



# ANNUAL REPORT 2019



PEaCE (ECPAT Sri Lanka)



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## Message from the Executive Director

The year 2019 was an extremely productive year for PEaCE despite the constant challenges the organization experienced given the very fragile and fluctuating socio-political landscape in the country. The Easter Sunday Attack in April 2019 had a severe impact on the implementation of our programs. In fact, mass gatherings and free movement of people were curtailed for nearly two months and once again interrupted ahead of the presidential election, thus limiting our engagement with government officials.

Despite the unstable circumstances, PEaCE was able to conduct multiple activities during the reporting period. Awareness raising, training of trainers, capacity building, public campaigns, and counselling and legal aid were some of the major initiatives. Through consultations and collaborations at both local and international levels, it strategically gained support to carry out its work to combat sexual abuse and exploitation of children.

The programs were designed to target multiple stakeholders such as children, youth, parents, teachers, child protection officers of the government, civil society organizations, lawyers, media personnel, law enforcement officers, corporate sector personnel, the travel and tourism industry and many others. The target audiences benefited under the above interventions, and were equipped with a vast array of skills and knowledge in addressing issues pertaining to sexual exploitation and abuse of children both online and offline.

Thus, PEaCE received a wonderful reception from its beneficiaries be it at the individual, societal, industrial or system level. We are pleased to be at the frontline, in the implementation of these activities island-wide and would like to thank all stakeholders and our donors for their commitment, contributions and support towards our efforts to end Sexual Exploitation of Children. We look forward to your continued support in making this endeavour a reality.

*Mohammed Mahuruf*

Executive Director- ECPAT Sri Lanka- PEaCE

## About PEaCE

Protecting Environment and Children Everywhere (PEaCE), is the Sri Lankan counterpart of ECPAT International, and is a non-profit organization with nearly three decades of commitment (1991-2020) in its tireless efforts to create an exploitation and violence free environment for children. Since its inception, the organization has been working primarily in the sphere of combating sexual exploitation of children in Travel and Tourism, and has gradually evolved into addressing a broader spectrum of issues encompassing the commercial sexual exploitation of children, combatting child sexual abuse and exploitation material, trafficking of children, sexual exploitation of children in travel and tourism, children in prostitution

and forced or child marriage. More recently, PEaCE has directed its mission towards prioritising the sexual exploitation of children online. Among its other important programs; health, education and family wellbeing have been significant. During the past two years, PEaCE has made a remarkable turnaround with its programs spreading across the country, and focusing on the Individual, Society, Industry and System levels.

At present, its work is conducted through awareness raising, capacity building, public awareness campaigns, social media campaign, debates at school level, consultations, legal aid, research, advocacy etc. PEaCE continues to offer its services to protect children all across Sri Lanka.

## OUR Mission, Vision and Values



**Our Mission**

PEACE actively contributes to the elimination of Sexual Exploitation of Children and strives to promote the protection of children from all forms of abuse and exploitation



**Our Vision**

Protect and promote the rights of every child and create an environment in which the safety and security of every child is assured.



## Major Programs in 2019



During the course of 2019, PEaCE was involved in the implementation of three key initiatives, which were funded by the following: The UK Government, Lemonaid & ChariTea, and a Japanese Philanthropist (Mr. Okada), who had been sponsoring the work of PEaCE for the past 20 years.

The focus of these programs was on Ending Sexual Exploitation of Children Online, Ending Sexual Exploitation of Children in Travel and Tourism, and Medical Programs for under privileged communities.



## Ending Sexual Exploitation of Children in Travel & Tourism and Online



The Sexual Exploitation of Children in Travel and Tourism, is a menace that has affected children of Sri Lanka since it was first identified in the 1980's. The mediation of PEaCE in this aspect of child sexual abuse was visible from the commencement of the organization, in 1991. However, the constant support received from Lemonaid & ChariTea since 2015 has been remarkable in order to further enhance this initiative.

Project activities were conducted in areas that were highly volatile to SECTT, based on our research, and projects carried out in the respective locations. In recent years, more activities were conducted in Anuradhapura, Ella, Hikkaduwa etc, with the support of the Tourism Police, the Zonal Education Department, National

Child Protection Authority and the Department of Probation and Child Care Services.

The beneficiaries were mainly hoteliers from the travel and tourism industry including small, medium and large businesses, law enforcement officers, communities of migrant workers, children etc. The assistance of the tourism police in most of the programs were a prominent feature, and this motivated and encouraged participants, especially children and youth to raise concerns they encountered. The focus was to create awareness, provide legal and counselling support to survivors, build the capacity of legal and law enforcement agencies, and educate the community on reporting and complaint mechanisms.

## Ending Sexual Exploitation of Children Online

End Sexual Exploitation of Children Online was a project sponsored by the Commonwealth through the UK Government for a period of 2 years from April 2018 to March 2020. The main focus of the project was combating sexual exploitation of children online, an area of work the organization had been focusing on since 2015.

PEaCE launched an island-wide initiative through this project reaching all 25 districts of the country. Activities were carried out at four levels; Individual, Society, Industry and the System level. The overall objective of the project was to develop capacities of children, their families, communities and service providers to protect children from online sexual exploitation (OCSE) in a more protective legal and regulatory environment. Emphasis was given to creating awareness among all segments of society on the importance of strengthening the child protection system, formulating, and implementing laws and mechanisms to create an abuse and exploitation free environment for children.

Through the four levels, PEaCE worked with many stakeholders and these included, children, parents, teachers, principals, community leaders, village headmen, civil society, the legal and law enforcement sector, ICT sector, media, child protection sector and many others. Several programs were conducted with the aforementioned stakeholders ranging from awareness raising programs, to

training sessions, public awareness, training of trainers, consultations, inter-school debate competitions, round table meetings, and legal and counselling support to sexually abused and exploited children.

Further, PEaCE was able to provide training for law enforcement and child protection officers through INTERPOL, UK Police Academy, Dutch Police and other international police forces engaged in investigating crimes and identifying victims of sexual exploitation online. This was further consolidated through international collaborations with law enforcement agencies and child protection organizations, facilitating opportunities to bring in knowledge and resources shared via the respective platforms.

The organization is also at the forefront in engaging different stakeholders of the government and private sector, to bring in new laws and mechanisms to speed up and better tackle sexual abuse and exploitation of children in the country, through research and consultations. The ESECO project has undoubtedly benefited thousands of our stakeholders. We have received very optimistic feedback to date, and there is great enthusiasm and eagerness among youth to initiate these activities within and among their own circles.

## Our Achievements



PEaCE had a number of achievements to celebrate despite challenges in 2019. Successful programs were conducted for awareness raising on child sexual abuse and exploitation, training and capacity building was provided to relevant and important actors, and through public awareness campaigns child abuse prevention messages and information on complaint mechanisms were shared. The organization advocated for and strengthened the support and collective efforts of multiple stakeholders towards the cause of ending child sexual abuse and exploitation. In addition, legal aid and counselling support was provided to victims and their families, and vulnerable communities were reached with medical assistance through medical clinics and medical camps.

### Raising Awareness

Awareness raising programs are a critical component of the activities conducted by PEaCE. The majority of programs fell under this category and benefitted members of District Children Councils (DCC), members of Village Child Development Committees (VCDC), parents, teachers, law enforcement officers, government authorities, corporate entities etc. The programs focused on educating these groups on

multiple aspects such as child rights, the many prevalent types of sexual abuse and exploitation both online and offline, reporting and complaint mechanisms etc. The programs were full-day events. The participants at village and community level were made aware of the risks facing children in their communities, as well as ways and means with which they can prevent the exploitation and abuse of children.

### Awareness Programs at a Glance

	NO. OF EVENTS	BENEFICIARY TYPE	TOTAL BENEFICIARIES
1	38	D C C Members	3734
2	39	Youth Leaders	954
3	38	Parents	3406
4	24	VCDC Members	2021
5	04	Teachers	305
6	12	Children	1805
7	10	Lawyers	325
8	05	Media Personnel	143
	170	← TOTAL →	12693





Knowledge is an essential device in this battle. PEaCE worked to increase awareness among key target groups and to equip those who are vulnerable with necessary information on prevention, as well as available complaint mechanisms.

## Public Awareness Campaigns



The public awareness campaigns conducted by PEaCE were one of the most crucial interventions in 2019. The campaigns enabled the organization to increase awareness and educate the public on sexual abuse and exploitation of children and involve and engage a larger number of people.

During the reporting period, public awareness campaigns were generally carried out as impromptu stand-up meetings for vulnerable communities. They were held at bus stands, places of religious worship, beaches, markets and in public halls. Sometimes they took the form of large-scale walks, street dramas and public poster campaigns. The participants gained a basic understanding of the dangers surrounding sexual exploitation of children, and the protective measures that can be followed at any given instance.

Child Care Services, as well as volunteer youth leaders of the National Youth Services Council (NYSC). Brochures and leaflets about child abuse and exploitation were distributed to provide the community a better understanding about the importance of preventing child abuse and exploitation.

The campaigns were carried out by the project officers of PEaCE and were further supported by the Police, child protection officers of the National Child Protection Authority (NCPA) and child rights promotion officers of the Department of Probation and





The campaigns conducted in Yowunpura (annual youth jamboree) in Hambantota, and Karandeniya in Galle, were special highlights during the reporting period as they included the participation of youth from all 25 districts. These programs provided the opportunity for PEaCE to equip and enable youth to become change agents in tackling sexual exploitation of

children online. The campaigns focused on street drama as a tool to disseminate the message across a wider number of youths in a single destination. The number of participants exceeded 2,500 per day, especially at the residential camps. These campaigns received immense reception from the audience, who continued to engage with PEaCE as volunteers.



**Communicating child protection messages through music**

A program was conducted with motivational and inspirational public speaker, Brother Charles Anthony where child abuse prevention messages were communicated using the methodology of music and singing. The event drew around 1600 students, teachers, youth and parents from 12 Police Divisions in the Gampaha district and was conducted with the support of the Senior Deputy Inspector General of Police (SDIG), Western

Province, Deshabandu Tennakoon. Brother Charles addresses social issues associated with diverse and conflicting views, as well as degradation of social values, which leads to many social problems such as children on the streets, drug peddling, online abuse etc. In this program, he emphasized on how people can positively address the issue of online abuse of children by changing their attitudes and behaviours.





## Training Programs



Equipping the right people with the right tools is critical for the way forward. PEaCE conducted trainings and capacity building programs for a number of key stakeholders.



The training programs carried out by PEaCE mainly prioritized law enforcement officers. Special trainings were provided to these officials by local and International law enforcement agencies such as INTERPOL, UK Police Academy, Dutch Police and individual police trainers. In addition, the project officers of PEaCE conducted Training of Trainers (ToT) for civil society organizations, media

personnel, child protection officers and child rights promotion officers of the government, as well as teachers, youth leaders of the National Youth Services Council, Village Child Development Committee members, members of travel and tourism organizations etc. empowering them to become change makers.

## Training by INTERPOL for the NCPA



Following the very successful training conducted in late 2018 for police officers mainly in the Bureau for the Prevention of Abuse of Children and Women, the training was further extended by PEaCE with INTERPOL expertise. The training held in March 2019 was on 'Online Sexual Exploitation of Children, Investigations and Victim Identification' for 43 investigation officers of the National Child Protection Authority (NCPA) by INTERPOL, and resulted in the successful tackling of a case of child abuse material appearing online.

The Sri Lanka police came into contact with the Crimes Against Children Unit of INTERPOL and as a result the INTERPOL has been pressurizing the Sri Lanka police to update and maintain the International Child Sexual Exploitation (ICSE) database, where incidents and victims from around the world are recorded.

These were very successful sessions which eventually led the trainees to gain more technical skills, and new knowledge to better address the grave crimes carried out against children online.



### Training on Child Protection System for CID by the UK Police

A training on a Child Protection System (CPS) was organized by PEaCE for 23 officers from the Cybercrime unit of the Criminal Investigations Department in Sri Lanka from 25-29 March 2019. The initial training was for 3 days at Rani Beach Resort in Negombo, and was followed by 2 days of practical sessions at their work stations.

The program focused on a complete training on the CPS and included, assistance on installing the CPS in the Police systems as an investigation tool for online crimes against children.

An idea for the training emerged at the 36th INTERPOL Specialists Group on Crimes against Children held in Singapore,

in 2018. Executive Director of PEaCE, Mohammed Mahuruf who was present at the meeting saw an opportunity to strengthen the child protection system in Sri Lanka. Following discussions with UK intelligence officials he was able to facilitate and arrange a training on the CPS that was being used very effectively as a highly reliable tool by the UK Police and other top police forces to investigate online child sexual exploitation crimes. It had at the time already resulted in over 11,000 arrests over the course of 5 years. The training was delivered by a team of accredited CPS instructors from the UK Police Academy. The team donated the System to the Sri Lanka police.



### Training Programs at a Glance

During the reporting period, PEaCE was able to develop two training toolkits. The toolkit '*Let's Be Safe Online*' is a guide for both children and youth to develop their knowledge and skills in online safety.

The second toolkit, '*Protect Children in the Digital World*' is a guide to develop and enhance the skills and knowledge of

professionals who work with children and youth to combat Sexual Exploitation of Children Online (SECO). These training manuals were introduced and utilized during the workshops, which were either 1-day or 3-day residential programs. Follow up programs were carried out for youth and child protection officers.

NO. OF TRAINING	TYPE OF TRAININGS	TYPE OF BENEFICIARIES	BENEFICIARIES	
			↓	↑
02	Toolkit Review Workshop	Children (DCC Members)	34	43
30	Training of Trainers	NYSC Youth Leaders	304	515
03	Training of Trainers	Civil Society Leaders	87	134
01	Training of Trainers	Child Protection Officers	17	03
01	Victim Identification & Investigation	NCPA Officers	32	12
01	Child Protection System	Cybercrime Unit of CID	12	11
02	Training of Trainers	Police Officers	48	52
48	TOTAL		745	559

### Inter School Debates: Is Internet Safe for Children

PEaCE was able to conduct additional programs under the ESECO project. All Island Inter-School Debate competitions were conducted in collaboration with the

Ministry of Education. These competitions addressed key issues relating to safety of internet, how to keep a child safe online, and the advantages and disadvantages of



the internet for students, which benefitted children, parents, teachers and members



The debates provided children an opportunity to conduct their own research by spending time in libraries and online, as well as collecting data from various sources to support their arguments. It was great to see the children enlighten their

of the public in the audience, through awareness creation.



fellow students, teachers and others in their surroundings. Peer-to-peer awareness was more effective and an easier method to convey the message. PEaCE was able to conduct 19 debates in 9 districts during the reporting period.

### Creating awareness among tourism industry professionals

An awareness program on identifying and preventing sexual abuse and exploitation of children in travel and tourism as well as on available complaint mechanisms was conducted for members of the Tourism Business Association of Ella (190 male and 60 female) in the Badulla district. This was a critical program as 500-800 tourists were visiting the area on a daily basis at the time. PEaCE has agreed with the local Police and the Association to display a child protection message at the railway station in Ella.

### Equipping vulnerable groups with relevant information

Children of migrant workers as well as their parents/guardians (12 male and 28 female) in Puttalam were empowered with information on staying safe from sexual abuse and exploitation of children. The content focused on online sexual

The annual awareness program on the importance of preventing child sexual abuse and exploitation in travel and tourism by identifying and preventing such incidents as well as informing the right channels was provided to staff members (78 male and 22 female) of Hotel Dolphin, in Waikkal, north of Negombo, a well-known tourist destination in Sri Lanka.

exploitation of children in the digital age, available complaint mechanisms and how parents/guardian can identify and take precautions to ensure the safety of vulnerable children. Several children of migrant workers have left school and are

seeking jobs, some are addicted to drugs, stealing, smoking etc. Cases of sexual abuse are often reported from among this

group. The situation facing these children often leads to them being deprived of their education as well as a better future.

### Getting legal professionals on board in the campaign against child abuse



Awareness programs on how lawyers can assist child abuse and exploitation victims within the justice system were conducted for members of the Bar Association of Sri Lanka (BASL). Following the programs, members who participated in the programs increased collaboration through

information sharing and support in the child abuse and exploitation prevention efforts of PEaCE. The awareness programs were conducted in the districts of Anuradhapura, Badulla, Colombo and Rathnapura, and had around 160 lawyers participating in the program.

### Legal Aid and Counselling

Providing legal aid and counselling support to child survivors of sexual exploitation is one of the most vital and centralized aspects prioritized by the organization. PEaCE immediately intervenes to provide support to such

victims and their families, and where necessary advice and guide them through court case proceedings. In fact, the legal officer of the organization appears on behalf of the victim in such court cases and assists victims during visits to the

police. Many victims and their families are reluctant to proceed through with the legal process and seek justice. This is due to frequent delays in the hearing of cases and the prolonged processes in place.

Counselling and psychological assistance is given and survivors are attended to with much care. In the event, the survivor is reluctant to go back to school due to discrimination, PEaCE helps the child find

### Promoting ethical media reporting

Awareness raising was also conducted for another critical group: media personnel and social media activists. The content focused on ethical reporting and best practices. Programs were conducted in the districts of Badulla, Colombo and Nuwara Eliya with the engagement and organizing support of the Sri Lanka Press Institute and Press Complaints Commission of Sri Lanka.

Further, the lack of knowledge about legal procedures and financial difficulties in obtaining legal and counselling support are common challenges faced by affected parties.

alternative schooling. Thus, during the year 2019, PEaCE assisted and appeared in court on behalf of 40 child victims of sexual abuse and exploitation.



### Medical Programs for Underprivileged Communities

PEaCE has been able to conduct medical camps and medical clinics with the gracious support of Shiroi-Tori (White Bird) Hikone Japan. The support extended by the organization has gone beyond the aforementioned programs. It has helped to brighten the lives of selected marginalized communities and children through educational support, family-life educational programs, vocational training for youth etc, since 1999. The long-standing bond has been an extremely rewarding partnership that has helped

both parties realize their goals. The benefits of the initiatives have been of immense value, as these communities and their families have greatly felt their impact. It has brought forth very productive results and have enabled the beneficiaries to elevate their living standards. Further, it has provided PEaCE, the opportunity to identify and extend the programs to other marginalized communities that have been identified through the organization's grassroots level interventions as those deserving assistance.

### Medical Camps

Two medical camps were conducted during the reporting period and these camps were carried out within the city

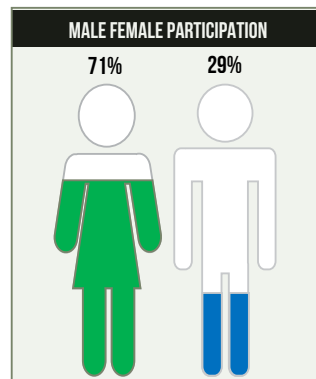
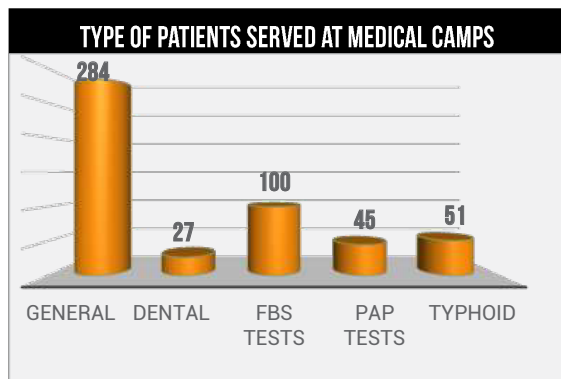
limits of Colombo and its suburbs. They targeted the extremely impoverished communities in Mt. Lavinia and

Mattakuliya in Colombo 14. The medical camps took a holistic approach towards overall well-being and focused on examining attendees for common illnesses, dental care, diabetes, fasting blood sugar (FBS) testing, eye problems,

typhoid vaccination and testing for breast cancer. The medical camp has been used as an entry point into areas which have the highest reported number of cases of child sexual abuse.







### Medical Clinics

The medical clinics provided residents of selected under-privileged communities with medical services on a monthly basis. The cost was borne by PEaCE with the funding support of White Bird. Usually, 08 medical clinics were conducted every month in the selected areas of Angulana, Kaldemulla, Badowita, Mattakkuliya and Attidiya.

Due to the depths of financial difficulty and illiteracy, the beneficiaries were often unaware of the consequences of unattended medical needs. Therefore, PEaCE along with the financial support of White Bird was able to provide consistent assistance.



### PROGRAM AND BENEFICIARY HISTORY OVER 20 YEARS

Year	Education Program	Vocational Trainings	Medical Camp	Medical Clinic	Total No. of Beneficiaries
1999	110	62	0	0	172
2000	415	55	0	0	470
2001	500	97	0	0	597
2002	500	91	480	748	1,819
2003	350	85	658	665	1,758
2004	275	100	801	1,128	2,304
2005	125	60	1,100	3,340	4,625
2006	100	65	345	3,590	4,101
2007	100	65	348	3,294	3,827
2008	125	83	324	3,257	3,789
2009	150	80	432	3,343	4,005
2010	150	60	481	3,187	3,878
2011	150	60	418	3,365	3,993
2012	150	20	461	3,566	4,197
2013	150	20	426	3,739	4,335
2014	150	0	605	4,527	5,282
2015	150	0	717	4,001	4,868
2016	150	0	769	3,888	4,807
2017	150	0	1,907	3,897	5,954
2018	150	0	834	3,347	4,331
2019	0	0	517	2,126	2,643
Total	4,100	1,023	11,624	55,008	71,755

#### Education Program

- Special coaching classes for grade 5 Scholarship Exam
- English classes for school leavers

**Beneficiaries 4,100**

#### Total Number of Beneficiaries

# 71,755

#### Vocational Training

- Vocational training for school dropouts and school leavers
- Leadership training for youth

**Beneficiaries 1,023**

#### Medical Clinics

Monthly medical clinics for underprivileged people from urban slums and urban coastal areas.

**Beneficiaries 55,008**

#### Total Budget

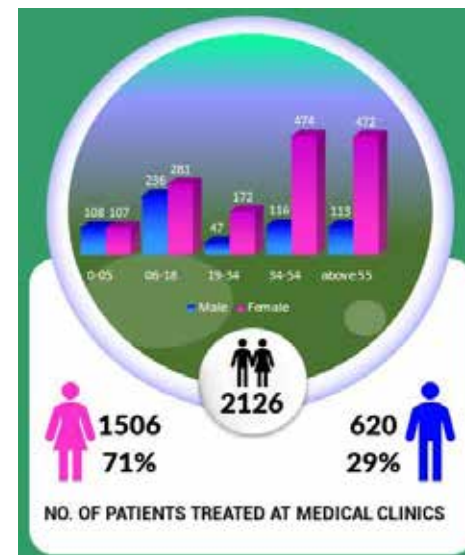
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LKR

#### Medical Camps

Remoterural areas identified as high risk areas for child abuse and sexual exploitation

**Beneficiaries 11,624**



The health of both boys and girls were on par with each other between the ages of 0-5 years. However, starting from the age of 6 years, the gap between the health conditions of the two groups grew wider as the graph indicates. From the age of 19 years onwards there appears to be a major difference in the health conditions of males and females in this locality, with the health of females showing a significant decline. The quality of life of slum dwellers, early marriage, under-age pregnancy and associated health conditions, as well as poverty, malnutrition, alcohol abuse and prostitution are some of the factors that could be attributed to the significant decline in the health condition of women in this group.

## Other Programs



A number of other programs and activities took place during this period. PEaCE was also actively involved in meetings of the Coalition to End Sexual Exploitation and Abuse of Children and international conferences relating to sexual exploitation of children and crimes against children. The organization also played a key role in the development of the National Action Plan to Eliminate Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation Including Online Safety in Sri Lanka.

### Consolidating Collaboration to End Exploitation and Abuse

A Coalition to End Sexual Exploitation and Abuse of Children was initiated by PEaCE in 2018. The Coalition was set up with like-minded organizations with the objective of strengthening child protection, fortifying the technical capacity of members, streamlining functions, expanding interventions at the ground level and enhancing productive outcomes.

This is important for PEaCE, as the organization aims to nurture collaborations among local civil society

organizations, the state, the corporate sector and activists, to widen the child rights community and form a strong network for the protection of children from sexual exploitation.

It also meets the need for a thematic network of civil society organization to support the National Action Coordinating Group (NACG) and South Asia Initiative to End Violence Against Children (SAIEVAC) in Sri Lanka.



Further, it facilitates the organization to explore the possibilities of widening the activities of ECPAT in Sri Lanka through a larger network.

### National Action Plan to Eliminate Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation Including Online Safety (CSAE & OS)

In 2011, Sri Lanka committed to implement the South Asia Initiative to End Violence Against Children (SAIEVAC) action plan to put an end to violence against children at the regional and national level. This is a strategic framework to coordinate, standardise, and monitor progress annually. (This work plan supports the development of effective and comprehensive child protection systems, and addresses key issues for the region including child labour, sexual abuse and exploitation, trafficking, corporal punishment, and child marriage.) In striving to maintain this commitment, the Ministry of Women and Child Affairs (MWCA) in Sri Lanka requested PEaCE to support the development of a National Action Plan to eliminate CSAE including OS.

In 2018, PEaCE initiated the Project ESECO and in 2019 held a National Consultation workshop with the involvement of the government, SAIEVAC, NACG, the private sector and civil society organizations. As an output of the consultation, the group developed the first concept note covering 6 thematic areas (i) Policy & Legislation, (ii) Protection & Assistance, (iii) Prevention, (iv) Institution & Capacity Building, (v) Partnership & Stakeholder Engagement and, (vi) Monitoring & Assessment.





The proceedings of the National Consultation and inputs were then consolidated by 25 experts over a two-day workshop. An external consultant developed the first draft plan of action to compile the information generated in the above two consultations, and the draft was circulated for review, to the UNICEF, Government and NGOs in the field of Child Protection and Education.

The Consultant consolidated the feedback and the draft plan was then validated and

approved by a 10-member committee including the Secretary to the MWCA, PEaCE, Director General of SAIEVAC, Commissioner of Probation and Child Care Services, Save the Children, NCPA and ChildFund. Thereafter, Secretary to the MWCA presented the National Action Plan to the SAIEVAC Governing Board and it was duly accepted. The National Action Plan on CSAE including OS is now awaiting approval by the cabinet of ministers after which it is to be gazetted. Following months of strenuous effort and hard work, PEaCE is hopeful that this initiative will soon become a reality for all children in Sri Lanka.



## International Engagement

*Learning and sharing best practices*

### Regional Seminar on Combating Sexual Exploitation of Children

Among the international visits made by PEaCE, there were two main conferences which were quite significant. The Regional Seminar on combating sexual exploitation of Children "From the screen of offender's computer to the place where victims are abused: better detecting, identifying, investigating and fighting the financing" was held from 17th to 21st June 2019, in Singapore. It was organized by the

Department of International Cooperation (DCI), French Embassy, Singapore. The Executive Director, Mohammed Mahuruf represented PEaCE at the seminar.

This helped re-establish relationships with the regional liaison officers of various western law enforcement agencies and key players, such as INTERPOL, EUROPOL, NCA, Dutch police, FBI etc.

### Global Summit to Tackle Online Child Sexual Exploitation

The Global Summit to Tackle Online Child Sexual Exploitation was held in the African Union Head Quarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from 11th to 12th December. The Global Summit was co-hosted by the African Union, the WePROTECT Global Alliance and the UK Government. The summit was attended by delegates including global leaders from across governments, industry and civil society organizations, and child rights activists around the world.

The two-day event covered both the nature and scale of the threat posed by

online child sexual exploitation, as well as the required response at the national, regional and international levels. Two major products were launched at the summit: Global Threat Assessment 2019 and a Global Strategic Response framework.

The Sri Lankan delegates of the World Summit included the State Minister of Ministry of Women and Child Affairs (MWCA), Deputy Secretary to the State Minister of MWCA, Commissioner of Probation and Child Care Services and the Executive Director of PEaCE.





Sri Lankan Delegate at the Global Summit to Tackle Online Child Sexual Exploitation



Mohammed Mahuruf with the founder of WePROTECT, Baroness Joanna Shields

### The INTERPOL Specialists Group on Crimes Against Children Meet

The development of the Internet and technology has provided more opportunities to exploit the vulnerable. International experts gathered at the INTERPOL Headquarters in Lyon, France to develop a holistic approach to curbing crimes against children over a period of four days from 12-15 November, 2019.

The INTERPOL Specialists Group on Crimes Against Children was an opportunity to gain an overview of global efforts and technical solutions for combating crimes such as sexual abuse and exploitation, abduction and other forms of violence against children.



Around 250 participants from 70 countries, regional and international organizations, the private sector, NGOs and academia shared case studies of successful investigations, national initiatives and campaigns, as well as victim protection mechanisms.

It was a critical meeting, as sharing best practices across countries and sectors is vital to keeping up with the *modus operandi* of offenders, who continually

seek to exploit children while benefitting from the anonymity of the online environment and the new applications and platforms it provides.

Sri Lanka was represented by Executive Director of PEaCE, Mohammed Mahuruf and Chief Inspector of Police from the Bureau for the Prevention of Abuse of Children and Women, Janaka Mannamperuma.



### 8th SAIEVAC Governing Board Meet in Maldives

The 8th South Asia Initiative to End Violence Against Children (SAIEVAC) Governing Board Meeting (GBM) was held in Huluhmale, Maldives from 17-19 October 2019. The key objectives of the meeting were to review progress and challenges of the SAIEVAC Movement and brainstorm on how the movement could be better focused and accelerated; to review follow up actions taken on the recommendations of the 7th GBM.

The event also consisted of a one-day open forum where some of the main discussions focussed on current thematic focus areas and approach to address Violence against Children, as well as emerging challenges/issues – organizational, thematic and regional dynamics. Other key highlights of the meeting included the presentation and

endorsement of the Regional Action Plan to End Child Marriage in South Asia, 2018-2023 and the presentation of the Final Draft Regional Action Plan (RAP) on Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation including Online Safety (CSAE&OS).

The event was hosted by the Ministry of Gender, Family and Social Services of the Government of Maldives. The delegation from Sri Lanka included the Commissioner of Probation and Child Care Services, Program and Sponsorship Director of ChildFund and the Executive Director of PEaCE. The delegation was headed by the Secretary to the MWCA. The Secretary of MWCA presented the National Action Plan for the Elimination of Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation Including Online Safety in Sri Lanka, which was approved by the GBM.

### South Asia and Commonwealth Cyber Security Dialogue

The South Asia and Commonwealth Cyber Security Dialogue was held in New Delhi on 20 September 2019. Building on the Cyber Security Declaration of the 2018 Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting, this session focused on discussion on the development status and implementation of national cyber security strategies in South Asia and the wider Commonwealth. It provided participants a platform to look into opportunities for international cooperation in cyber space and identify required policy, regulation and legislative changes to enhance both regional and international cyber security frameworks among all nations.

Safeguarding Children in Cyber Space, was one of the key subjects covered by the

meeting. Protecting children from the risks of grooming, bullying and abuse inherent in their use of the internet and social media is an issue of global concern, yet efforts to counter these threats have been varied and ad hoc. This session analysed the threat, assessed actions taken to date in India and other South Asian countries, and considered best practices and options for greater Commonwealth and international co-operation and co-ordination in intelligence-gathering and joint action.

Other key topics included, Online Crime and Radicalism, Women in Cyberspace, and Securing the Opportunities of the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

### Consultation Meeting on Status of Action Plans on CSAE and OS

The Consultation Meeting on Status of Action Plan on Child Sexual Abuse, Exploitation and Online Safety (CSAE & OS) was held on 18th December 2019 at Hotel Crowne Imperial, in Kathmandu. Representatives from Bhutan, Maldives, Nepal and Sri Lanka attended the meeting.

Discussions focused on: The situation of child sexual abuse and exploitation, including online safety; Sharing of National Plan of Action on CSAE & OS by each country's NACG; and the way forward on National Plan of Action on CSAE & OS.

Panchal Abeysinghe, a project officer of PEaCE participated in the advocacy meeting and represented PEaCE. He was able to share information relating to CSAE in Sri Lanka and the ESECO project's efforts to improve online safety. The meeting was a good platform for learning and sharing, and provided an opportunity to reflect on the current status of child sexual abuse, exploitation and online safety, the different initiatives being taken and good practices in the region. The meeting was hosted by National Coalition for Children as Zones of Peace (CZOP) and NACG Nepal.

## Our Donors

### The LemonAid and ChariTea Foundation



The LemonAid and ChariTea Foundation has been supporting the work of ECPAT Sri Lanka - PEaCE since 2015. The Lemonaid & ChariTea Foundation is a non-profit organisation founded in 2010 in the bohemian St. Pauli area of Hamburg. The organization aims to contribute to the sustainable improvement of social, economic and ecological structures in the Global South. Particularly in regions that have been negatively affected by the structures of the global economy. It partners with local organizations that implement projects within their communities to create positive change and strengthen economic independence.

### The UK Government and Commonwealth Fund



#### UK Government

The overarching purpose of the Commonwealth 18-20 Fund (which sits within the Conflict, Stability and Security Fund) is to demonstrate the ability of the Commonwealth to lead the international agenda on key issues. The Security Programme was set up to support the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting, 2018 (CHOGM) commitment of delivering 'A More Secure Future' through: (a) A more secure cyber environment that enables digital growth through a free, open and peaceful cyber space; (b) Progress towards a Commonwealth without modern slavery, forced labour, human trafficking and the worst forms of child labour and; (c) Enhanced capacity within the Commonwealth to tackle online child sexual exploitation. In 2018, the UK Government together with the Commonwealth Fund extended funding for the 2-year project, Ending Sexual Exploitation of Children Online.

### White Bird (Shiroi Tori) Japan



White Bird (Shiroi Tori) is a Japanese charity led by Mr. Minoru Okada. It has been in a committed partnership supporting the work of ECPAT Sri Lanka – PEaCE for over 20 years. The key focus of White Bird has been on uplifting and improving the health of vulnerable communities in Sri Lanka. This has been achieved through free medical camps and clinics in communities where awareness on and access to health care has been limited.



"There can be no keener revelation of a society's soul than the way in which it treats its children."

– Nelson Mandela



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