



In Sri Lanka, The Asia Foundation is a trusted link between civil society and government and is valued for our work promoting inclusive subnational governance, improving access to justice, advancing gender equality, facilitating effective alternative dispute resolution, supporting the well-being of communities, fostering social cohesion and community dialogue, and strengthening civil society.

Project Highlights

More inclusive and participatory governance mechanisms

Supported 27 local CSOs to strengthen national integrity systems and social accountability, promote gender equality, social inclusion, and investigative journalism, and counter disinformation.

Strengthening community resilience through values

The Foundation's Values4All Sri Lanka Curriculum trained 522 youth on countering misinformation and disinformation and received over 900k engagements in a social media campaign countering fake news.

More effective mechanisms to improve mental health support

Developed a free online Basic Psychosocial Skills course for first responders available in Tetun, Nepali, English, Sinhala, and Tamil.

Improving women's rights and security, including reducing gender-based violence

Trained over 110 criminal prosecutors on pre-trial consultations for victims of sexual crime and conducted remote service provision, emergency client assistance, and mobile legal aid clinics to victims of domestic violence.

Increasing opportunities for female-led households

Provided livelihood support to 1,150 female-headed households disproportionately affected by Sri Lanka's economic crisis.

2022 Snapshot



5,608 survivors of trauma received psychosocial support



77 CSOs received capacity building support and funding



600+ children's books translated into local languages for the Let's Read digital library



Flagship Initiatives



Strengthening alternative dispute resolution mechanisms

The Foundation supports accessible and voluntary ways to resolve minor disputes through interest-based mediation. We work with the Ministry of Justice and the Mediation Boards Commission to establish and strengthen Community Mediation Boards and Special Land Mediation Boards across the country by training mediators and mediation trainers and improving systems. We are also expanding our support to commercial mediation, special mediation boards for financial disputes, and commercial arbitration.

Promoting sustainable peace within all communities

Greater social cohesion and improved community resilience are critical following Sri Lanka's ethnic conflict and socioeconomic crises. The Sri Lanka Social Cohesion Grants project supports 24 civil society organizations (CSOs) in building a safer environment for all communities, especially youth, women, and girls, through equitable access to local information and services, inclusive decision-making, and a strengthened sense of civic education and citizenship via emphasis on a better understanding of shared values.

Incentivizing local service delivery

The Foundation's role in elevating the service standards of Sri Lankan Local Government Authorities (LGAs) has grown during its 15-year engagement. We have sought to address critical systemic challenges that dilute the scope and potential of devolution, undermine the economic resilience of subnational governments and weaken citizens' agency to exercise voice and accountability. In 2022, we facilitated the first-ever performance-based financing program for the government, which helped identify and reward 134 LGAs that show tangible proof of improved service, innovation, project development and efficient planning and budgeting.

Strengthening mental health services

The Foundation's mental health and psychosocial support program has helped respond to diverse mental health and psychosocial issues in Sri Lanka for over 15 years. We have developed materials and methods to support both victims of trauma and those in the helping professions, including a peer support system, and practice opportunities for government counselors, case-management methods, and self-care programs. The program also trains court family counselors on counseling skills, substance misuse, and marital conflict.

Ensuring women's rights and security

Local Women's Rights Organizations (WROs) are integral to advancing gender equality, women's rights, and empowerment in Sri Lanka. However, lack of access to resources limits their advocacy, service delivery, and collective activism. We support 26 local WROs to strengthen their capacity to drive transformative change for equal rights and empowerment of women and girls. In 2022, they reached over 3,000 marginalized and excluded women and girls through counseling, befriending, legal and para-legal aid services, and awareness and advocacy initiatives.

The Asia Foundation is a nonprofit international development organization committed to improving lives and expanding opportunities across Asia and the Pacific. Informed by decades of experience and deep local expertise, our work across the region is focused on good governance, women's empowerment and gender equality, inclusive economic growth, environment and climate action, and regional and international relations.