 4.1.2. | No. of forum meetings held | 208 | 2 | 8 | | 49 | 59 |
| OCI 5.1 | No. of electronic and print media publications / broadcasts created by the sensitized media community on TIP and safe migration. | 100 | - | - | 5 | | 5 |
| OPI 5.1.1 | No. of unique awareness materials designed or adapted through foreign assistance (PS.5.3-16) | 10 | 6 | 7 | 5 | | 18 |
| OPI 5.1.2 | No. of times awareness materials broadcasted or published (PS.5.3-17) | 40 | - | - | 5 | | 5 |
| OPI 5.2.1 | No. of journalists trained on TIP prevention and promote safe migration | 120 | 49 | - | 89 | 56 | 194 |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| OPI 5.3.1 | No. of youth trained to support TIP prevention | 540 | 127 | - | 39 | 507 | 673 |

## ANNEX 2: PARTNER PROJECT LOCATIONS




**Map depicting ECCT districts and partner organizations**

SAMADANA - Central province (Kandy, Nuwara-eliya)

Prathiba Media Network (PMN) - Southern p rovince (Matara, Hambanthota)

SAFE Foundation - North Central and North Western provinces (Anuradhapura, Polonnaruwa, Puttalam, Kurunegala)

Organization of Environment and Children Rights Preservation (OECRP) - Sabaragamuwa province (Rathnapura and Kegalle)

Recovery and Humanitarian Action Management Agency (RAHAMA) - Northern province (Mullaitivu, Vavuniya)

## ANNEX 3: TOR PROGRAM MANAGEMNT AND LEARNING TEAM

### PROGRAM MANAGEMNT AND LEARNING TEAM TERMS OF REFERENCE

EMPOWERING CSOS TO COMBAT HUMAN TRAFFICKING (ECCT) IN SRI LANKA PROJECT
The project on "Empowering CSOs to Combat Human Trafficking in Sri Lanka" (ECCT), implemented by SAFE Foundation in partnership with Organization for Environmental and Child Rights preservation (OECRP), Prathiba Media Network (PMN), Recovery and Humanitarian Action Management Agency (RAHAMA) and Seemasahitha Samadana Samithiya (SAMADANA). The project is funded by USAID under their Civil Society Impact initiative.

The ECCT project will initiate a 3-pronged strategy to address the urgent need for government and non-governmental action to counter human trafficking and promote safe migration in Sri Lanka: (a) Fill and bridge policy gaps to consolidate existing legal/regulatory frameworks through advocacy and engagement of civil society networks in anti-trafficking activities (b) Increase capacity of government and civil society partners to address trafficking at national, regional and local levels (c) Facilitate the creation of networks and spaces for effective collaboration among government, civil society and general public to addressing human trafficking.

PROGRAM MANAGEMENT AND LEARNING TEAM
The Program Management and Learning Team (PMLT) will meet monthly and provide leadership and vision for the overall project design, implementation and review of progress. The PMLT will also trouble shoot to resolve issues that may arise, review progress annually and lead the planning process for the next year. The PMLT will consist of the core leadership of the ECCT project implemented by SAFE Foundation and partners and will be chaired by SAFE Foundation. IDEA will provide guidance and support during the initial setting up of the partnership and gradually phase out of the PMLT. The members of the PMLT are as follows:

Organization for Environmental and Children Rights Preservation (OECRP)
Prathiba Media Network (PMN)
Recovery and Humanitarian Action Management Agency (RAHAMA)
Seemasahitha Samadana Samithiya (SAMADANA)
SAFE Foundation

Invitees:
SAFE Foundation and Subgrantees to invite the Heads of Organization, MEL manager and two other staffers according to discretion of the organization. In the absence of the organizational head, a competent authority with the ability to take decisions on behalf of the organization, will be assigned to attend the meeting.
MSI: Gowthaman Balachandran, Sheila Richards, Nilantha Alexander – by invitation
While a pre-determined agenda will be set, this will be revised according to the requirements of any given month/ quarterly review meeting.

RESPONSIBILITIES
SAFE Foundation will set the vision and overview of the project so that it may be internalized by the leadership of the partners so that they may provide suitable leadership to their respective organizations.
Trouble shoot to deal with issues that may arise or are anticipated.
Review progress annually and lead the planning process for the upcoming months.

Monitoring project progress to ensure timely delivery of project outcomes
Ensure timely reporting according to the requirements set out in the agreements between SAFE Foundation and partners in order that the prime may report to USAID in a timely manner.
Assessing the results of completed activities in relation to achieving the common purposes of USAID and the ECCT project
Providing support and insight to resolving contextual or circumstantial challenges
Addressing concerns on issues related to the budgeting and finance, especially in relation to inflation and other related discrepancies

The PMLT meetings will be held at each of the partner locations on a rotational basis every three months. The meeting will be scheduled for two days with half a day allocated for filed visits.

FREQUENCY
The quarterly meetings will be hosted by SAFE Foundation and partners in their respective districts. The rest of the monthly meetings to be held online every first Wednesday of the month.

Provided below is the proposed roster for the PMLT meetings:

| Host | Venue | June | July | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec | Jan | Feb | Mar | April | May | June | July | Aug |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| SAFE | Online | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | A'pura | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| PMN | Matara | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| SSS | Kandy | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| OECRP | Ratnapura | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| RAHAMA | Vavuniya | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

## ANNEX 04: # OF PEOPLE TRAINED IN PREVENTION OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING

| Trained group | Number of people Trained | Gender | | Geographical location |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Male | Female | |
| SAFE Foundation staff | | | | |
| ECCT selected CSOs | | | | |
| ECCT selected CSOs | | | | |
| ECCT Partner organizations | | | | |
| Journalists | | | | |
| Government officials | | | | |
| Private sector | | | | |
| Youth forum | | | | |
| Youth forum | | | | |
| **Total** | | | | |

## ANNEX 5: PUBLICITY MATERIALS & MEDIA PUBLICITY FOR THE PROJECT

Billboard-1




Billboard-2




Billboard-3




Billboard-4




Pull-up Banner-01



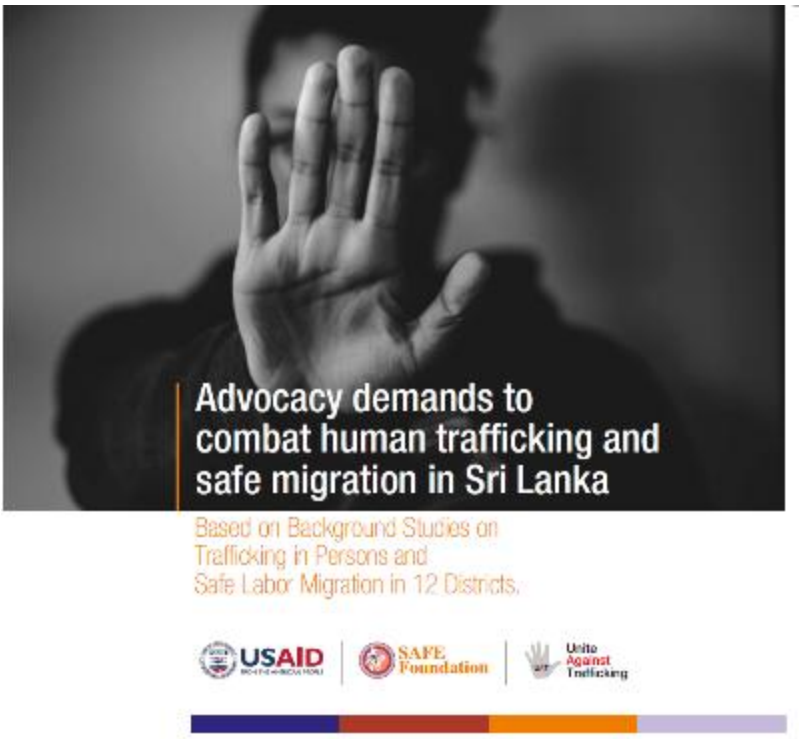
**Photo Backdrops**







**Booklet on Advocacy Demands**



**Paper Articles**

ECCT ව්‍යාපෘති ප්‍රධානී,SAFE Foundation හි විධායක අධ්‍යක්ෂක තුමන් සහභාගි වන වැඩ සටහන මේ ඉරිදා අසන්න



Transport, Highways and Mass Media Minister Dr. Bandula Gunawardhana said he will intervene as the Minister to take necessary steps to increase the wages of new drivers and conductors within two months.

The Minister made these comments at a function held at the Government Information Department Auditorium to award appointment letters to a group of new drivers and conductors recruited to the Sri Lanka Transport Board.



The Minister speaking further said: To get a job after finishing education, today's youth have to wait a long time. We are happy to be able to provide you with a government job appointment with special Cabinet approval even though recruitment for government jobs has been suspended at this time."

"When we visit all parts of the country, the only public transport available to the people in

# SAFE Foundation assists in combating human trafficking



US Ambassador Julie Chung at a recent meeting with SAFE Foundation officials in Anuradhapura.

NIMAL WIJESINGHE
Anuradhapura Additional District Group Corr

The Anuradhapura-based national NGO, Social Advancement for Family Empowerment (SAFE) Foundation assists in combatting human trafficking including child trafficking and guaranteeing safe migration for foreign job seekers, mainly in the North Central Province.

SAFE Foundation Chairman/Managing Director Harsha Jayarathne told the *Daily News* that at present, the NGO is engaged in community empowerment activities at the village, divisional, regional and national level in areas such as migrant workers rights and child rights.

SAFE Foundation, under the auspices of the government of Japan, International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the Labour and Foreign Employment Ministry, has launched a programme to reintegrate migrant workers who returned to Sri Lanka, mainly due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

With regard to the prevention of human trafficking and encouraging safe migration, the SAFE Foundation has pioneered in establishing 15 divisional level societies to prevent the district's villagers, mostly women, from falling prey to human traffickers. These societies are now engaged in holding village-level awareness programmes to enhance the knowledge of village women, men and youth in securing foreign employment opportunities, the nature of foreign jobs open to them, and the human trafficking mafia.

The progress was reviewed recently at a meeting held at the District Secretariat. Officials of the SAFE Foundation along with officials of government agencies exchanged views and considered future plans to be executed for the benefit and safety of foreign job seekers. Foreign Employment Bureau Anuradhapura Regional Manager S.A. Sunil, district foreign employment promotion officer S.G. Wickramasinghe, Assistant Education Director Upul Hemantha Chandrasekara and Inspector of Police Syama S Dissanayaka participated in the discussion.

US Ambassador Julie Chung recently visited the SAFE Foundation headquarters at Anuradhapura Pamunkadawala village to observe and evaluate the progress being achieved by the Foundation in the prevention of human trafficking and expressed her satisfaction over the activities of the Foundation.

## My privileges...

He said that the Police Headquarters spokesman who is also an Attorney-at-Law has been making several false statements to the media regarding the incident. All these statements have been made as the official

institution is completely corrupted. It unleashes state terror on the Tamil people. They have acted illegally and partially, in my case completely. I'm hardly going to run

## Luxury c

India's first internation luxury cruise ship, the Cord Empress, which departed fro Chennai Port, arrived at T Trincomalee Port yesterday.

Indian Union Minister Ports, Shipping and Wat ways, Sarbananda Sonowa flagged off at Chennai Port June 6.

The luxury ship MV Cordel Empress which departed fro Chennai arrived in Trinco malee yesterday. In Trinco

## Police acted correct

incident have been produce so far and all the related scene tabled in Parliament.

The Minister said that the which MP Gajendrakumar Po who is a public representative the police officers can not be all. Related investigations wer ried out transparently.

"I not only asked for a repo regard to this incident but also quickly in this regard. I even videos that were put in court them. Looking at them, it is c that the MP had not behaved there. The way he spoke to the officers, like shut up, can not approved. I got all the details Police. I came to know that w sent to that place, there was a the Kachcha of that, the Pol who were providing security OIC, an examination center i Police about this matter and of our Special Branch came in civilian clothes. The MP a ple who were with him bega the officers as to who they officers had stated very cle

## Peradeniya tests

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Posters







Flyers

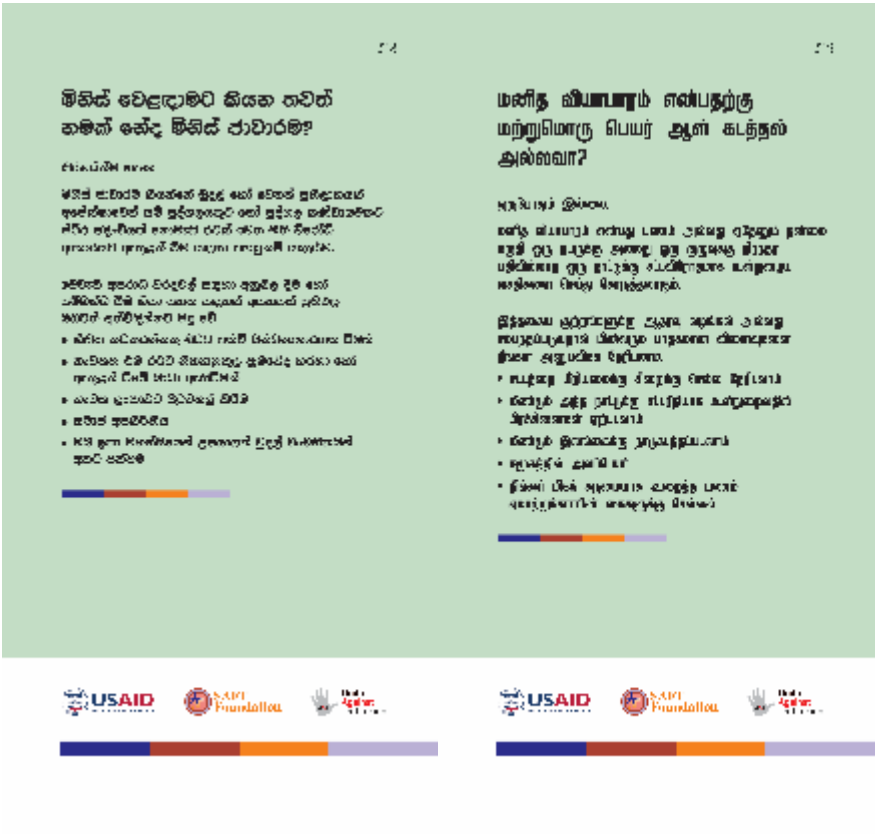





Flyers



Panels (Selected Images)



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மனித வியாபாரத்துக்கு
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வசதிகளைச்செய்து
கொடுத்தல்.
ஒழுங்கமைத்தல் என்பன
குற்றம் என
இலங்கையின்
சட்டக்கோவையில்
இருப்பதை நாம்
தெரிந்திருக்க வேண்டும்.



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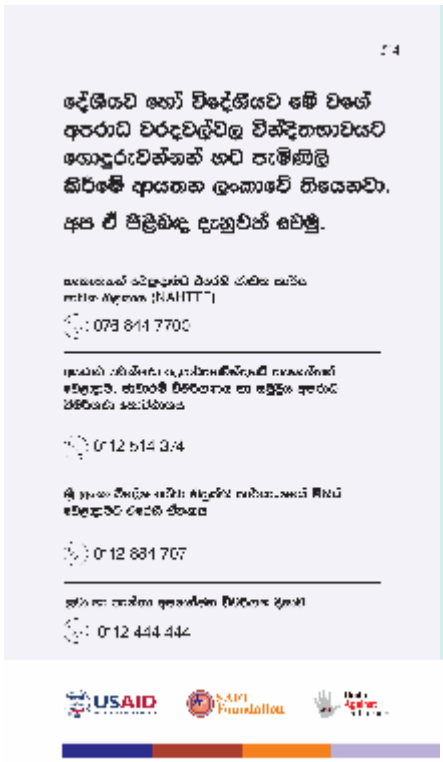
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வகைகள் என்ன என்பதை
விளக்க முடியுமா?

USAID




உழைப்புச் சுரண்டல்கள்
எவ்வகையான களங்களில் இடம்
பெறுகிறது?



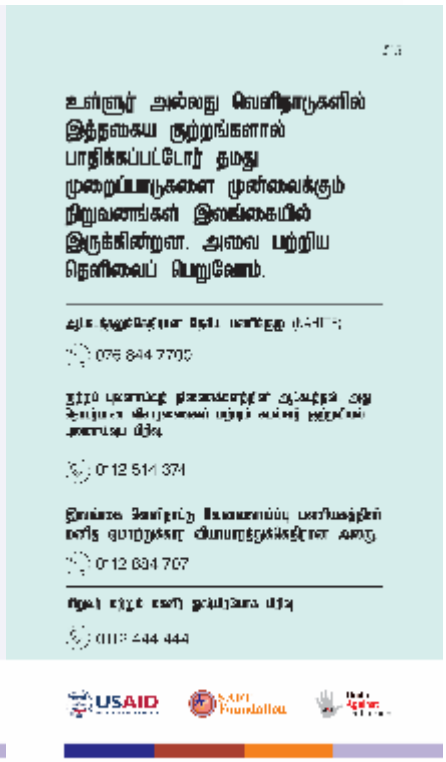
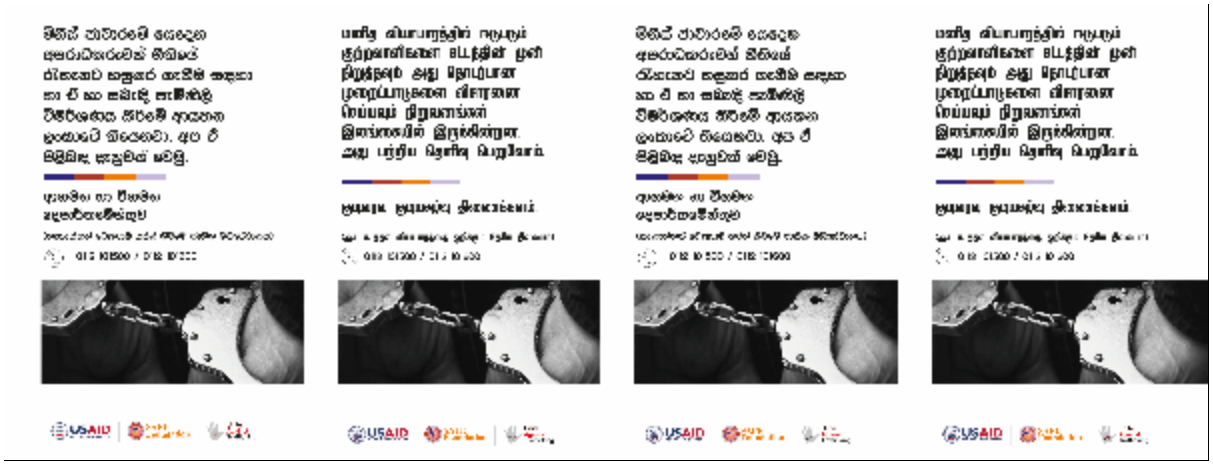

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தெளிவைப் பெறுவோம்.

Table tops



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FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

# SENSITIZING OF JOURNALISTS ON TIP PRODUCING RESULTS

## Journalists Give Voice to Vulnerable Victim in Polonnaruwa

On 26th September a popular news channel broadcasted a comprehensive report about a victim of trafficking on Polonnaruwa. The particular journalist who had covered the story of the above victim was one of the 40 journalists who have been trained through ECCT project's awareness programs about trafficking in persons and safe migration in 2022. Polonnaruwa district's ECCT project activities are implemented through SAFE's North-Central (SAFE-NC) regional project team.

This individual was already identified as a victim of trafficking by the Polonnaruwa SAFE project team a few months back through a partner CSO. The victim left the country as a migrant worker in July 21, 2022. She was only told the country she will be taken to, which was Oman, after she arrived at the airport. She said 'the agent told me that there is no house identified as yet for me to work in' and she had to stay the agency for 04 days. Later she was employed at a house which, according to her own words, was in the 'middle of the desert'. She said that all the seven months she worked she never received adequate food or given the salary she was promised. Although she escaped from the house once and went to the embassy she was again taken back to same house. Thereafter the treatment she received was worse than before. One day as she was cleaning a window at an elevated place she fell and badly injured herself. But she was denied medical treatment and was locked up in a room with no proper food or water for over a week. Finally, she arrived in the country, disabled and unable to walk without the aid of crutches. Later, she met with another tragedy as her father, who couldn't bear the pain what happened to his daughter and being unable to support the family, committed suicide. Her father was blind. Her mother is also blind.

The victim is not able to find any work due to her present disability. Although over the months the victim has approached relevant institutions for receiving a suitable solution for her present predicament the response has been very poor. The news documentary, which was broadcasted on 'Siyatha News' had captured the key details of the victim's story including the plight she had been through during her tenure as a domestic worker overseas and the dire circumstances of her family at present. The news report about the victim has resulted in immediate attention of relevant officials attending to her case. SAFE is also following her case and aiding her in every possible way.

SAFE is presently following initial trainings of journalists with more discussion sessions, broadening their knowledge about TIPs, victim identification and safe migration. SAFE-NC team said that 'this news report is an encouraging outcome of identifying and training committed journalists who are passionate on making a positive impact on reducing TIP and promoting safe migration in the region'.

# DREAM TURNS TO NIGHTMARE

## How Nihal and His Friends Were Rescued from Traffickers

The victims of this human trafficking incident are from Anuradhapura district, North Central Province. The events leading up to this case unfolded in 2022. A young male has rented a house in Anuradhapura for his education purposes. The young man's mother works in Dubai. This mother of the young man from Dubai established a relationship with the owners of the rented house over time and became acquainted with them. As time went by the women from Dubai had promised they are able to provide jobs in Dubai for those who are willing to work there.

Upon hearing the good news, Nihal[10], the son of the owner of the rented house decided to go to Dubai in search of a job. Nihal is in his early twenties. He also approached some of his friends and relatives to join him and they all agreed with enthusiasm. A number of six males, including Nihal, applied for visitor visa to Dubai. The advice to come via visitor visa was given by the woman in Dubai. This woman's husband also works in Dubai. This couple in Dubai charged LKR 950,000 per person for obtaining visitor visa and tickets to fly to Dubai. The couple in Dubai has asked Nihal and the others travelling with him to deposit the money to two of their relatives' bank accounts in Sri Lanka. One of them is the couple's son's bank account and the other the Father-in-law's bank account.

In December 2022 the six males left for Dubai on visitor visa. They were promised jobs in Emirate Airlines as soon as they arrived. But unlike promised they had to stay with the couple for a few weeks without being given any job offers. In a couple instances, they were taken for what was called 'interviews' but upon returning to the place of residence they were told that job application was not successful. The males who also recall one time they were being offered to be sold to traffickers. After some time, the six males began to question the motives of the couple demanding answers from them.

During the time, Nihal's mother came got to know about SAMADANA/M and that they are able to get assistance regarding matters such as this. After contacting SAMADANA they were told the illegal nature of visitor visa travel for work and advised to notify the couple in Dubai that the Embassy in Dubai, Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment (SLBFE) and the Dubai Police will be alerted regarding the situation. It was later found that the couple in Dubai worked together with another Sri Lankan couple and they were doing this as a business.

After hearing the news on authorities being alerted, the couples in Dubai feared consequences. They decided to arrange the return the six males to Sri Lanka at their own costs. On January 05, 2023 all the trafficked males arrived back in Sri Lanka.

SAFE's executive Director said that 'in order to prevent such situations it is important to have a mechanism to educate travelers about registration with the SLBFE and potential dangers of leaving the country for work using visitor visa. This could even be done through an auto-generated message to phone for those applying for visitor visa. Communication between the Department of Emigration and Immigration and the traveler is very important. If the traveler is overstaying the visa a message can be sent with consequences and how to be in touch with relevant authorities.'

[10] *Real name and photo withheld on request for anonymity*

# LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND: COMMEMORATING WORLD DAY AGAINST TRAFFICKING-IN-PERSONS 2023

## An Event That Fostered Strategic Collaboration with Key Stakeholders

SAFE together with its coalition of 120 Civil Society Organizations known as "Unite Against Trafficking", organized an event to commemorate the World Day Against Trafficking in Persons, at the Waters Edge Battaramulla on July 30, 2023. The event was supported by USAID ECCT. This event was organized with the aim of raising awareness about human trafficking and to foster effective and strategic cooperation between stakeholders, especially government stakeholders. It was attended by a wide spectrum of stakeholders who play a crucial role in combatting trafficking in Sri Lanka and promoting Safe Migration. An exhibition was also organized at the premises in parallel to this event which showcased a wide variety of products from cottage industries carried out by CSO partners' Self-Help Groups.

The event featured many items raising awareness about reducing Human Trafficking and promoting Safe Migration. These items included documentaries, panel discussions, speeches by distinguished guests, launching the booklet 'Advocacy Demands to Combat Human Trafficking and Safe Migration in Sri Lanka' and an award ceremony to highlight those who have contributed to the fight against human trafficking in Sri Lanka. The event also featured a video message from United States Ambassador to Sri Lanka, Hon. Julie J. Chung emphasizing the need to increase efforts to combat Human Trafficking. An official stamp was also released to during the event to mark Sri Lanka's commemoration the World Day Against Trafficking-in-Persons 2023 by the Department of Posts, Sri Lanka.




*(Left) Official handing over of the stamp to Hon. Minister Munusha Nanayakkara (Right) The official stamp that was released)*

As a direct result of the event ECCT project's lead SAFE and its coalition partners were able to make direct links and collaboration with key stakeholders relevant to the project. Among the national and regional government stakeholders were NAHTTF, SLBFE, Department of Immigration and Emigration, Ministry of Labour and Foreign Employment, Department of Social Services,

Attorney general department, Legal Aid Commission, NCPA, Child and women abuse prevention range, Department of labour Samurdhi Department and National Authority for protection of victims of crime and witnesses. In addition, the ECCT project's partners also made close links with non-governmental actors who can also play an important role in advancing the cause of the ECCT project. Some examples of such are Helvitas, World vision, UNODC, ILO, IOM, Child Fund, Asia Foundation, Save the Children and National Action and Coordination Group (NACG).
The above connections, especially with the government stakeholders has proven to be great resource for establishing district and divisional level trafficking forums, for partner organizations and CSO to receive the support of district, divisional and grassroots level government officials for working in their respective target areas, and also for advocacy initiatives which are done under the ECCT project as it progresses. In addition, as a result of the event SAFE has also be able to achieve regional level networking and collaboration opportunities such as Attending the GAATW- MECTD Event on 'Understanding UAE's Anti-Trafficking Governance Efforts' in Dubai organized by the Alliance Against Traffic in Women (GAATW) and Thailand and Dubai-based Middle East Centre for Training and Development (MECTD). SAFE has also been invited to participate in the Regional Conference on Corruption as a Facilitator of TIP and Smuggling of Migrants in Bangkok organized by UNODC Regional Office for Southeast Asia and the Pacific.

During the event SAFE launched the booklet 'Advocacy Demands to Combat Human Trafficking and Safe Migration in Sri Lanka' which included important advocacy points of ECCT project. Through collaborative networks established from the event SAFE was able to advocate for the establishment of a Safe Migration Unit at the Bandaranayke International Airport to monitor and assist migrants making it safer for them. SAFE was also able to advocate to allocating annual budget from the government for the work of the NAHTTF which is led by the Ministry of Defense. At present the MoD is carrying out discussions regarding this with the Budget Department for realizing this goal. SAFE also managed to advocate to incorporate education about TIP to school syllabuses. As a result, the National Institute for Education is exploring the possibility of incorporating this formally to school curriculums. In addition to the above, the Police Training centers and Sri Lanka Institute of Development Administration (SLIDA)are also looking in to the possibility of incorporating awareness on TIP to their training curriculums.
On recapturing the results of the event the Executive Director of SAFE said 'the event, with the participation of many stakeholders served an effective and strategic platform to raise awareness among the public foster cooperation, encourage partnership building, advocate for policies to combat human trafficking and promote safe migration within the scope of the ECCT project.

After completion of a series of training and sensitization sessions, the SAFE Foundation conducted the first national training session for the Women Development Officers (WDO), Child Rights protection officers (CRPO), Foreign Employment Development Officers (FEDO) and Counselling Officers (CO) represented by district and divisional secretariats from September 18th to 20th in Colombo. It is encouraging to note that among the 43 participants of the training above, a few have already taken the initiative to disseminate their knowledge of TIP and safe migration among different stakeholders in their sphere of influence.

Ms. R.M.A.K. Paranathala, a Women Development Officer at Kandy District Secretariat discussed TIP, human smuggling and safe migration with 32 officials (WDOs and subject officers) in a review meeting on September 21, 2023. Ms. U.K.D.S. Surangani is a Child Rights Promotion Officer from Polonnaruwa District Secretariat who used to serve at Aralanganwila Police Training Centre in Polonnaruwa as a visiting lecturer on Child Rights Protection and Public Relations. Ms. Surangani has conducted a lecture on TIP and safe migration on 26th September for 150 police officers. These police officers were those who had been recommended for promotions. Mr R.M.G.S. Rathnayake, Counselling Officer of Anuradhapura District Secretariat, has discussed and shared his newly acquired knowledge on TIP and safe migration with the rehabilitees at Katpahapuram Rehabilitation Centre, Vavuniya on September 27th. Mr. Rathnayake later organized another awareness session for boys (below Grade 11) from the K.B. Ratnayake School in Anuradhapura on TIP and safe migration on September 5th.

These are encouraging examples of how the message of the ECCT project on TIP and safe migration trickles down to various stakeholder groups through committed individuals such as these officers. Official who educated the students, rehabilitees and police officers on TIP responded that "it is a topic that has lot of contemporary importance and felt conducive to discuss the topic and share knowledge with the target group". They further said that "the awareness sessions have sensitized the attendees on the tragic stories of diverse victims of our time in Sri Lanka."

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# AKASHA BECOMES A TEACHER ON SAFE MIGRATION

## A SCHOOL GIRL'S INITIATIVE TO MAKE HER SCHOOL AWARE ABOUT TIP AND SAFE MIGRATION

"It was a great day that I and my friends had at school. It was busy in the morning hours in the school. All the prefects were called tothe assembly hall. The principal and the teacherswere gathered on the side. An awareness session started. Itwas a new topic: Human trafficking and Safemigration. Often, I hear and watch that people are getting into trouble when trying to migrate. But, I was not aware very much about the incidents shown onTV news. But during the awareness, I personally felt

the what I heard about trafficking of children" Akasha stated.

Akasha (17) is a student of Palaviya Sinhala Central College, Puttalam. She is enthusiastic always wanting to expand her knowledge about many things as well as school books. She got the opportunity to participate in the school awareness program on human trafficking and safe migration held at her school. This program for school prefects on Human Trafficking and Safe migrations is one of the awareness programs scheduled under the "Empowering CSOs to combat human trafficking in Sri Lanka" (ECCT) project implemented by SAFE Foundation with the support of USAID. The Puttalam district is one of the 12 districts that the project is implemented in. SAFE Foundation implements the project together with 10 CSOs in the district. Sanasili Foundation is one of such CSOs that coordinated the school awareness program in Palaviya Sinhala Central College under the approval of the Provincial Education Department, North Western Province, Sri Lanka.

Safe Foundation has already made aware 290 prefects in 9 schools in the Puttalam districts on TIP and safe migration. Akasha is one of those prefects who participated in the awareness sessions. The Puttalam district is a coastal area. This geographical placement is highly supportive of Trafficking in Person and illegal migration as evident from information reported to District Foreign Employment Development Officers. According to the CSOs who are working with SAFE, 37 trafficking victims have been reported during the last ten months.



Throughout the awareness program, Akasha raised questions to clarify all her doubts on this new subject. School teachers and the principal noticed her enthusiasm about this burning issue in the area. Under the recommendation of the school principal the following Monday's school assembly allocates a separate time for Akasha to share her newly acquired knowledge with all the children. That day she shared her knowledge about Human Trafficking and Safe Migration with all the students in the school.

"After the awareness, I began to learn more about the human trafficking incidents in the newspapers and on television. I also began to find out about the correct ways of safe migration. In my speech at the Monday School Assembly, I shared useful information with my friends. I met a number of elders who are planning to go abroad for a job in my village area. I told them what I knew about safe migration. Several, times I have emphasized them the need of enroll in registered agencies and meet the Foreign Employment Officer in the Divisional Secretariat Office in Palaviya for more information" Akasha said with a cheerful spirit.

Now Akasha gets the opportunity to talk about Safe Migration and Human Trafficking in every Monday School Assembly. During the time, she kindly requests her friend to discuss the matters with their parents and relatives as much as possible. She dreams to make her village and school free from trafficking incidents.

The school principal appreciated Akasha's efforts saying "I can hear that most of the parents are talking about what Akasha discusses during the assemblies. This indicates the other children discus the matters in their homes with their parents."



*Akasha with her principal, school teachers and friends and SAFE staff*

A letter from Akashsa read, "I kindly request my friends to discuss the matter with their parents and relatives. So, my dream is to make my village and school free from trafficking. I request the SAFE foundation to extend this awareness to other school too"

