

# **PROJECT INFORMATION**

## **STRENGTHENING SOCIAL COHESION IN SRI LANKA**

### **PROJECT BRIEF**

The Asia Foundation, with the support of Global Affairs Canada (GAC) aims to support sustainable initiatives led by local civil society organizations (CSOs) to strengthen social cohesion among communities, with a special focus on youth, women, girls, and marginalized groups. An important element of this will be to support CSOs build required capacities for effective programming on these issues. As such, this project aims to provide grants to twenty-four local civil society organizations in the following project districts; Trincomalee, Batticaloa, Ampara, Jaffna, Mannar, Kalutara, Kurunegala, Kandy, Badulla and Galle.

Expected outcomes of the project are:

- I. Strengthened inter/intra-community and community-state relations through sustainable initiatives led by local and national civil society organizations (CSOs) including women's network and movements.
- II. Greater and more meaningful participation of youth, women, girls, and marginalized groups in CSO-led efforts to promote social cohesion and community resilience.
- III. Improved networking and collaboration between local and national CSOs in taking tangible actions to address common challenges and share lessons learned.

### **FUNDING LOCAL CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS**

A total of twenty CSOs will receive funding in two rounds for a period of 6 to 12 months, as well as technical support for implementation of activities related to key issues including: 1) ensuring improved safety and security for local communities, especially women and girls, 2) ensuring all communities have equitable access to local information and services and are meaningfully engaged in inclusive dialogue/decision making with local government service providers 3) enabling young men and women to better understand shared values that underpin constructive dialogue between diverse communities and the role that these values play in strengthening civic education and civic responsibility. The Foundation will ensure that gender equality and social inclusion is at the forefront of selected projects.

### **ENSURING SUSTAINABILITY THROUGH CAPACITY BUILDING**

The project aims to build the capacity of CSOs to work individually and collectively towards enabling greater social cohesion, as well as to ensure a more just, inclusive, and sustainable environment. Capacity building for CSOs will consist of customized trainings that aim to 1) strengthen their creativity, capacity and sustainability to effectively achieve objectives related to their social cohesion mandate; and 2) improve their capacity to collaborate through networks and alliances to affect inclusive gender and context-sensitive change that contributes to sustainable social cohesion programs in Sri Lanka.

### **FOSTERING NETWORKS AND COLLABORATIONS**

The project also aims to provide opportunities for networking through regional events that enable local CSOs to meet and share lessons and experience.

## **ENGAGING GOVERNMENT**

The Foundation envisages that local government will be key partners in many project activities. The Foundation will work with selected CSOs to sustain outcomes in partnership with local and national state institutions, such as local government authorities, district and divisional secretariats and relevant national ministries.

## **ABOUT THE ASIA FOUNDATION**

The Asia Foundation is a nonprofit international development organization committed to improving lives across a dynamic and developing Asia. Informed by nearly seven decades of experience and deep local expertise, our work across the region addresses five overarching goals—strengthen governance, empower women, expand economic opportunity, increase environmental resilience, and promote international cooperation. Headquartered in San Francisco, The Asia Foundation works through its network of offices in 18 Asian countries and in Washington, DC. Working with public and private partners, the Foundation receives funding from a diverse group of bilateral and multilateral development agencies, foundations, corporations, and individuals.