

# ANNUAL REPORT

# 2019



**RIGHT TO LIFE**  
HUMAN RIGHTS CENTRE



# CONTENTS

	Page
<b>01. Message from Executive Director</b>	<b>04</b>
<b>02. Right to Life Human Rights Centre</b>	<b>06</b>
<b>03. Vision &amp; Mission</b>	<b>07</b>
<b>04. Organization Structure</b>	<b>08</b>
<b>05. Our Working Areas</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>06. Working Context</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>07. Legal</b>	<b>13</b>
7.1. Won Cases	
7.2. Cases Right to Life Human Rights Centre followed in 2019	
7.3. Meeting with Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka	
<b>08. Media</b>	<b>23</b>
8.1. Media Intervention	
8.2. Websites	
8.3. Websites, Social Media, Youtube	
<b>09. Human Rights First Aid Centers</b>	<b>24</b>
9.1. Concept	
9.2. Human Rights Defender Groups	
9.3. Cases received 2019	
<b>10. Intervention for Democracy</b>	<b>29</b>
10.1. Campaigns	
10.2. Public Meetings	
10.3. Press Conferences	
<b>11. Programmes</b>	<b>30</b>
11.1. Workshop for Human Rights Defender Groups on Committee Against Torture	
11.2. Campaigns in 08 Districts	
11.3. Trainings for Human Rights Defender Groups 08 Districts	
11.4. Press Conference	
11.5. Progress Review Meetings	
11.6. Key Community Leaders Meeting	
11.7. Vulnerable group Meeting	
11.8. District Coordinators Meeting	
11.9. Legal Clinics	
<b>12. Events/Forum</b>	<b>34</b>
12.1. International Day in Support of Torture Survivors	
12.2. International Human Rights Day	
12.3. 25 Years to Torture Act	
12.4. FTZ Struggle	
12.5. Gerrad's Torture Case	
<b>13. Sri Lanka Committee Against Torture (SLCAT)</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>14. Publications</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>15. Financial Position</b>	<b>38</b>



**Philip  
Dissanayake**

Executive Director  
Right to Life Human  
Rights Centre

## MESSAGE FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Torture, extrajudicial killings and disappearances are three major factors that directly affect human freedom. Although our citizens are protected by criminal laws, including fundamental rights, to protect these rights, it should be noted that most of the previous governments have violated these fundamental rights.

Beginning in 2003 with the main theme of Right to Life, our organization has been unable to prevent these fundamental human rights violations, even after 17 years. However, we should be pleased to note that the Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka (HRCSL) has stated that no cases of enforced disappearances have been reported in the country from 2016 to 2019. But we should be saddened by the fact that torture and extrajudicial killings continue to be reported during the above period.

For the past 17 years, we have been conducting an inquisitive study on why these fundamental rights violations continue to occur, regardless of the laws in the country. It showed that both governments and the masses have unofficially requested that the situation be continued.

If a government elected by the people and that people have a genuine desire to protect these fundamental rights in their country, they have ample opportunity to prevent it. We also made a special effort to create some conversation about it. We used media for that, and we were able to create a huge space for that through social media.

Our next goal was to create more people besides us who would speak and appear in this regard. To this end, we further strengthened and expanded the Sri Lankan Community Against Torture that we had originally built, and through it carried out various activities. On the International Day in Support of Victims of Torture, all 28 organizations of this coalition were able to create a great movement by naming June 2019 as the Month Against Torture.

In addition, the operation of our Human Rights First Aid Centers, which are spread across eight districts, was able to increase its activity compared to the previous year, to refer many people to human rights violations, civil rights violations, and other independent commissions, including the Information Commission and the Office of the Disappeared. We were also able to assist our trained human rights defenders in those investigations.

Although the year 2019 will create such an activity and create the environment for the enjoyment of the rights that have been won, we are entering 2020 with a situation where the rights that have been won can be challenged to some extent.



## RIGHT TO LIFE HUMAN RIGHTS CENTRE

Right to Life Human Rights Centre established on 2002 at Kurana, Katunayake, Gampaha District, Western Province. Currently located Koppiyawatta Road, Colombo 09, Western Province. Vision of the organization is "A multi ethnic and multi religious society of citizens that protect justice, equality, respect for life". Mission of the organization is "To be placed as an active Centre for establishing a society against human rights violations including torture, extra judicial killings, enforced disappearances standing for national harmony and democratic reforms". The main two objectives of the organization are First Human Rights - Torture, Extra judicial Killings and Enforced Disappearances. Second Democracy - Constitutional Reforms, Rule of Law. The main activities follow as; Advocating for Justice for Victims of Torture, Related Extra Judicial Killings, Disappearances and Human Rights Violations. Victim and Community Action against Human Rights Violations Including Torture and Extra-Judicial Killings. Fostering Democracy, Independence of the Judiciary, Human Rights, Rule of Law and Accountability through a New Constitution and Judicial Reform. Building a People's Movement and Civil Society Coalition for Resolving Ethnic Conflict through Constitutional Reform. Research, Training, Advocacy, Public Education/Campaign, Social mobilization and Legal. (Filing and following cases against torture, extra judicial killings, enforced disappearances and other Fundamental Rights Violations, Creating Human Rights Defenders, Training Programs, Workshops, Public Seminars, People's Tribunals, People's Assembly, Campaigns, Street Protests, maintaining 11 Human Rights First Aid Centers).

Apart from it the organization is involved in network activities which is the strength of the organization. Sri Lankan Collective Against Torture (SLCAT) with 30 other member organizations in the field of human rights in Sri Lanka, Human Rights First Aid Centres – There were 12 HRFACs in 12 Districts, People Against Torture (PAT), Platform For Freedom (PFF), Change with Reforms (Veediye Virodaya – Street Protest), National Movement for New Constitution (NMNC), Civil Society Collective for Democracy, Civil Society and Trade Unions Collective (CSTUC). International Relations: Full-fledged member Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (Forum Asia), South Asian Collective for Strategy Litigation, Asian Alliance Against Torture (AAAT), Freedom From Torture (FFT).

The organization is registered as a Guarantee Limited Company under the Companies Act No. 7 of 2007, on 16 June 2009 Certificate of incorporation GA (323). And the Aithiya Website registered Number 2019/34 at Ministry of Mass Media.

The organization also would like to be capacitate on reporting, project monitoring and evaluation to enhance the acquired knowledge the methods already the organization has within and to develop it. At the same time if possible to get some training for the project staff to upgrade and to enhance their knowledge through following a related course or study program related to the project content. Mainly on democracy, human rights, new laws and acts, project management related programs and use of media and digital security.

Success Stories: Human Right First Aid Centers (In 11 Districts), Creating Human Rights Defender Groups, Conducting Education sessions on Human Rights, Training of Trainees, Preparing UN CAT Shadow Report of Sri Lanka, follow up and Monitor recommendation given by UN CAT to Sri Lanka, Maintains Websites related to Human Rights issue (on Torture and Democratic Rights), Social Media campaigns on human rights and democratic rights issues (Facebook).

### Networks:

Sri Lankan Committee Against Torture (SLCAT), Human Rights First Aid Centres, Platform For Freedom (PFF), Change with Reforms, National Movement for New Constitution (NMNC), Civil Society Collective for Democracy, People Against Torture (PAT), Journalists Collective

## RIGHT TO LIFE contd...

### **International Relations:**

- Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (Forum Asia)
- South Asian Collective for Strategy Litigation
- Anti-Death Penalty Asian Network
- Asian Network against Torture

### **Success Stories:**

- Human Right First Aid Centers
- Creating Human Rights Defender Groups
- Conducting Education sessions on Human Rights
- Initiating Journalists Collective
- Training of Trainees
- Preparing UN CAT Shadow Report of Sri Lanka
- Follow up and Monitor recommendation given by UN CAT to Sri Lanka
- Maintains Websites related to Human Rights issue (on Torture and Democratic Rights)
- Social Media campaigns on human rights and democratic rights issues (Facebook)

## VISION & MISSION

### Vision:

A multi ethnic and multi religious society of citizens of citizens that protect justice, equality, respect for life.

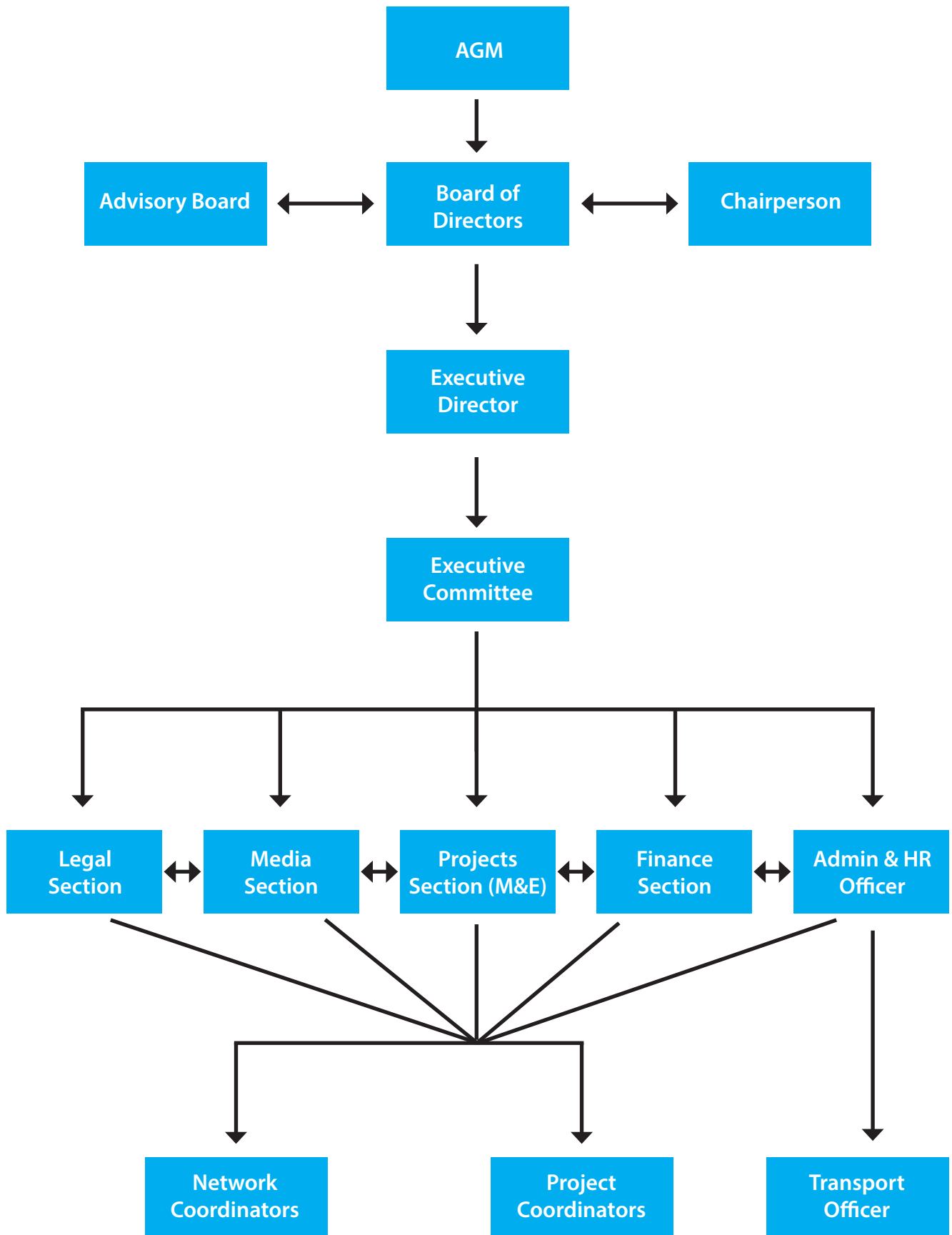
### Mission:

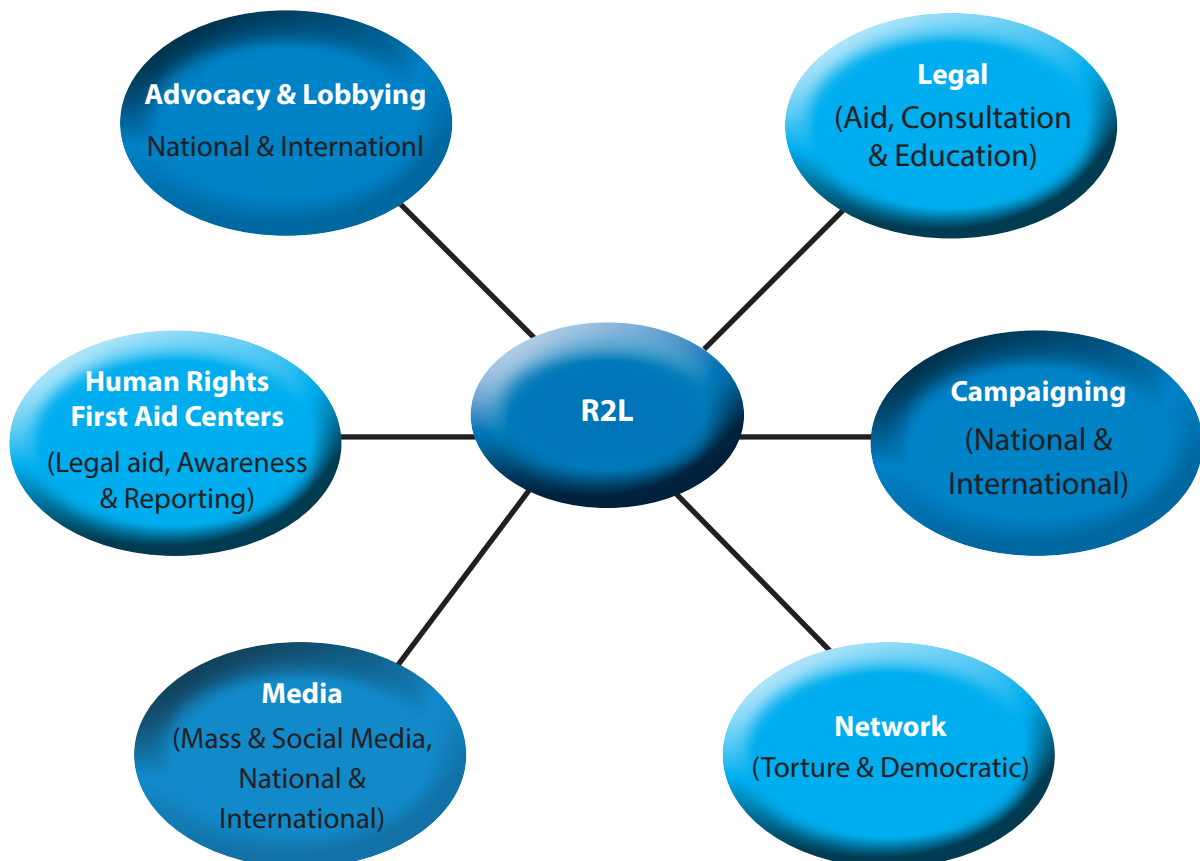
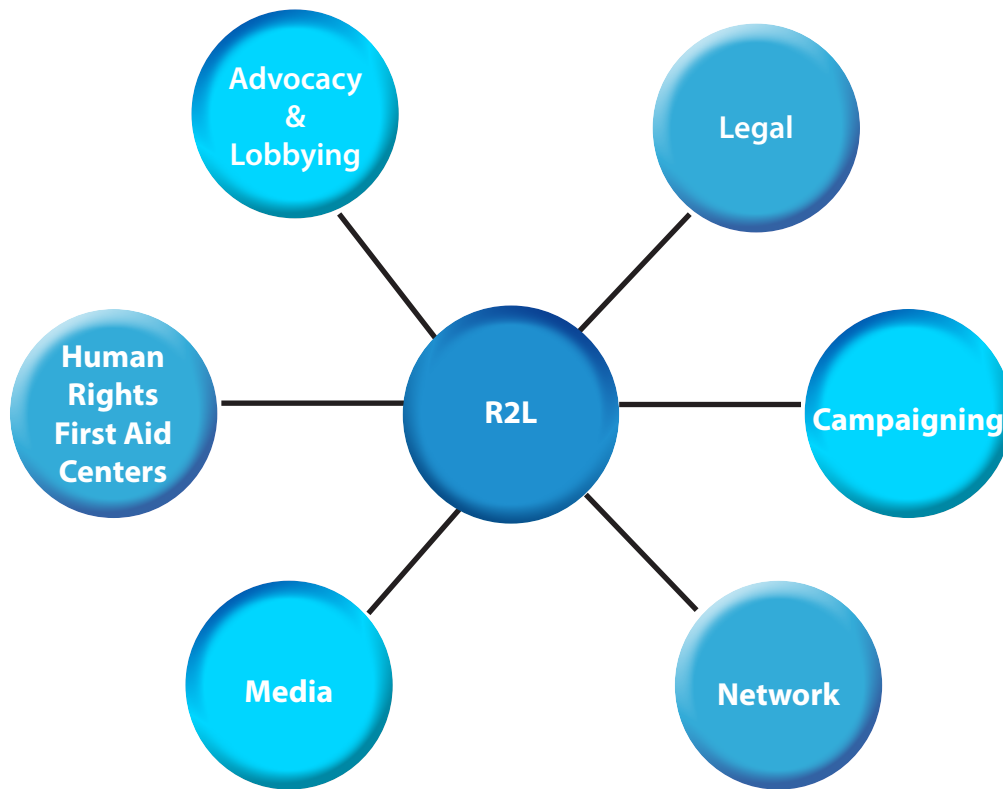
To be placed as an active Centre for establishing a society against human rights violations including torture, extra judicial killings, standing for national harmony and democratic reforms.

### Sub Missions

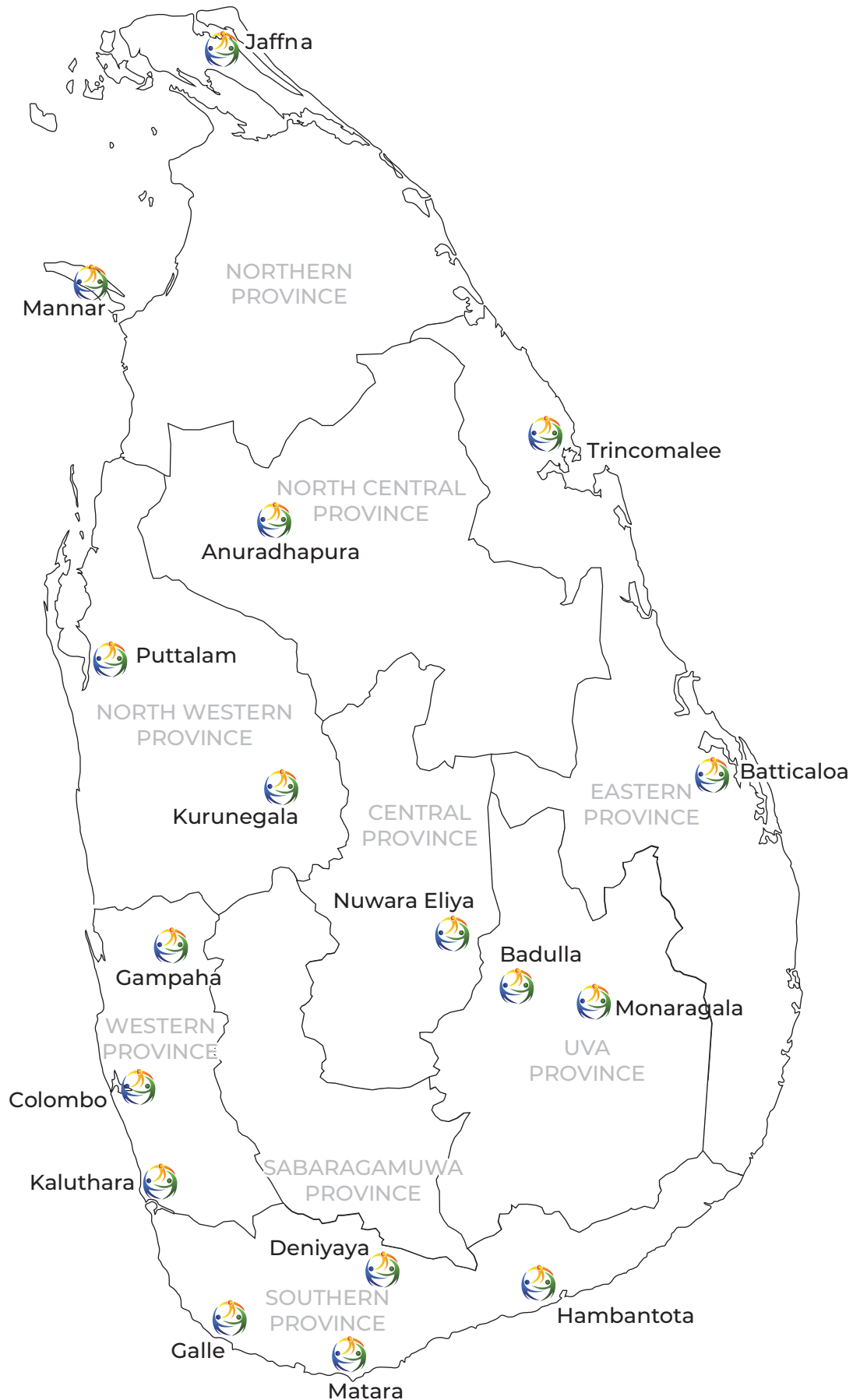


## ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE





## OUR WORKING AREAS





## WORKING CONTEXT

After common candidate appointed as the new president on 9th of January 2015, a new program of 100 days was established for immediate effect including some suggestions of the civil society. Even though they did not have the majority support of the parliament to impose this program, they managed to impose few democratic reforms with the help of the executive power.

Under this 100-day program 19th Amendment was introduced to abolish the previous 18th amendment which was imposed by the former government and also considerable amount of powers of the executive presidency had been transferred to the independent commissions through the parliament and constitutional council by this amendment. Apart from that important legal reforms had been introduced. Such as right to information was announced as a fundamental right and a new act has been imposed.

After that, from the general election of 2015 Good Government was not able to get the result that they expected. UNP and the United National Front were able to secure 106 seats though it is a 46 seat improvement than 2010, not enough to get the majority of the parliament. But they managed to build up a government with the support of the other parties especially the minority based parties. Under this government some crucial reforms have been imposed for the processes of reconciliation, transitional justice, rule of law and the independent judiciary.

Civil community which played a vital role to make the common candidate as the president in a huge disappointment hence the president breaches the people's mandate. Because of the following reasons popularity of the Good Government gradually decreased retaking the leadership of the party, delaying to actions against corruptions, creating various kind of obstructions when the military related suspects brought before justice, allegations made to the PM regarding the central bank bond scam, lack of the political leadership to take actions against corruptions. Confidence has been damaged cause to this political dissent between president and PM.

Defeated former regime has taken this opportunity immediately to spread their ideology through their supporting media network. Especially they trivialized above mentioned positive changes by using those media. For an example they were able to make an opinion among the public that the constitutional reforms which government introduced were supporting to separatists. Furthermore, they were trying to increase their votes with spreading this resist ideology.

Moreover, it has been recorded that the present government had engaged in several corruptive and fraudulent works, within which the central bank issue can be pointed as an example. Such malpractices of this government has created an opinion in minds of public that the present government cannot work for the betterment of the country, though the previous government too had involved in such corruptive works people believe that at least they have worked for the development of the country, specially the infrastructure development was in its highest at the time. This state of mind been revealed by Buddhist monks in times. Also they trying to pretend that infrastructural development such as highways are better than the development of political and social aspects.

Indeed, the down fall of the present government had made a way for the uprising of the former regime. Not giving a proper publicity for positive activities of this government is the main reason for this for an example 19th amendment to the constitution that the present government passed to reduce the enormous power given to the president through executive presidency and independent commissions which form by this government to protect democracy.

For the first time in Sri Lanka's history, important political reform proposals for the country were discussed at the 2015 election season. Discussions about this topic continued with civil movements and a large space was created in that country. Various civil society actors formulated several important political reform proposals to the country and presented them to party leaders. Many of the opposition parties at that time accepted that they would implement these proposals if they came to power.

The next step of the Civil Society Movement due to the various lessons from the history of political party activity in Sri Lanka was to present an apolitical common candidate to the presidential election. Anyway, civil society organizations won that target and were ended up with a common candidate by overcoming obstacles and bring the common candidate to the victory. In order to achieve this aim, powerful political parties, trade unions and other progressive people, including the United National Party, TNA and minor parties, JVP and other representatives of the opposition were conspirators.

Here the Civil Society was representing for transformation of corrupt government into a government with good governance concepts. Their main aims were the abolition of the executive presidency, the adoption of a new constitution that will provide solutions to democratic and ethnic conflicts, formulation of the rule of law, protection of the democratic rights of the people including human rights, creating an environment for reconciliation among the communities, giving punishments for various criminals and corrupt persons.

These factors illustrate how civil society activity has affected the elections are supporters of the Rajapaksa regime have been directly threatened and threatened with the leaders of these civil organizations, launching protests against them and launching mudslinging through the state media and not only that they continued their physical attacks also. By concerning facts like the frenzied and repressive actions of the Rajapaksa regime, the attractive democratic proposals presented by civil societies and be able to present an apolitical common candidate for the first time in Sri Lanka, in the presidential election the majority of the people believed in good governance concepts and forgot their traditional political parties and appointed a common candidate to the presidency.

## LEGAL

### 7.1. Won Cases

New six Torture Cases we have followed in 2019

#### 1) *Madhavi Buddhika's Case*

Madhavi Buddhika Rajaguru, a resident of Wariyapola, is a nurse by profession and a mother of two children. She has been working as a Surgeon Nurse in the Kurunegala General Hospital for more than four years. As usual, on March 12, 2019, she reported to her operating room in the operating room as the specialist surgeon Ashoka Wijemanne.

As a patient with a leg injury was scheduled to undergo surgery at the time, Madhavi had prepared the procedure and Dr. Asoka had started the operation. In the meantime, Madhavi had been tasked with supplying the necessary equipment and had given her a device called the Bone Cutter. After using it, the mediator retrieved it and placed it on the surgical trolley.

The doctor, who was angry, took the device and immediately hit Madhavi's head. The nurse, who was seriously injured in the attack, was admitted to Ward 5 of the Kurunegala Hospital following a medical examination.

Other nurses say that the doctor has acted in harsh and insulting manner even on previous occasions. A complaint has been lodged with the Kurunegala Police on the same day and a case has been filed at the Magistrate's Court on 15th March 2019. The incident was reported to the Right to Life Human Rights Center through a civil society activist and leader of the All Ceylon Nurses Union, Saman Ratnapriya. Accordingly, a complaint was filed with the Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka and a fundamental rights case was filed in the Supreme Court.

#### 2) *Minuwangoda Torture case*

- Name of the victim : Manikpedige ashan madhuwantha, age 23, unmarried

Alawaladewage tayitas kumara karunarathne, age 32, married, father of two children

Pingamage jayasoma, age 61, married

- Alleged perpetrator : PC Priyantha bandara athapaththu, katunayake police station
- Date of the incident : 10.02.2019
- Place of the incident: Nilpanagoda area (Minuwangoda)
- Narration :

#### *Manikpedige ashan madhuwantha*

On 10th of February Ashan Madhuhanka met with an accident near hotel White house Nilpanagoda around 8.45 pm on the way back to his home from the work place located in Ballapana junction. Madhuwantha was on his motorbike (BAQ 8375) and the other party; PC Priyantha Bandara Athapaththu who was on the wrong side of the road, also on a bike. Due to the accident right leg of the victim was injured. (Fracture)

While Ashan was trying to claim the damages, PC Priyantha Bandara pulled a pistol out of his bike cabin and threatened. Then Ashan was hit back of his head and back side of the neck by the PC. Somehow Ashan managed to move 20m head and find a safe place then he informed his family about the situation.

In about 20 minutes' police arrested the above said PC and Ashan was admitted to Minuwangoda hospital for the treatments. After he was discharged on 12.02.2019 he lodged a complaint in Minuwangoda police station.

### ***Alawaladewage Taitas Kumara Karunaratne***

On the 10th day of February 2019, around 8.45 pm Taitas Kumara, who was on his way back to home after getting some needed stationery items for his child saw a crowd gathered near Hotel White House at Nilpanagoda. Hence he stopped a while to check out whether there were any knowns to him. Though he could not find any, he saw a person was being beaten and threatened by a gunman.

While Taitas Kumara was attempting to leave the place, the gunman (PC Priyantha bandara) had threatened him and asked to hand over Kumara's bike key and money. Since he refused to do so, Kumara was beaten by the gunman and due to heavy bleeding of his head and his lower lip Kumara was admitted in Minuwangoda Hospital.

### ***Pingamage Jayasoma***

On the 10th day of February 2019, around 8.30 pm Jayasoma, who was passing the above said hotel on his way back to home from his shop was suddenly beaten by a stranger who was drunk. Also has been demanded Rs. 500,000 by that stranger. Later he was admitted to Minuwangoda Hospital and from there to Gampaha Hospital for further treatments. He announced on February 19 that he had lodged a complaint in police for his protection. Later Jayasoma has been revealed the fact that, the above said PC was the stranger who was assaulting and making hindrance to him.

- Actions which were taken :

A criminal case is on trial before the magistrate court of Minuwangoda, The Police Commission has been informed of this incident on 13.02.2019 and also The Human Rights Commission on 13.02.2019 and fundamental rights case was filed in the Supreme Court.

### ***3) Devid Amarasinghe Torture case***

In 2010 David Amarasinghe was dead in Police custody. Two suspect police officers attached to Kirindiwela Police Station filed a 'Mandamus' writ case against to Pugoda Magistrate Court to avert murder case. Court of Appeal imposed an interim order against Magistrate Court. Right to Life Human Rights Centre gave legal aid to the victims therefore, in 22nd of October, 2018 Court of Appeal lifted the interim order. After suspect police officers filed an appeal case in supreme court against to the interim order. So R2L is giving legal aid for this appeal case.

### ***4) Shantha's Torture case - Hungama***

On 31st of December 2018 Wijesekara, Indika and Sandun were at a musical show near Hungama kiwula temple. Wijesekara, the victim was with Sandun right in front to the stage. Indika who lately arrested, was at the back. When Wijesekara got the message that Indika was arrested he had immediately gone to check the situation. Wijesekara said that Indika was in the police jeep and there were few police officers near the jeep and one of them was in civvies. Wijesekara was cudgelled by SI Chathuranga who attached Hungama police when he was trying to inform about the incident to Indika's family. His shin of the right leg was severely injured (compound fracture) and it was heavily bleeding. He was dragged in to the jeep and took to police station and then to Ranna hospital but they rejected to admit him. However, he was admitted to Tangalle base hospital. Around 1.00 am he informed the incident to her wife. Members of the R2L and Coordinator of Hambantota Human Rights First Aid Centre directly went to the place where the incident took place and took the basic legal actions. And also we interviewed the victim's wife and neighbours who saw this incident and got relevant information. Complaints were prepared and sent to Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka, National Police Commission and Inspector General of Police to take necessary steps. There were two (02) inquiry appearances during the year. Make aware the victim about Human Rights through our awareness programs. A Fundamental Right case has been filed in the Supreme Court of Sri Lanka in 2019 and it is still ongoing. (SCFR 76/2019) There were five (05) court appearances during the year.

### 5) Rathgama Torture case

The abductions of Rasheen Chinthaka and Manjula Asela on January 23 of 2019 caused turmoil in the small village of Rathnaudanagama at Rathgama in Galle. CID revealed that the two businessmen abducted in Rathgama have been killed and their bodies burnt by pouring diesel at a forest reserve in Pallekanda, Walasmulla. According to Neighbors of Manjula Asela, victims were arrested by few armed police officers when they are in Manjula's house. As soon as Samanthi (wife of Manjula Asela) heard the news she went to Rathgama police station to ask about the matter and according to Sub inspector Bandula, Manjula and Chinthaka had not been arrested by Rathgama police. Furthermore "if another police station had arrested we will be informed but yet we have not received any information" he said. Since there was no any information about Manjula and Chinthaka, Samathi complained about this to rathgama police. On 6th of February Samathi received a letter from Mathara Nupe police stating that OIC Rohana and IP Nishantha of special unit attached to southern senior DIG police office are behind this incident and DIG of southern province is covering the incident. The letter further states that the victims were murdered and burnt. Then CID revealed two businessmen Manjula Asela and Rashin Chinthaka were abducted and murdered inside a house in Akmeemana. Complaints were prepared and sent to Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka, National Police Commission and Inspector General of Police to take necessary steps. There was one (01) inquiry appearances during the year.

### 6) Ann Ranaweera - Pamunugama Police Torture case

Ann Ranaweera is a journalist and an Ayurveda doctor who residents in Pamunugama, Ja Ela in Gampaha District. On 13th August 2019 around 9.30 a.m two male police officers of the Pamunugama police station jumped over her wall and came her place. After they entered her house forcibly without any legal warrant. Male police officers entered to the Ann's room since she was in her nightwear. She told them to leave the room, but they got angry and shouted at her in foul language. After that Ann was illegally arrested and taken to the Pamunugama police station. She refused to go to the police station but two police officers there is neither valid reason neither there was a women police constable nor warrant to take her to the police station. After that she was tortured in front of the other police officers by S. Perera who is the sub inspector of Pamunugama police station. Complaints were prepared and sent to Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka, National Police Commission and Inspector General of Police to take necessary steps. There were three (02) inquiry appearances during the year. Make aware the victim's family about Human Rights through our awareness programs. A Fundamental Right case has been filed in the Supreme Court of Sri Lanka in 2019 and leave was granted to proceed the case and it is still ongoing. (SCFR 381/2019) There were three (03) court appearances during the year.

#### Won Cases in Supreme Court

	Name of the victim	Category	Case Number	Appeared Lawyers	Remarks
01.	Mr. Asantha Aravinda- Galle	Torture	FR/29/2008	Mr. Upul Kumarapperuma	Won
02.	Mr. Sameera Sadaruwan (FTZ)	Torture	FR/346/2011	Mr. J.C Weliamuna	Won
03.	Mr. R.H.M Keerthirathne	Torture	FR/491/2011	Mr. Upul Kumarapperuma	Won
04.	Mr. Pradeep Kumara (FTZ)	Torture	FR/348/2011	Mr. J.C Weliamuna	Won
05.	Mr. Jayathilaka (FTZ)	Torture	FR/347/2011	Mr. J.C Weliamuna	Won
06.	Mr. Sameera Sandaruwan (FTZ)	Torture	FR/346/2011	Mr. J.C Weliamuna	Won
07.	Mr. Jerad Perera	Torture & Murder	SC SPL LA/259/2013	Dr. Jayantha Almeda	Won

### Won Cases in Court of Appeal

	Name of the victim	Category	Case Number	Appeared Lawyers	Remarks
01.	Mr. David Amarasingha	Torture & Murder	CA LA -338/2011	Mr. J.C Weliamuna	Won
02.	Mr. Nimal Chandrasiri	Torture & Murder	CA (Writ) 473/20151	Mr. Wasana Wickramasekara	Won
03.	Mr. Jerad Perera	Torture & Murder	CA 151-152/2015	Ms. Upendra Gunasekara	Won

### Won Cases in High Court

	Name of the victim	Category	Case Number	Court	Appeared Lawyers	Remarks
01.	Mr. Jerald Mervin Perera	Murder	HC/445/2005	Negombo	Mr. Bernard Piterson	Won
02.	Mr. Jerald Mervin Perera	Torture	HC/326/2003	Negombo	Ms. Upendra Gunasekara	Won
03.	Mrs. Niluka Krishanthi	Rape	HC/162/2009	Negombo	Mr. Dileepa Batagoda	Won
04.	Mr. K.A Hemasiri	Torture	HC/57/2014	Matara	Mr. Gunawaradana	Won
05.	Mr. Sandun Malinga	Torture & Murder	HC/01/2015	Badulla	Mr. Kashyapa Perera	Won

### Won Cases in District Court

	Name of the victim	Category	Case Number	Court	Appeared Lawyers	Remarks
01.	Mr. Brito Fernando & P. Dissanayake	Stay Order	HC/445/2005	Negombo	Mr. Sunil Cooray	Won

### Won Cases in Magistrate Court

	Name of the victim	Category	Case Number	Court	Appeared Lawyers	Remarks
01.	Mr. Asantha Aravinda	Filing a false case	B/2111	Moravaka	Mr. Upul Samarasinghe	Won
02.	Mr. Asantha Aravinda	Filing a false case	B/2113	Moravaka	Mr. Upul Samarasinghe	Won
03.	Mr. Asantha Aravinda	Filing a false case	HC/162/2009	Moravaka	Mr. Upul Samarasinghe	Won
04.	Mr. Roshen Shanaka FTZ	Murder	B/1577	Negombo	Mr. Saliya Peiris	Won
05.	Mr. Nimal Chandrasiri	Murder	B/04561/15	Panadura	Mr. Lakshan Dias	Won



## 7.2. Cases Right to Life Human Rights Centre followed in 2019

Cases followed towards 2019

### Supreme Court Cases

	Name of the victim	Category	Case Number	Appeared Lawyers	Remarks
01.	Mr. Seninur Miswer - Periyamulla	Torture & Murder	FR/342/2008	Mr. Upul Kumarapperuma	Laid By
02.	Mr. Asantha Aravinda - Galle	Torture	FR/29/2008	Mr. Upul Kumarapperuma	Won
03.	Mr. Amitha Ariyaratna - Ragama	Torture	FR/123/2009	Mr. J.C Weliamuna	Dismissed
04.	Mr. K.A. Hemasiri – Hakmana	Torture	FR/12/2010	Mr. Upul Kumarapperuma	Ongoing
05.	Mr. Sameera Sadaruwan (FTZ)	Torture	FR/346/2011	Mr. J.C Weliamuna	Won
06.	Mr. R.H.M Keerthirathne	Torture	FR/491/2011	Mr. Upul Kumarapperuma	Won
07.	Mr. Pradeep Kumara (FTZ)	Torture	FR/348/2011	Mr. J.C Weliamuna	Won
08.	Mr. Jayathilaka (FTZ)	Torture	FR/347/2011	Mr. J.C Weliamuna	Won
09.	Mr. Sameera Sandaruwan (FTZ)	Torture	FR/346/2011	Mr. J.C Weliamuna	Won
10.	Mr. Susil Priyanka	Torture	FR/690/2012	Ms. Ermisa Tegal	Dismissed
11.	Mr. Thusitha Rathnayaka	Torture	FR/521/2012	Ms. Ermiza Tegal	Dismissed
12.	Mr. Nimal Chandrasiri	Torture & Murder	FR/260/2012	Mr. J.C Weliamuna	Ongoing
13.	Mr. Jerad Perera	Torture & Murder	SC SPL LA/259/2013	Dr. Jayantha Almeda	Won
14.	Mr. Sadun Malinga – Badulla	Torture & Murder	FR/157/2014	Mr. Lakshan Dias	Ongoing
15.	Mr. Shantha Lakmal	Murder	FR/28/2015	Mr. Lakshan Dias	Dismissed
16.	Mr. L.A. Samantha	Torture	FR/85/2015	Mr. Lakshan Dias	Ongoing
17.	Mr. Kelum Subasinghe	Extra Judicial killing	FR/29/2015	Mr. Lakshan Dias	Dismissed
18.	Mr. Gamage Wasantha	Torture	FR/34/20	Mr. Lakshan Dias	Ongoing
19.	Mr. Gamage Lasantha	Torture	FR/33/2016	Mr. Lakshan Dias	Ongoing
20.	Mr. D.P.Mendis	Torture	FR/32/2016	Mr. Lakshan Dias & Mr. Priyalal Sirisena	Ongoing

21.	Mr. Sumith Prasanna	Torture & Murder	FR/30/2016	Mr. Lakshan Dias & Mr. Priyalal Sirisena	Ongoing
22.	Mr. Chadik Shyamen	Torture & Murder	FR/449/2017	Mr. Lakshan Dias	Ongoing
23.	Shantha	Torture	FR/76/2019	Mr. Lakshan Dias	Ongoing
24.	Madhavi Buddhika	Torture	FR/190/2019	Ms. Ermiza Tigal	Ongoing
25.	Taitus	Torture	FR/186/2019	Mr. Lakshan Dias	Ongoing
26.	David Amarasinghe	Torture & Murder	SC/SPL/LA 410/18	Ms. Niluka Dissanayake & Mr. Pulasthi	Ongoing
27.	Ann Ranaweera	Torture	FR/381/2019	Mr. Lakshan Dias	Ongoing

### Court of Appeal Cases

	Name of the victim	Category	Case Number	Appeared Lawyers	Remarks
01.	Mr. David Amarasingha	Torture & Murder	CA LA -338/2011	Mr. J.C. Weliamuna	Won
02.	Ms. Sandun Malinga	Torture & Murder	CA (Writ) 375/2015	Mr. Lakshan Dias	Dismissed
03.	Mr. Nimal Chandrasiri	Torture & Murder	CA (Writ) 473/2015	Mr. Wasana Wickramasekara	Won
04.	Mr. Jerad Perera	Torture & Murder	CA 151-152/2015	Ms. Upendra Gunasekara	Won
05.	Mr. K.A. Hemasiri	Torture	CA 235/2016	Mr. Lakshan Dias	Ongoing
06.	Ms. Niluka Krishanthi	Rape	CA 232/2016	Mr. Lakshan Dias	Ongoing
07.	Mr. Sandun Malinga	Torture & Murder	CA 19-24/2017	Mr. A.Z Bary	Ongoing

### High Court Cases

	Name of the victim	Category	Case Number	Court	Appeared Lawyers	Remarks
01.	Mr. Jerald Mervin Perera	Murder	HC/445/2005	Negombo	Mr. Bernard Piterson	Won
02.	Mr. Jerald Mervin Perera	Torture	HC/326/2004	Negombo	Ms. Upendra Gunasekara	Won
03.	Mrs. Niluka Krishanthi	Rape	HC/162/2009	Negombo	Mr. Dileepa Batagoda	Won

04.	Ms. Chamila Dissanayaka	Rape & Murder	HC/440/2010	Negombo	Mr. Sunil Wijesooriya	Settlement
05.	Mr. K.A. Hemasiri	Torture	HC/57/2014	Matara	Mr. Gunawaradana	Won
06.	Mr. Sandun Malinga	Torture & Murder	HC/01/2015	Badulla	Mr. Kashyapa Perera	Won
07.	Mr. Nimal Chandrasiri	Torture & Murder	HC/3499/2017	Panadura	Mr. Lakshan Dias	Ongoing
08.	Mr. Asantha Aravinda	Torture	HC/164/2016	Matara	Mr. Tharanga Pinidiya	Ongoing
09.	Chadik Sherman	Torture & Murder	HC/155/2019	Colombo	Mr. Lakshan Dias	Ongoing

### District Court Cases

	Name of the victim	Category	Case Number	Court	Appeared Lawyers	Remarks
01.	Ms. Niluka Krishanthi	Rape	12242/M0	Negombo	Mr. Dileepa Batagoda	Ongoing
02.	Mr. Brito Fernando & P. Dissanayake	Stay Order	2835/SP	Negombo	Mr. Sunil Coorayna	Won
03.	Mr. Asantha Arvinda	Torture	149/M	Matara	Mr. Priyantha Pereraa	Ongoing
04.	Mr. Jeesus Deniasias	Harresment	14239/M	Negombo	Ms. Upendra Gunasekaras	Ongoing

### Magistrate Court Cases

	Name of the victim	Category	Case Number	Court	Appeared Lawyers	Remarks
01.	Mr. Asantha Aravinda	Filing a false case	B/2111	Moravaka	Mr. Upul Samarasinghe	Won
02.	Mr. Asantha Aravinda	Filing a false case	B/2113	Moravaka	Mr. Upul Samarasinghe	Won
03.	Mr. Asantha Aravinda	Filing a false case	B/33921	Moravaka	Mr. Upul Samarasinghe	Won
04.	Mr. Asantha Aravinda	Filing a false case	B/4860	Moravaka	Mr. Upul Samarasinghe	Won
05.	Mr. Roshen Shanaka FTZ	Murder	B/1577	Negombo	Mr. Saliya Peiris	Won
06.	Mr. David Amarasingja	Murder	B/577/NS- B/678/10	Pugoda	Mr. Lakshan Dias	Ongoing

07. Mr. Royel Greshan	Filing a false case	B/11829-11825	Minuwangoda	Ms. Upendra Gunasakera	Settlement
08. Mr. Jesus Denisious	Assault	B/2455/11	Negombo	Mr. Srilachana	Ongoing
09. Vidiye Virodaya & Mr. Senaka Perera	Torture	B/21970/2016	Hambantota	Mr. Lakshan Dias	Ongoing
10. Mr. Nimal Chandrasiri	Murder	B/04561/15	Panadura	Mr. Lakshan Dias	Won
11. Mr. Madhushka de Silva	Disappearance	B/2894/14	Anuradapura	Mr. Priyala Sirisena	Ongoing
12. Mr. K.A Hemasiri	Filing a false case	B/66401	Matara	Mr. Sanath Karunanayake	Ongoing
13. Mr. Chadik Shyamen	Murder	B/69402/05	Colombo	Mr. Lakshan Dias	Ongoing
14. Mr. Taitus	Torture	B/89427/ 2019	Minuwangoda	Mr. Dulan Dasanayake	Ongoing
15. Madhavi Buddhika	Torture	B/706/ 2019	Kurunegala	Mr. Dulan Dasanayake	Ongoing
16. Rasheen Chinthaka & Manjula Asela	Murder	B/5323/2019	Galle	Mr. Dulan Dasanayake	Ongoing

### 7.3. Meeting Independent and State Institutions

#### Meeting with Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka

The meeting went on for about 2 hours on 19th July 2019 and we had a discussion based on the arrest and the release of the suspects of Easter Sunday attack and its aftermath. How human rights commission has tackled this issue. Further we spoke about the torture incidents recorded to the HRCSL and why people are afraid lodge a complaint.

How the ICCPR act is being used to arrest the people who bring out different opinion which is not the ordinary term in the view of the society and also the danger of being arrested under ICCPR if the Civil Society members speak against a religion's view at this particular juncture and also the use of laws according the political agendas of certain people.

We further discussed on court delays and the research that Right to Life Human Rights Centre and also the identified areas from the ongoing research also discussed in line with the functioning of Torture Act.

#### Follow up actions:

1. The relationship with the officials of the HRCSL apart from the commissioners has to be built up.
2. The follow up of the National Human Rights Action Plan 2017 to 2021.
3. The preparation for the 2020 UNCAT shadow report.
4. Emerging Issues like ICCPR Act and Death penalty.

5. Implementation of HRCSL recommendation and it's follow up.
6. Best practices during and after inquiries.
7. Torture after Easter Sunday Attack (under any law and its current situation).
8. Things to improve or develop from our part as SLCAT is also being discussed.

After the first Meeting round, we were unable to meet independence commissions and designated Ministries. In December 2019 we met and discussed with the Minister of Justice & Human Rights. Through that we were able to build a relationship with ministries so we can work together in future to a certain extent. Also, we were able to build a relationship with Acting Inspector General of Police. He was represented by DIG at the event to mark the 25th Anniversary Celebration of Torture Act. At the meeting we discussed about the current situation of the torture Act. and failure of not filing cases under torture act. the meeting went on about 45 mins. Mr. Dulan Dassanayake – AAL, Mr. Hiroshan Fernando and Mr. Anthony Vinoth participated on the meeting from our side. Apart from that we were able to build up a relationship with executive staff of Human Rights Commission. The following are some of the issues that will be discussed:

#### **Follow-up actions:**

- Able to build up a relationship with executive staff in HRC and getting them involved in future work.
- To pave the assistance of the Human Rights Commission to conduct ongoing researchers based on Human Rights Action Plan.
- Collection of facts and information related to the preparation of shadow report to be sent to the United Nations CAT Committee.
- Analyzing the recommendations made by HRCSL for each complaint and preparing a research report to be released this year.
- Adding Human Rights Commission to the advisory panel of SLCAT.
- We were able to establish a relationship with the Ministry of Justice. It is possible to contact them in future works.
- Adding Human Rights Commission, Sri Lanka Police and Ministry of Justice & Human Rights into our panels in future discussions.

#### **Issues identified:**

- The Police Commission is not interested in maintaining any kind of contact with us.
- Despite attempts to contact the Attorney General's Department, Ministry of Law and Order and Foreign Affairs they have not responded.
- Change of the government led us to step back from our initiations which we had with former ministries and commissions because newly appointed Government is not Human Rights friendly.

#### **Meeting with Commissioner of OMP**

The meeting with the Commissioner of Office of Missing Person was held on May 23, 2019. The meeting was held at Ecumenical Centre along with the representatives of selected Sri Lankan Collective Against Torture and the civil society organizations works in the field. The discussion was held on the process of the Office of the Missing Persons and the current functioning of it.

The discussion was a closed discussion and at the meeting the practical issue faced by the Commission was also discussed. Further how the Civil Society Organizations can take up the promotion of OMP and contribute to its better functioning through their direct and indirect engagement.

The participants were from 11 districts and the priority is being given for the time being to get the information of the disappeared persons through filling the forms given by the Commission and then we need address to get the certificate of the absence to the disappeared.

Later the reparation allocated to be given to the victims of the disappeared Rs. 6000.00.

We had a discussion on how better civil society can involve in this process. At the same time make the functioning of the OMP more successful through meetings its objectives.



## MEDIA

### 8.1 Media Intervention

Media Intervention is very much important to popularize the things; topics among public. Human Rights also a great field which public should have the knowledge and sense about it. So as a Human Right organization we also use the media to improve the human right, democratic rights sense of the people. Through this media intervention we aimed to make a social discourse among general public about human rights and democratic rights, aware people about their rights and how to demand it, share news about human rights violation happens.

In this organization we have several websites to inform the people about this Human Rights, Torture and democratic rights.

### 8.2 Websites

#### 8.2.1 Right to Life Website

Right to Life Website is the key website where all these functioning human rights actions and activities are included. It is the first website that our organization has been initiated. It has a long history from 2007. Here we include news, articles and videos about the Human right violation cases which we supported as an organization, court cases; FR cases; torture cases, human rights engagements, the programs and trainings that we held. As well it includes the recent incidents, Human Rights Violations and human rights engagements happening around Sri Lanka.

Throughout the year of 2019 this website has published 51 English news and 236 Sinhala news. As well it has uploaded 29 videos. R2L Facebook has 1756 followers.

#### 8.2.2 Aithiya

Aithiya is the major; popular website which is authorized by our organization. It was initiated in 2014. It has a sense of torture. Mainly it includes news, articles, interviews, videos which are related to the torture and democracy in Sri Lanka. As well it includes foreign news and business news also.

Other than Aithiya website, it has Aithiya YouTube channel and Aithiya Facebook page. Aithiya YouTube channel has 14.6K followers and this YouTube channel make a bridge to a social discourse among general public about the torture and how it eliminates from the society, democratic rights, human rights and recent topics etc. Time to time it has advanced its appearance choosing different kind of topics.

In 2019, it uploaded 40 video interviews on views professionals of torture. It was popular among public, professionals and scholars etc. As well the articles on that video also published in website. Throughout the year of 2019, website has published 948 Sinhala and 54 English news, articles and interviews. Aithiya Facebook page has 15K followers.

#### 8.2.3 Daily Reporter

Daily Reporter is the recent website which was initiated in 2019. It is a common website which publishes all kind of news unless other two websites. It also popular among the public. It includes news related to local, political, sports, foreign, business etc. It has a Facebook page too. It was popular among public within a short period of time.

### 8.3. Videos / Interviews

Right to Life Human Rights Centre was able to produce 40 videos on torture to youtube with English subtitle and have been able to create a discourse among the public on torture. The selected 40 professionals have been closely working with the organization on promoting Human Rights. The series of the interviews are being documented and published as DVD on 25th Anniversary of Anti-Torture Act in Sri Lanka on December 20, 2019.

## Human Rights First Aid Centres

### 9.1. Concept

A Human Rights First Aid Centre is widespread in 11 districts in 2018 earlier Right to Life Human Rights Centre has been functioning 6 Human Rights First Aid Centres in the beginning of 2018 (Gampaha, Galle, Matara, Hambantota, Badulla and Monaragala). In 2018 with the aid of European Union and National Peace Council, Right to Life Human Rights Centre was able to expand the Human Rights First Aid Centres in another 5 Districts (Trincomalee, Batticaloa, Nuwara Eliya, Jaffna and Mannar).

Human Rights First Aid Centre is being operated within Community Based Organization or at a Society in a Village with the participation of a minimum of three members who give their time voluntarily. The Human Rights First Aid Centre is established within an existing Community Based Organization or Society to minimize running costs and avoid additional a burden on society. Right to Life Human Rights Centre identify Human Rights Defenders from the districts and with their consent include them in the volunteer pool. Thereafter the volunteers are given training on how to manage a Human Rights First Aid Centres in a particular District. Human Rights Defender contributes voluntarily a minimum of 3 to 4 days to the Centre per month.

#### Their functions are as follows:

- The Human Rights First Aid Centre intervenes to support an individual victim or group when a rights violation is evident.
- They identify the issues faced by the aggrieved party, collect relevant information and explore all possible answers.
- Keep the victim updated on possible solutions and ensure the safety of victims.
- With the victims' consent, prepare initial documentation necessary to start a legal process. This includes recording statements, taking copies of police statements, preparing affidavits etc.
- A Human Rights Defender at the Human Rights First Aid Centre accompany the victim to investigations etc. conducted by relevant authorities and observe the conduct of the authorities.
- Directing victims to seek legal / psycho social / medical support from either government led or NGO supported institutions. This is necessary to ensure continuity of legal measures.
- Carry out training / information dissemination for human rights defenders on how to manage a Human Rights First Aid Centre and to build a cadre of localized human rights defenders in a network.
- Carry out human rights / legal rights education workshops to disseminate knowledge to communities in easy to understand local languages.
- Identify, document all localized human rights violations, and disseminate this information to the public, share information on violations with others through available media, through publications, videos and media statements.
- Inform and update relevant governmental and non-governmental human rights institutions on these violations and support with any follow up actions.

## 9.2. Human Rights Defender Groups

Human Rights Defenders from all parts of the country. They have been defending human rights and fighting for the protection and promotion of human rights throughout their lifetime with their sacrifices and attempt to establish rule of law in the country. Human Rights Defenders are pioneers in many sectors and have been trained with adequate knowledge on human rights and the laws of the country according to the constitution. In 2019, R2L has been continuously supporting the Human Rights Defender Groups with education programs, building up networks and making them well placed in the society by linking them to State mechanisms to stand for justice. Moreover, victims, relatives and survivors of human rights have become human rights defenders in vast manner in the recent past.

## 9.3. Cases received 2019

### Trainings Dates of Human Rights First Aid Centres in 2019

	District	Training on trauma counselling for befriending	Women Police Constables Training	Police officers & Government Officers Training	Key Community Leaders Trainings	Marginalized Group Trainings
01.	Badulla	25 <sup>th</sup> – 27 <sup>th</sup> July	24 <sup>th</sup> July	25 <sup>th</sup> July	26 <sup>th</sup> July	26 <sup>th</sup> July
02.	Galle	4 <sup>th</sup> – 6 <sup>th</sup> July	10 <sup>th</sup> Sept 3 <sup>rd</sup> Nov 2 <sup>nd</sup>	12 <sup>th</sup> Sept	5 <sup>th</sup> July	11 <sup>th</sup> Sept
03.	Gampaha	12 <sup>th</sup> -14 <sup>th</sup> July	11 <sup>th</sup> July Octo-2 <sup>nd</sup>	12 <sup>nd</sup> July	13 <sup>th</sup> July 1 <sup>st</sup> 24 <sup>th</sup>	24 <sup>th</sup> Sep
04.	Hambantota	18 <sup>th</sup> -20 <sup>th</sup> July	17 <sup>th</sup> July	18 <sup>th</sup> July	19 <sup>th</sup> July	19 <sup>th</sup> July
05.	Matara	15 <sup>th</sup> -17 <sup>th</sup> August	14 <sup>th</sup> August	15 <sup>th</sup> August	16 <sup>th</sup> August	16 <sup>th</sup> August
06.	Monaragala	01 <sup>st</sup> -03 <sup>rd</sup> August	31 <sup>st</sup> July	01 <sup>st</sup> August	2 <sup>nd</sup> August	2 <sup>nd</sup> August
07.	Nuwaraeliya	08 <sup>th</sup> -10 <sup>th</sup> August	07 <sup>th</sup> August	08 <sup>th</sup> August 9 <sup>th</sup>	August 22 <sup>nd</sup> Dec 2 <sup>nd</sup>	9 <sup>th</sup> August
08.	Trincomalee	18 <sup>th</sup> -20 <sup>th</sup> Sept	21 <sup>st</sup> August	22 <sup>nd</sup> August	19 <sup>th</sup> sept	19 <sup>th</sup> sept

## Human Rights Defender Groups of Human Rights First Aid Centres

District	Members	Active Accompaniers	Active Befrienders	New Members
Gampaha	35	24	26	+4
Galle	34	24	27	+7
Matara	40	30	25	+4
Hambantota	35	32	34	0
Monaragala	32	29	25	+6
Badulla	30	21	23	0
Nuwara Eliya	39	25	24	+5
Trincomalee	30	25	21	0

## HR Desk committee members and beneficiaries' meetings from January 2019 to December 2019

District	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gampaha												
Galle												
Matara												
Hambantota												
Badulla												
Monaragala												
Trincomalee												
Nuwara Eliya												

## Progress review meetings from January 2019 to December 2019 of HRFACs

District	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Gampaha				R2L		R2L			R2L		R2L	
Galle				R2L		R2L			R2L	R2L	R2L	
Matara				R2L		R2L			R2L	R2L	R2L	
Hambantota				R2L		R2L		R2L	R2L		R2L	
Badulla				R2L		R2L			R2L		R2L	
Monaragala				R2L		R2L			R2L		R2L	
Trincomalee				R2L		R2L			R2L		R2L	
Nuwara Eliya				R2L		R2L			R2L		R2L	

R2L District Coordinator's meetings in R2L office in Colombo

R2L Meetings in HRFACs with R2L members & Defenders

## Complaints Received from 01st January 2019 to 31st December 2019

District	Recorded	HR Violations	Civil Cases	Referred to HRCSL	Referred to OMP	Referred to RTI	Referred to NPC
Gampaha	125	36	87	20	02	18	07
Galle	95	42	53	27	0	07	13
Matara	70	11	37	09	22	09	04
Hambantota	82	28	43	20	11	10	10
Monaragala	51	14	25	10	12	14	04
Badulla	130	28	36	17	66	20	05
Nuwara Eliya	45	11	30	08	03	12	04
Trincomalee	69	13	55	10	01	17	04
Total	667	183	366	121	117	95	51

## Trainings for Districts Women Police Constables, Police Officers, Government Officers, Marginalized Groups and Key Community Leaders

District	Participants of WPC Training	Participants of Police Officers & Government Officers Training	Participants of Marginalized Group Training	Participants of Key Community Leaders Training
Trincomalee	28	15	30	39
Galle	30	17	34	48
Badulla	23	14	23	14
Monaragala	27	23	58	15
Gampaha	26	18	31	48
Nuwara Eliya	23	10	33	87
Matara	31	14	41	14
Hambantota	19	12	31	14
Total	281	169	417	467



## Intervention for Democracy

**10.1. Campaigns**

**10.2. Public Meetings**

**10.3. Press Conferences**

## Programmes

### 11.1. Workshop for Human Rights Defender Groups on Committee Against Torture

### 11.2. Campaigns in 08 Districts

Campaigns against Torture and other Inhuman Treatment, on Human Rights and on Human Rights First Aid Centres have been held in 8 Districts at different locations in 2019.

District	Covered Places
Gampaha	Gampaha, Negombo, Minuwangoda, Udugampola, Ja-ela
Monaragala	Wellawaya, Pelwatta, Burutha Junction, Mahagodaya, Tanamalwila
Badulla	Bandarawela, Haputale, Boralanda, Guruthalawa, Welimada, Etampitiya
Trincomalee	Trincomalee, Kinniya, Kantale, Thambalagamuwa
Galle	Galle, Baddegama, Habaraduwa, Milidduwa, Katugoda
Nuwara Eliya	Hatton, Dickoya, Kotagala, Pathana
Hambantota	Hambantota, Ambalanthota, Angunukolapelassa, Tangalle
Matara	Deniyaya, Urubokka, Morawakka, Kotapola

### 11.3. Trainings for Human Rights Defender Groups 08 Districts

In the year 2018, there was a basic training and advanced training for human rights activists in the eight districts. Subsequently, in 2019, a few selected centers (for the Gampaha, Galle, Matara and Hambantota centers) were given further training in human rights law in October and November. Also in July, 25 human rights activists selected from eight districts underwent a media training on social media usage.

### 11.4. Press Conference

There have been 4 Press Conferences help representing Sri Lankan Collective Against Torture on, before and after Anti-Torture Month from 1<sup>st</sup> June to 31<sup>st</sup> June and also during torture issues and have been put out the statements of SLCAT to public and media through public and media statements respectively. During April 21<sup>st</sup> Easter Sunday

Bomb Attack too SLCAT put out the statement as well. The members of SLCAT put forward their views in public representing the network. At the same time, on Democratic issues Civil Society and Trade Union Collective had been hosting 3 Press Conferences with the members and human rights lawyers as well joined for a press conference during Anti-Torture month.

### **11.5. Progress Review Meetings**

During the year 2019, several meetings were held to monitor the performance of Human Rights First Aid Centres. Accordingly, Galle Center in June, Hambantota Center in August, Matara Center in October and the Gampaha Center in November were supervised. Several progress review meetings with coordinators at other centres were held at the Colombo main office in April and September.

### **11.6. Key Community Leaders Meeting**

In 2019, a series of meetings were held with community leaders of the district, who are affiliated with the Human Rights First Aid Centers in the eight districts. The meeting focused on the common issues faced by the district and their solutions. Accordingly, these Community Leadership meetings were held in July, Badulla, Galle, Gampaha and Hambantota districts, in August, Matara, Nuwara Eliya and Moneragala districts and in September in Trincomalee.

### **11.7. Vulnerable group Meeting**

A special awareness program for disabled persons and widows in 8 districts was held in 2019 with the participation of District Human Rights First Aid Centers. They were briefed on government subsidies and availability of the marginalized community. Accordingly, the program was held in July, Badulla and Hambantota districts, in August, Matara, Moneragala and Nuwara Eliya districts, and in September in Gampaha, Galle and Trincomalee districts.

### **11.8. District Coordinators Meeting**

Several meetings with the coordinators of the Human Rights First Aid Centers in 8 Districts were held at the Head Office in Colombo in 2019. They discussed the progress of the activities of the Coordinators, the practical issues they face and the political changes in the country. These discussions further strengthened the work of the Human Rights First Aid Centers and took steps to improve the knowledge and the confidence of District Human Rights Defenders. These meetings were held in April, June, September and November.

## **Specialization of Human Rights First Aid Centers in 8 Districts**

### **1. Gampaha HRFAC**

Gampaha District Human Rights First Aid Centre is located in Ja-Ela. It consists of 35 human rights defenders. Mrs. Kusum Silva is coordinating it. The Centre is specially committed to upholding the rights of the victims of police torture violence in the district. The Centre has made a major intervention to filing of fundamental rights lawsuits in the Supreme Court for two persons who violated fundamental rights of police torture in 2019. The centre also held regional public seminars to commemorate human rights law in the area, commemorating International Day of Torture and International Human Rights Day.

### **2. Galle HRFAC**

Galle District Human Rights First Aid Centre is located in Galle. It is made up of 34 human rights defenders. The coordinator is Mrs. Kanchani Kodituwakku. The centre is against the violation of fundamental rights of citizens by

police officers and other government institutions in the Galle District. The centre has good connections with police stations in the Galle district and has been able to get the assistance of senior police officers to prevent torture. The centre also held regional public seminars to commemorate human rights law in the area, commemorating International Day of Torture and International Human Rights Day.

### 3. Matara HRFAC

Matara District Human Rights First Aid Centre is located in Deniyaya. It consists of 40 human rights defenders. The coordinator is Mr. PD Kumara. The area where this centre is located is one of the most frequent areas of tea plantation industry. Therefore, the Human Rights First Aid Centre does a great job of protecting the rights of workers in the tea estate sector. The centre also plays a vital role in providing basic legal aid to human rights violations in the district.

### 4. Hambantota HRFAC

Hambantota Human Rights First Aid Centre is located in Ambalantota. It consists of 35 human rights defenders. Mr. Tharanga Patabendi is the Coordinator. Mr. Tharanga Patabendi has worked with the Right to Life Human Rights Center since 2006 as a human rights defender. As such, he has good experience in the field of human rights, including torture. He has done great job in filing fundamental rights cases a police torture case in Embilipitiya in 2016 and a fundamental rights case in Suriyakanda. The Human Rights First Aid Centre is fighting against human rights violations including police torture in the district. Basic legal aid has been provided to victims of human rights violations. Similarly, the fundamental rights cases have filed in the Supreme Court for the serious cases. The centre also held regional public seminars to commemorate human rights law in the area.

### 5. Monaragala HRFAC

Moneragala District Human Rights First Aid Center is located in Wellawaya. It consists of 32 human rights defenders. Its coordinator is Achala Piyumantha. The Centre plays a vital role in the rights of the victims of enforced disappearances and rights of their families. It also plays a major role in protecting the land rights of the citizens of the district. The Human Rights First Aid Centre is fighting against human rights violations including police torture in the district. Basic legal aid has been provided to victims of human rights violations. The centre also held regional public seminars to commemorate human rights law in the area.

### 6. Badulla HRFAC

Badulla District Human Rights First Aid Centre is located in Badulla. This includes 30 human rights defenders. The coordinator is Suresh Nadesan. As a human rights and civil activist in the Uva Province, he has for many years represented the rights of citizens. The Centre has made a significant contribution to the rights of thousands of families affected by the Uma Oya Project in 2014. The Human Rights First Aid Centre is fighting against human rights violations including police torture in the district. Basic legal aid has been provided to victims of human rights violations. Similarly, the fundamental rights cases have filed in the Supreme Court for the serious cases. The centre also held regional public seminars to commemorate human rights law in the area.

### 7. Nuwara eliya HRFAC

Nuwara Eliya District Human Rights First Aid Centre is located in Hatton. There are 39 human rights defenders here. The Coordinator is Mr. A. Selvaraj. The area where this centre is located is one of the most frequent areas of tea plantation industry. Therefore, the Human Rights First Aid Centre does a great job of protecting the rights of workers in the tea estate sector. The centre also plays a vital role in providing basic legal aid to human rights violations in the district. The centre also held regional public seminars to commemorate human rights law in the area.

## 8. Trincomalee HRFAC

Trincomalee District Human Rights First Aid Centre is located in Kantale. It consists of 30 human rights defenders. Suranga Rupasinghe is the coordinator. This Centre has played a significant role in protecting to the right to information in the district. The Human Rights First Aid Centre is fighting against human rights violations including police torture in the district. Basic legal aid has been provided to the victims of human rights violations.

### 11.9 Legal Clinics

Legal aid program was held in 2019 to provide legal aid for complex complaints in district human rights first aid centres which complaints are difficult to access. The program was conducted with the full intervention of the Right to Life human rights centre. Accordingly, Attorney-at-law Dulan Dassanayake and Attorney-at-law Pubudu Randima of Right to Life Human Rights Centre participated in this legal aid program. The program was implemented in the Gampaha, Matara and Hambantota Districts with the focus of Human Rights First Aid Centers. Accordingly, the Legal Aid Program was implemented in Gampaha District in February and Matara and Hambantota Districts in October.

## Events/Forums

### 12.1. International Day in Support of Torture Survivors

#### Panel Discussion to mark the International Day Commemoration in Support of Torture Survivors

“Torture Free Sri Lanka through Protecting Citizens’ Dignity!”

The Panel Discussion on the theme of “Torture Free Sri Lanka through Protecting Citizens’ Dignity” held in Light House Auditorium, on 26th of June (Wednesday) as a public event after the Press Conference and Public meeting organized by Sri Lankan Collective Against Torture (SLCAT) to highlight torture and its possibility of being extreme in many forms in the country with the past and present experiences. The proposed Anti-Torture Month started on June 19, 2019 to mark the International Day in Support of Torture Survivors of 2019. There are many programs planned to host around the country through various manner.

Panelists addressed the gathering were Rev. Galkande Dammananda Thero Senior Lecturer at Kelaniya University, Mr. J.C. Weliamuna President Counsel, Mr. Ajith Parakum Journalist, Mrs. Ramani Muthethuwegama Commissioner of Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka and Senior Lawyer Mr. Upul Kumarapperuma AAL as Moderator.

As a special event handed over the Human Rights Lawyer Award to President Counsel J. C. Weliamuna on behalf of Right to Life Human Rights Centre at this Panel Discussion

### 12.2. International Human Rights Day

**International Human Rights Day – 2019** On 10th of December 2019, International Human Rights Day Commemoration held at Sri Lanka Foundation Institute. The theme of this program was “Stand Up for Human Rights”. Hon. Karu Jayasuriya - Speaker of the parliament, Dr. Nimalka Fernando, Commissioner of Office of Missing persons, Dr. Jehan Perera – Director of National Peace Council, Mr. Saman Rathnapriya – Convener of Trade Union & Civil Society Collective and Executive Director of Right to Life Human Rights Centre Mr. Philip Dissanayake were there as the key speakers.

### 12.3. 25 Years to Torture Act

#### 25th Anniversary Commemoration of Act Against Torture

On 25th of December 2019 Right to life Human Rights Centre organized this program along with the Sri Lanka Collective Against Torture. The discussion focused on the number of cases filed under the Torture Act and the about verdicts given within 25 years of the introduction of the Anti-Torture Act in Sri Lanka. The key speakers of the program were Ms. Ermiza Tegal – AAL, MP- Mr. M.A. Sumanthiran, Mr. Ajith Rohana Deputy Inspector General of Police, Mr. Prabodha Rathnayake – AAL, Mr Dulan Dassanayake – AAL & Ms. Amitha Ariyaratne – Civil Activists. Program was held at BMICH – Tulip Hall.

### 12.4. FTZ Struggle

#### FTZ Book Launch

Justice for Struggle of FTZ book was launched on 8th of November 2019 at Jayalath Reception Hall, Ja-ela. This book was written by Mr. Dulan Dassanayake AAL based on the Mahanama Thilakarathne report which is issued by a presidential commission regarding incident took place on 24th of May to 30th of May 2011. All NGO's and Civil Society organizations, including Right to Life Human Rights Center, worked hard to get this report from 2012 to

2019. The book was authored by Mr. Dulan Dassanayke as an analysis of this Mahanama Thilakaratne Report. The people who contributed to the struggle were also present on the occasion. Among them, Mrs. Chamila Thushari also spoke about the struggle they have faced during this time and the victory they had achieved. Attorney-at-Law Dulan also gave a speech regarding the book

## **12.5. Gerrad's Torture Case**

### **Gerrard Mervin Perera's Incident and The Tragedy of the Legal System in Sri Lanka**

This program was held at Light House Auditorium and Lawns on 7th of August 2019 with the participation of 120 participants. Program started with the lunching of a documentary called "Hinsanaye Niyapasaru Yata" (under the guise of violence) which is created with the stories of women's whose husbands got tortured by the police. Specially the Gerrard Mervins' wife is sharing her experience which she has to face after the incident. Mr. Basil Fernando – AAL, Dr. Nimalka Fernando, Mr. Sunanda Deshapriya and Mr. Philip Dissanayake were the key speakers of the program. The main reason for holding the event was the verdict on the torture case of Gerard Mervyn Perera.

## Sri Lanka Committee Against Torture (SLCAT)

Right to Life Human Rights Centre initially started to work on torture issue in Sri Lanka from its establishment from 2002. Since the organization losing the lives of two torture victims. The need of networking to combat torture was initiated then on and the network called "People Against Torture" PAT is formed along with seven organizations with the support Asian Human Rights Commission.

Right to Life Human Rights Centre has initiated the Sri Lankan Committee Against Torture (SLCAT) from 2009 ensuring torture prevention mechanisms and establishing torture free Sri Lanka. In 2011, we took the initiative and led in the process to submit a shadow report to the United Nations Committee Against Torture (UNCAT) together with nine organizations. Later the network discussed and decided that the UNCAT recommendations should be implemented and the network or the collective has to take the initiation and work for it. The State party should be observed and the Civil Society should pressurize them to implement the recommendations. Later the network worked on that focus.

And in 2016 the Collective was able to make it more effective by joining hands with twenty organizations and were able to submit the shadow report to UNCAT. Now the network has been expanded up to 27 organizations and have decided to include other CSOs who have similar interest to join hands to raise voice against torture. R2L has been playing the leading role of functioning the network, and implementing proposed activities of the network with the network. Activities like, discussions with Independent Institutions and related ministries take measures to prevent torture and ensure accountability, holding press conferences, campaigns, writing statements, awareness raising programs, R2L finds resources to maintain the network.

### **Vision: Zero Tolerance Torture**

Mission: Strengthening torture prevention mechanisms and create awareness among general public on torture and extra judicial killings, aiming to ensure justice through legal support, advocacy, campaigns

### **Sub-missions:**

- Cater Torture issues in Sri Lanka through taking legal remedies
- Awareness raising on the gravity of torture to general public
- Advocacy Campaign - Give needed media publicity
- Reporting to UNCAT on Torture issues in Sri Lanka
- Regular Discussions with Ministries and Independent Institutions/Commissions
- Regular Research on torture related issues and incidents
- Working against Prison torture

### **Main Achievements**

- 2011 Shadow report to United Nations Committee Against Torture
- 2016 Shadow report to United Nations Committee Against Torture
- 2011 & 2016 representing Sri Lankan Civil Society in Geneva
- 2016 handing over the shadow report to Minister of Foreign Affairs before send it to UNCAT
- Meeting and holding discussions with the Independent Commissions and State Institutions
- Hosting events throughout the month of June in 2018 marking International Day in Support of Torture Survivors
- " Anti-Torture Month"
- Interviewing public figures and professionals on Torture related issues and bring it to public discourse
- Creating documentaries on torture issue both on advocacy and awareness



## Publications

(FTZ, Pramadavee Lebunu Yukthiya, Sentencing Policies of Torture, 25 years to Torture Act, MSV Guide, Eka Ahasak Yata, 40 Video Documentary, Niyapasuru Yata)

## Financial Position

### Financial Position 2019

#	Date	Donor	Project Title & Total Budget	Total Grant Amount (LKR)	Description of Project
1.	2018-2020	EU	Accountability through Community Engagement and Initiatives for Transition	7,131,725.00 (20,041,089.00)	Transitional justice and human rights promotion and activating prevailing mechanisms for citizen's benefits.
2.	2017-2019	OSF	Strengthening Civil Society Action to Ensure Zero Tolerance Response to Torture"	9,750,034.00 (19,778,300.00)	Ensuring the full and fair implementation of the zero tolerance policy on torture. Strengthening Civil Society responses on torture including Male Sexual Violence (MSV), in Sri Lanka.
3.	2019	IDEA	Strengthening torture prevention mechanism through community engagement	8,796,410.00	Capacitating Sri Lankan Collective Against Torture and creating a public discourse on torture through using all possible means.
4.	2019	UNFVT	You are not alone	3,588,000.00	Zero tolerance torture and legal, medical, psychological and social support to torture survivors.