

Progress report

2023

Ministry of Women, Child Affairs and Social Empowerment



Message from Hon. Minister of Women, Child Affairs & Social Empowerment

The Ministry of Women, Child Affairs, and Social Empowerment shoulders the crucial responsibility of fulfilling the government's commitment to ensuring social and economic revival. One of its primary functions is the empowerment of 1.2 mn low-income families, providing economic opportunities, and establishing social security measures for marginalized groups in society. This includes individuals with disabilities, the elderly, low-income families, women, children and those with mental disabilities.

Furthermore, the Ministry is tasked with conducting programs aimed at cultivating a productive younger generation, focusing on the 33% of children under 18 years of age. These initiatives are designed to align with the evolving needs and progress of the modern world.

Additionally, the Ministry plays a pivotal role in enhancing the current socio-economic status of women, who constitute 52% of Sri Lanka's total population. This involves ensuring their safety and protection, preventing violence against women and promoting the overall welfare and development of women who have been victims of various challenges.

It is essential to express appreciation for the unwavering dedication of the departments, institutions, and all sectors under the Ministry that diligently provide services to the target community. Special gratitude is extended to the State Minister of Women and Child Affairs, State Minister of Social Empowerment, the Secretary of the Ministry and the entire staff actively supporting me in these critical initiatives. Their efforts contribute significantly to the realization of the Ministry's objectives and the broader goal of social and economic upliftment.

Ranil Wickremesinghe

Minister of Women, Child Affairs and Social Empowerment



Messege from Hon. State Minister of Women & Child Affairs

It is a pleasure to send a message to the Progress and Performance Report of the Ministry of Women, Child Affairs and Social Empowerment for the year 2023, in which a vital role for women and children was played. A significant contribution was made in the year 2023 for making decisions and formulating laws, acts and long-term plans favorable to children and women more than in other years. The leadership provided by the Honourable President towards the achievement of these objectives is highly commendable.

Also, for the first time in Sri Lanka, the highest provision was made to the women and children sector this year, which amounted to Rs.14,829Mn (for main development and welfare programmes) despite the unfavorable situation in the country caused by the global economic crisis. In addition to these provisions of the government, we were able to accomplish a great mission for the advancement of children and women with the continuous support of United Nations organizations, various local and foreign non-governmental organizations and local business communities.

It should be remembered that this is a year in which many services were rendered for orphaned, abandoned and destitute children and the community and for all the affected groups as well as most vulnerable community. Furthermore, taking further actions to be carried out through long-term plans such as women, peace and security, prevention of sexual and gender-based violence, as well as taking steps forward in long-term plans prepared for the protection of children, are the tasks that we all have to perform collectively in the future.

We were also able to carry out many tasks required for the development of human resources for quality service, as well as the physical and infrastructure development of women shelters and children's homes to maintain them effectively and efficiently.

Majority of the country's population are children and women. The Ministry of Women, Child Affairs and Social Empowerment is constantly dedicated for work as the pioneer of the national mechanism to provide them with a safe and secure living standard, and we greatly appreciate your support and active contribution towards the achievement of this objective.

Kalakeerthi Geetha Samanmalee Kumarasinghe
State Minister of Women and Child Affairs



Messege from Hon. State Minister of Women & Child Affairs

I am pleased to have opportunity to implement number of development programs in year 2023 through this Ministry, which has been established with the aim of empowering the community and upliftment of the life standards of marginalized and disadvantageous people to build a prosperous country through people-centric economy.

Empowerment the low income persons, persons with disabilities and persons with special needs economically and socially is a main function assigned to the Social Empowerment Section of the Ministry of Women, Child Affairs and Social Empowerment. The main objective has been to empower the identified 1.2 mn poor and extremely poor families under the “Aswesuma” welfare benefit program economically and socially in the planned 03 years of period, identifying the economic and social issues of those families, preparation the most appropriate proposals for those issues and coordination with all the support services providing agencies.

In addition to that, it is expected to strengthen the National Economy through contributing to building the rural economy, promoting household economic products under the Saubhagya Production Village Program.

Our other main objectives are to promote rights of the elders and persons with disabilities and their welfare and to strengthen the community mentally in order to empower the economy through individual personality development.

Our Ministry also carries out activities such as promotion new contribution pension schemes for the person who are still not having a pension and conducting social security programs, providing education related to social works, social development and welfare, conducting various types of programs for trainings and awareness on rural development and poverty alleviation strategies.

I would like to further mention that providing services to our target groups in this way is not only for welfare but also as an investment process to create small scale entrepreneurs.

I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to the His Excellency President, who guides us to implement various programs in order to restore the lives of the people who have been severely affected by the economic crisis, and to boost the national economy, the Honorable Prime Minister, and the Secretary of the Ministry and the staff who have committed themselves in this regards.

Anupa Pasqual,

State Minister of Social Empowerment



Message from the Secretary of the Ministry of Women, Child Affairs & Social Empowerment

This ministry performs a great social mission focusing on the main target groups such as children and women, disabled, elderly and poor families and in such a occasion when the budget for the year 2023 is being discussed, I am very happy to get this opportunity to present the progress of the programs implemented by my Ministry up to 30 September 2023.

At a time when national policy formulation has been started for social empowerment with the aim of economic stability, bringing the prosperity to the nation by alleviating poverty is a significant challenge needed to be achieved through those plans.

To build a productive generation of children, in a way that suits for the requirements and the progress of the modern world and protecting the rights and welfare of women are also such an important task. In such a context, It is a great pleasure to say that a process to achieve nationally expected results by the year 2030, by planning the short-term, medium-term and long-term strategies in the Ministry and other Government Institutions under the ministry, has been started under the leadership of the Honorable Minister of Women, Child Affairs and Social Empowerment and is being implemented with my active contribution.

The specific expected results to be achieved within the scope of duties assigned to our Ministry are to reduce the current population poverty index of 14.3, convert the low-income community into high-income status, provide more welfare and protection to other marginalized communities such as disabled and kidney patients, promote contributory pension schemes to the non-pensionable community, protect and ensure the rights of children and women and carry out welfare activities while maintaining all the establishment works along such a road map.

Livelihood development projects, micro, small and medium scale loan financing projects and a number of projects involving the target community have been planned and are currently being implemented for this purpose.

Further, I hope to provide these services to the community in a more effective and efficient manner by reducing the economic and social issues of the target groups.

I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to all the staff of all the Department, Institutes and Sections under my Ministry, who are providing their services dedicatedly, to His Excellency President, who properly guides us, to Honorable Prime Minister, State Minister of Women and Child Affairs, State Minister of Social Empowerment and Secretary to the Treasury.

Yamuna Perera
Secretary

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01 – Vision and Mission of the Ministry

Vision

An advanced society that enjoy the full benefits of development fairly and equally.

Mission

Formulate and execute programmes for providing and enhancing legal, institutional and human resource services for the economic empowerment, social protection of women, children, vulnerable and disadvantaged people considering national priorities and requirements along with international standards.

02 - Introduction, Subjects and Functions

The Ministry of Women, Child Affairs and Social Empowerment was established by the Special Gazette No. 2289/43 of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka and dated 22.07.2022. The Ministry functions under the two sectors of Women and Child Affairs sector and Social Empowerment sector.

The main function and tasks of the Ministry are as follows.

- Compilation, implementation, follow-up and evaluation of policies, programs and projects related to the subjects of women, child affairs and social empowerment and the subjects of the departments and statutory institutions and government corporations affiliated to the ministry based on the national policies implemented by the government.
- Provisions of public services under the purview of the Ministry in an efficient and people friendly manner.
- Reforming all systems and procedures using modern management techniques and technology, thus ensuring that the functions of the ministry are fulfilled while eliminating corruption and waste.
- Implementation of women's charter.
- Formulation and implementation of strategies to enhance women's participation and representation in decision making in state affairs and the political field.
- Adoption of necessary measures for empowerment of women affected by conflict and poverty.
- Strengthening and Implementation of laws and politics for the prevention of women and child abuse.
- Amending existing laws and formulation and implementing new laws and policies to prevent discrimination against women on the basis of sex and gender.
- Formulation and implementation of policies and programmes for the empowerment of women headed households
- Accomplishment of Sustainable development Goals in relation to women and child affairs
- Formulation, implementation of national policy for pre schools.
- Formulation of policies and programme on early childhood protection and development aimed at bringing up physically and mentally healthy children.
- Development and implementation of programme and projects in line with international standards to protect the right of vulnerable children.
- Implementation of children's Charter.
- Regulation child care Center.
- Implementation of the Sevana Sarana Foster-Parent Scheme.
- Providing financial assistance for development the skill of exceptionally talented children.
- Implementation of Samurdhi programme.
- Identification of person with special needs and fulfilling such needs.
- Reviewing, re-organizing public assistance schemes, and introducing appropriate new reforms.

- Provision of assistance to patients of Tuberculosis, Kidney disease, Leprosy, Cancer and Thalassemia, and their dependents.
- Implementation of family counseling services.
- Matters relating to internationally recognized Conventions in relation to person with special needs.
- Implementation of required programme in coordination with relevant institution for providing vocational training and creation employment opportunities for person with special needs.
- Effecting policy changers, provision of facilities and Implementation of programmes required to integrate person with special needs into the mainstream and formulation and launch of appropriate programme.
- Implementation of social insurance schemes for person with special needs
- Taking necessary measures to care for elder, increase participation of elders in social development activities, and protect the rights for senior citizens

The following departments/ institutions and divisions are actively functioning to carry out the above work and tasks in an effective and efficient manner.

- I. Department of Samurdhi Development (DSD)
- II. Department of Social Services (DSS)
- III. Department of Probation & Child Care Services
- IV. National Secretariat for Early Childhood Development
- V. Early childhood Development Project
- VI. National Child Protection Authority
- VII. Sri Lanka Women's Bureau
- VIII. National Committee on Women
- IX. "Saubhagya" Development Bureau (SDB)
- X. National Council and National Secretariat for Persons with Disabilities (NSPD)
- XI. National Secretariat for Elders (NSE)
- XII. Sri Lanka Social Security Board (SLSSB)
- XIII. National Institute of Social Development (NISD)
- XIV. Rural Development Training and Research Institute (RDTRI)
- XV. Counseling Division

Furthermore, Administrative Division, Accounts Division, Development Division, Internal Audit Division and Planning and Monitoring Division are functioning to provide administrative and operational support for the above institutions.

This report includes information about the allocation for the year of 2023 and the financial and physical progress up to 30.09.2023 regarding the Departments, Institutions, divisions and Projects operating under this ministry.

03 - Cadre Management

Institution	Senior		Territory		Secondary		Primary		Total		
	Approved Cadre	Existing Cadre	Approved Cadre	Existing Cadre	Approved Cadre	Approved Cadre	Existing Cadre	Approved Cadre	Existing Cadre	Approved Cadre	Vacancies and excess cadre
Ministry of Women, Child Affairs and Social Empowerment											
Women and Child Affairs Sector	26	21	16	12	1019	956	70	51	1131	1040	91
Social Empowerment Sector	26	18	3	4	438	511	44	38	511	571	60
Departments/ Institutions/ Divisions											
Department of Probation & Child Care Services	08	06	224	220	253	236	17	13	502	475	27
Department of Samurdhi Development (DSD)	108	81	1942	1560	25509	22279	516	440	28075	24360	3715
Department of Social Services (DSS)	9	8	492	246	857	636	161	106	1519	996	523
National Child Protection Authority	18	14	17	08	570	297	13	07	618	326	292
National Secretariat for Persons with Disabilities	06	05	03	03	25	42	06	02	40	52	12
National Secretariat for Elders	7	3	1	1	115	106	20	15	143	125	18
Sri Lanka Social Security Board	08	07	14	12	133	97	43	41	198	157	41
National Institute of Social Development	53	34	09	03	49	40	26	22	137	99	38
National Secretariat for Early Childhood Development	05	02	-	-	391	388	05	03	401	393	08
Saubhgya Development Bureau	14	08	04	0	74	34	10	-	102	42	60
Rural Development Training and Research Institute	05	03	13	11	17	23	11	10	46	46	-
Counseling Division	1	1	-	-	334	329	1	1	336	331	5
Total	294	211	2738	2080	29784	25974	943	749	33759	29013	4890

04 - Summary of allocations and financial progress of the

Allocations have been allocated for this ministry under the head no. 171, for the Department of Samurdhi Development under the head no. 331, for the Department of Social Services under the head no 216 and for the Department of Probation and Child Care Services under the head no. 217.

Accordingly, the total allocation approved and financial progress achieved of the Ministry of Women, Child Affairs and Social Empowerment is as follows.

Type of Allocation	Approved allocation for year 2023 (Rs. Mn.)	Financial Progress from 01.01.2023 to 30.09.2023 (Rs. Mn.)
Ministry of Women, Child Affairs and Social Empowerment – Head No. 171		
Capital	3,041.32	910.44
Recurrent	42,917.12	25,024.04
Sub Total	45,958.45	25,934.48
Department of Samurdhi Development - Head No. 331		
Capital	166.00	13.29
Recurrent	126,543.00	106,721.31
Sub Total	126,709.00	106,734.60
Department of Social Services - Head No. 216		
Capital	36.00	8.15
Recurrent	888.00	608.90
Sub Total	924.00	617.05
Department of Probation & Child Care Services - Head No. 217		
Capital	65.00	37.15
Recurrent	384.00	281.50
Sub Total	449.00	318.65
Grand Total	174,040.45	133,604.78

05 - Summary on strengthening Legal Mechanisms for the Ministry of Women, Child Affairs and Social Empowerment

In order to protect the rights and privileges of the beneficiaries belong under the scope of the Ministry of Women, Child Affairs and Social Empowerment, the Ministry has initiated the preparation of ordinances, policies and various plans.

➤ **Introduction of the Gender Equality Bill**

The Bill drafted by the Legal Draftsman's Department was submitted to the Cabinet of Ministers and according to the relevant Cabinet Decision, further action is being taken by the Legal Draftsman's Department after including the observations made by the Attorney General as well.

➤ **Introduction of the Women Empowerment Act.**

The Bill for the establishment of a National Women's Commission and the Women's Empowerment Bill were drafted by the Legal Draftsman's Department and submitted to the Hon. Attorney General while observations thereon has been made.

Taking into consideration the observations made by the Hon. Attorney General that it is appropriate to amalgamate the Bill for the establishment of a National Women's Commission and the Women's Empowerment Bill, the Cabinet of Ministers has approved the preparation of a single bill by amalgamating the Bill for the establishment of a National Women's Commission and the Women's Empowerment Bill. Accordingly, the Legal Draftsman's Department is preparing a single bill by amalgamating the above two Bills.

➤ **Child Rights Draft Bill**

The aim of this effort is to study all the laws and ordinances related to the protection of children's rights and legislate children's rights as one act to suit the current needs in order to ensure the rights of children in Sri Lanka. Having studied it further, the concept paper has already been prepared.

➤ **Draft Bill of Protection of the rights of the persons with disabilities**

The Cabinet approval was obtained on 13.03.2023 to prepare a new Draft Bill instead of Protection of Rights of the Persons with Disabilities Act no:28 of 1996. The Draft Bill, prepared by the Department of Legal Draftsmen in accordance with that approval was sent to this Ministry through Ministry of Justice and the observations to be sent to the Department of Legal Draftsmen in that regards has been forwarded to the Ministry of Justice.

➤ **Sign Language draft Bill**

The Sign Language Draft Bill has been prepared and sent by the Department of Legal Draftsmen and the consent for that has been forwarded to the Department of Legal Draftsmen.

➤ **Gazette of Accessibility Orders for Persons with Disabilities**

The Extraordinary Gazette Notification No. 1467/15 dated 17.10.2006 and its amended Extraordinary Gazette Notification No. 1619/24 dated 18.09.2009 which were published to make government buildings, public places and service places accessible to persons with disabilities and actions have been taken to re-create the above special Gazette Notifications to suit the current needs. The Gazette, prepared in accordance with the international standards and specifications has been drafted through a committee of experts in the relevant field and the observations are subjected to be received by the parties responsible.

06 - How the institutions have functioned to achieve the objectives of the Ministry

6.1 Development Division - Women and Child Affairs Sector

Key Function

The key function of the Development division, which has the primary responsibility for the formulation of policies and the implementation of national level development programmes of the Ministry, is to coordinate the programs implemented by the institutions functioning under the Ministry, coordinate the institutions affiliated to the United Nations along with foreign as well as local institutions, and to coordinate and evaluate the national level programmes.

Financial and Physical Progress of Main Development Programmes as at 30.09.2023

1. Formulation of women related Policies and Acts

- **Preparation of the second Five-year National Action Plan for the Prevention of Sexual and Gender-based Violence**

The second five-year National Action Plan for the Prevention of Sexual and Gender-based Violence, consisting of 13 main sectoral plans, has been drafted after having discussions with relevant ministries and stakeholders, and conducting workshops on several occasions. The main sectors included are child sector, gender and empowerment, social security and welfare, education sector (sub-sectors: higher education, general education, skill and vocational education), foreign employment and labour, health (sub-sectors: indigenous and health), judicial and law reforms, media, youth sector (sub-sectors: youth and sports), transport, disaster, economic empowerment. After preparing this National Action Plan, approval of the Cabinet of Ministers is to be obtained thereto.

- **Formulation and implementation of National Policy on Gender Equality and Women Empowerment**

The National Policy on Women has been expanded as the national policy on Gender Equality and Women Empowerment. This policy was introduced in all three languages on International Women's Day that falls on 08 March 2023. Based on this policy, a strategic action plan is currently being drafted.

- **Preparation of National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (UNSCR 1325)**

The National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (2023-2027) has been prepared to implement United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325. It focuses on the peace and security of conflict-affected women and women in post-conflict areas of Sri Lanka, upliftment of women's living standards, and promotion of gender equality. This plan has been approved by the Cabinet of Ministers and it was unveiled on the International Women's Day that falls on 08 March 2023.

2. Conducting meetings of District Child and Women Development Committees

Necessary allocation has been released for the 25 districts to hold committee meetings quarterly to have discussions with all the stakeholders providing services to children and women. After receiving those committee reports, necessary steps and follow-up action will be taken if there are any interventions that need to be done at the national level. Twenty three (23) first quarterly meetings have been conducted so far and an expenditure of Rs. 0.413mn has been incurred.

3. Providing information / reports to other Ministries and related coordination activities

Providing necessary information for international reports according to the requests made by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. For example, providing information to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Violence against Women (CEDAW) Periodic reporting, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), Universal Periodic Review (UPR) etc. as the line Ministry.

4. Programme on Gender and Women's Rights - Programmes implemented by utilizing the provisions of United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)

For the year 2023, the United Nations Population Fund has allocated Rs.5.363 mn for the Ministry for implementing programmes to prevent gender-based violence and provide services to the victims. Under those provisions, the following programmes were planned and implemented by utilizing Rs.2.55 mn allocated to the development division.

- To meet the emergency needs of women affected by violence and their children, a provision of Rs.1.780 mn at Rs.5000 each has been made to 332 Divisional Secretariats and 24 District Secretariats as emergency management cost.
- Pilot programme was conducted in Kegalle district to train a vigilance team to capture reported and unreported incidents of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) and establish a mechanism for better coordination with service providers. The programme in Kandy District will held in October.

5. Awareness Campaign on Legal Aid and Gender based violence and prevention of Domestic Violence under the “Food Security and Livelihood Recovery Emergency Assistance Project” - (ADB)

Awareness programmes to prevent all forms of violence and abuse, including domestic violence, which is commonly reported at the rural level, and to ensure gender equality, are being conducted for 1500 beneficiaries identified in 10 divisional secretariats selected from the districts receiving more complaints through 1938 helpline services and such programmes have already been conducted in Mahara, Embilipitiya, Hambantota and Panadura Divisional Secretariat Divisions.

6. Implementation of the activities related to the Ministry of the National Strategic Plan on the Prevention and Management of Human Trafficking.

Due to the current economic crisis women and children are most at risk of being victims of human trafficking. With the aim of preventing and protecting them from human trafficking, awareness programmes on the legal issues related to "Human Trafficking" are being carried out by the field officers employed island wide, as well as the officers of the 1929 and 1938 helpline services.

7. Implementation of Awareness and Training Programmes

- **Media publicity**

Publicity campaigns such as news, interviews, newspaper supplements etc. have been carried out through electronic and print media to sensitize the society on the days assigned internationally for women and children. The contribution of the media was also made to sensitize the society about the programmes, projects and activities launched by the Ministry for the empowerment and protection of women and the various programmes implemented by the Ministry for handling the media in an ethical manner that would be favorable to women and children.

6.2 Planning and Information Technology Division(Women and Child Affairs)

Key Functions

Planning and Monitoring , follow-up to deliver the Ministry's services more effectively and efficiently in the field of children and women and systematic maintenance of the information technology practices of the Ministry in accordance with the Government policy and all relevant technical policies.

Financial and Physical Progress of Main Development Programmes as at 30.09.2023

1. Planning

The Annual Action Plan, Key Performance Area Plan, Sustainable Development Goal Plan of the Ministry and other plans related to women and child affairs have been prepared.

In addition, technical assistance has been provided for the plans, policies and other periodic reports prepared by various institutions/departments and other Ministries under the scope of this Ministry according to national and international policies and recommendations.

2 . Monitoring

Conducting monthly, quarterly and annual progress review meetings related to all development programmes of the Ministry. Under this, 08 progress review meetings have been conducted.

3. Follow up

The entrepreneurship/livelihood development projects implemented under the provisions of the Ministry in selected Divisional Secretariat Divisions in the Galle District, Kandy District and Ratnapura District have been observed and the reports containing the necessary recommendations to improve the success and sustainability of those projects have been submitted to the implementing agencies. Another field supervision has been planned in the Nuwara Eliya district.

4. “Lanka Women e-Market” - Digital Marketing Platform and e-Directory

Through the digital marketing platform which was developed with the aim of uplifting the quality of life of women entrepreneurs and empowering them economically, opportunity has been provided to expand the market linkages and strategies for women entrepreneurs and promote and popularize their products and services in the local market as well as in the international market. This system can be accessed through the link <<https://lankawomenemarket.gov.lk>>. At present, 316 women entrepreneurs are registered in the system. Three (03) training sessions on the registration of women entrepreneurs in the system, have been conducted for the field officers.moreover, 216 Women Development Officers have been trained in this regard.

In addition, The Lanka Women e-Directory has been prepared by including 52 women *entrepreneurs* who are registered on the "Lanka Women" e-Market- digital marketing platform. It includes details of women entrepreneurs and their products. It can be accessed

through the Ministry's YouTube channel <<https://youtube/gaWNBVryOsk>> and the official website of the Ministry.

5. "Suhurukatha" Magazine

With the aim of improving women's knowledge of information technology, attitudes and skills and empower them with information and communication technology, a magazine named "Suhurukatha" is published in Sinhala medium. Arrangements are being made to publish an e-version of 'Suhurukatha' magazine for the year 2023.

7. Updating and maintaining the official Website, YouTube channel and Face book page

Information of the Ministry is updated continuously and maintained in a timely manner to make aware the officials and the community. Arrangements have already been made to introduce an upgraded new version of the website.

7. Coordination of the programme to improve the nutrition of children (UNICEF)

The United Nations Children's Fund has launched a programme to improve the nutrition of children aged between 05 months and 02 years in the districts of Mullaitivu, Kegalle, Kilinochchi, Puttalam, Anuradhapura, Monaragala, Vavunia, Nuwara Eliya and Ratnapura. Provision has been made to provide a monthly allowance of 6,750/- for 110,687 mothers/caretakers of those children for 04 months.

8. Implementation of Awareness and Training Programmes

- **Training Programmes on Artificial Intelligence**

In parallel with the series of National Programme to Prevent Child Abuse, a programme to educate all district officers on the use of artificial intelligence for women and child protection was conducted via zoom technology with the resource contribution of the Sri Lanka Computer Emergency Readiness Team while 188 officers participated therein. The second programme is scheduled to be conducted in October.

- **Programmes on General Information Technology**

Sixteen (16) online and in-person training programmes have been conducted for Ministry officials to improve IT knowledge and enhance computer literacy. By now, 183 Ministry officials have received general information technology training through these training programmes.

- **"Suhuruliya" Programme**

"Suhuruliya" is one of the series of programme for empowering the women community with information technology, which started in 2017 and has been conducting until now in collaboration with the Information and Communication Technology Agency (ICTA) of Sri Lanka and the Ministry of Women, Child Affairs and Social Empowerment. This programme imparts the knowledge on information technology, using internet and digital marketing especially to the women who are emerging as entrepreneurs and it will help the country's development process as well. After the successful completion of the first phase of "Suhuruliya", the preparation of the strategic plan for the second stage was done with the intervention of our Ministry.

6.3 National Secretariat for Early Childhood Development

Introduction

National mechanism for the formulation of national policies for early childhood care and development, coordination and implementation of early childhood development programmes jointly by the Government, non- Governmental and private sector, data collection and maintenance, training and capacity development related to early childhood development.

Key Functions

- Functioning as the mechanism for formulating and implementing National Policies on Early Childhood Care and Development.
- Coordinating and networking Early Childhood Development programmes conducted by government, non-government organizations and the private sector
- Conducting research, data collection and formulation of programmes related to Early Childhood Care and Development.
- Formulation and implementation of training programmes related to the overall development of Early Childhood of Children
- Development of Human Resource related to Early Childhood Care and Development

Main Development Programmes

1. Programme to Provide a Nutrition Allowance of Rs.45,000.00 to Pregnant and Lactating Mothers

Vouchers valued Rs. 45,000.00 are issued for mothers whose monthly family income does not exceed Rs.50,000.00. Accordingly, it is possible to get those nutritional food items for the last 06 months of pregnancy and the first 04 months during lactation. A sum of Rs. 2360.364 mn has been spent for 188,174 pregnant mothers so far.

2. Programme for Providing Morning Meal for Children in Pre-schools/ Early Childhood Development Centres

This programme was implemented through the financial assistance of World Bank Project during the period from 01 August 2022 to 15 May 2023 and since the World Bank Project was wound up on 15 May 2023, this programme is currently being implemented by utilizing the treasury provisions. Accordingly, Rs.203.591 mn has been spent for 86,468 pre-school children.

3. Programme for Providing Monthly Allowance to Pre-school Teachers 'Guru Abhimani'

The monthly allowance of Rs.250.00 provided to the Pre-school teachers has been increased to Rs.2,500.00 from June 2022. This programme was implemented covering the 25 districts in the year 2023 and a sum of Rs.236.946 mn was spent for 15,726 beneficiary teachers.

4. Other programmes for Early Childhood Care and Development

- **National Coordinating Committee on Early Childhood Care and Development**

The objective is to ensure the multi-sectoral collaboration from national to grassroots level in formulating and implementing plans and Early Childhood Care and Development work and 02 meetings of the National Coordinating Committee were held so far representing all the parties.

- **Sub-Committee on Regulation and Supervision of Pre-School Teacher Training Diploma Institutions**

The main objective of this sub-committee is to re-examine the prevailing issues of the 63 Teacher Training Diploma Institutions registered in the National Secretariat for Early Childhood Development and remedy the shortcomings and prepare the necessary criteria for the registration of Teacher Training Diploma Institutions requesting new registration and 03 committee meetings were held.

The criteria for examining those institutions have been prepared and it has been planned to provide that information to the Provincial Officers and District Officers in the future.

5. Programmes implemented without provision

- **Project on Home-based Early Childhood Care and Development**

The objectives of this project are creating a child-friendly environment that allows for the child's best interests and development of the child in the home through the necessary intervention and guidance for the selected family units, creating a child-friendly environment in the home by having a positive influence on the overall development of the child, ensuring the overall development of the child by raising the awareness of the parents and caretakers related to the early childhood development and care, ensuring the food security in the family and reduce child malnutrition, early identification of most vulnerable children and children with special needs and refer them to necessary services. This project is implemented targeting the family units in all the Divisional Secretariat Divisions and necessary awareness programmes have been conducted and interventions were made for 537 family units.

- **Project for the Establishment of five Standardized pre-schools per Divisional Secretariat Division**

The National Secretariat for Early Childhood Development has updated the National Standards for Early Childhood Development Centers and relaunched them in the year 2022 in order to maintain a high level of quality and physical development of the Early Childhood Development Centers. Accordingly, it is expected that 5 Early Childhood Development centers located in each Divisional Secretariat Division which have not reached the minimum standardized level will be brought up to the standardized level and converted into a health promoted early childhood development center. Moreover, necessary awareness programmes have been conducted and interventions were made in 922 Early Childhood Development Centers covering all the Divisional Secretariat Divisions.

- **Progress Review Meetings of Early Childhood Development Officers**

Progress review meetings are held monthly and quarterly regarding the evaluation of effectiveness of the performance of Early Childhood Development Officers attached for the duties of the District Secretariats and Divisional Secretariats. Nine (09) online meetings were held so far.

6. Implementation of Awareness Programmes

• National Week on Early Childhood Care and Development

Programmes aimed at the safety, care and development of children in early childhood are conducted at the national, provincial, district, divisional and rural levels in every year from 14th to 20th of July gathering all the responsible parties related to the subject of early childhood. The following programmes were conducted under the theme of "Mul lamaviya pubuduwannata sewoma ekwemu senehasin" during National Week on Early Childhood Care and Development of the year 2023.

- Awareness programmes for 500 public officers in 25 Divisions of Stage 1 and 2 of Sethsiripaya under the awareness programme on Early Childhood Development for public officers .
- A two-day workshop on the operating process of Early Childhood National Policy was held with the policy makers.
- The National Awareness Programme targeting 200 pregnant mothers in the Kelaniya Divisional Secretariat, and in parallel with this Programme, awareness programmes for 40,000 pregnant mothers in 40 Divisional Secretariats in the Western Province (Kalutara, Gampaha, Colombo,) were conducted under the sponsorship of the Unilever.
- Awareness programmes on Early Childhood Care and Development were conducted for parents in 255 Divisional Secretariat Divisions.

6.4 Early Childhood Development Project

The first Early Childhood Development Project has been started under the loan assistance of World Bank in 2016 considering the specific needs and issues of early childhood development in Sri Lanka. The objectives of this entire project, which was implemented until June 2023, was to improve the quality of the early childhood sector in Sri Lanka and make it a service that is accessible to all.

Main development programs

- Establishing Early Childhood Development Centers in underprivileged /deprived areas and renovation of pre-shools .
- Providing teaching – learning materials to identified Early Childhood Development Centers.
- Providing reading materials to Early Childhood Development Centers
- Providing water filters, sports equipment, furniture to identified early childhood development centers.
- Providing water and sanitation facilities for identified early childhood development centers.
- Implementation of pre-school teacher training programs.
- Conducting awareness programs for parents through mass media.
- Providing morning meal for pre-school children (from January-June 2023).
- Construction of centers for children with special needs.

Rs. 886.650 mn has been spent on the activities of the above project carried out during the year 2023.

6.5 Department of Probation and Child Care Services

Introduction

The Department of Probation and Child Care Services is the National level Institution that works according to National and International policies and legal provisions to create equal opportunities for orphaned, abandoned, destitute and all the groups of children displaced by conflicts, while protecting children's rights.

Key Role

In accordance with the national and international standards, Probation and Child Care Services operates under the mission of securing the rights of all children while creating equal opportunities for them and also giving special attention to orphaned, abandoned, and destitute children and children having conflicts with the law.

Under the probation services, mainly the coordinating and supporting the functions of Provincial Probation and Child Care Services Departments, providing guidance for various institutions operating under it for probation services when necessary, preparation of National policies/standards, implementation of Alternative Care Policy, and assisting in amendment of laws relevant to children and new legislative activities, are carried out.

Under the child protection service, activities such as, the implementation of the Child Rights Convention, establishment and strengthening of the social structures for child protection, and working jointly with the Non-Government and international Non-Government Organizations operated throughout the island for child protection, are being carried out through the Child Rights Promotion Officers/Assistants attached to the District and Divisional Secretariats island-wide.

Financial and Physical Progress of the Main Development Programs as at 30.09.2023

1. Monitoring Committees Program on Children's Rights

The hierarchy of committees established at the rural, divisional, district and provincial level to secure children's rights, is the main mechanism that initiates the action of providing solutions by discussing the problems identified in the subject of children.

Including the new committees established this year, there are 10,070 rural child development committees that have been established island wide, currently. Further, the strengthening and reorganizing activities of 390 rural child development committees, have been carried out this year.

743 Divisional Monitoring Committee meetings on children's rights have been held so far and the financial progress is Rs.1.916 mn. 14 Provincial Monitoring Committee meetings on children's rights have been conducted and the expenditure is Rs.0.1245 mn. Further, 2 National Monitoring Committee meetings on children's rights have been held and expended Rs. 0.033 mn. Another meeting is to be held this year in the month of November.

- **The 7th State Periodic Report on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child**

The state report to be submitted to the committee on the United Nations Child Rights, once in 5 years, including the progress of the implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, was prepared **this year** by the Department. Information was obtained for this, through 65 government and non-government institutions and 20 consultation workshops held at the national and district levels with the participation of 1144 children.

2.Children's Clubs and Children's Councils Program

This is a program implemented to ensure meaningfully the right to participation of Sri Lankan children according to the Children's Rights Convention. The hierarchy of the children's clubs established at the Grama Niladhari Division level extends up to the National Children's Council. Under this 9444 children's clubs are established and have been registered and its membership is approximately 400,000.

Under this program , 390 Divisional Children's Councils and 45 District Councils have been held. The total amount of expenditure incurred on this is Rs. 2.459 mn. Further, 02 National Children's Council meetings have been held and the total number of children participated in that is 350.

3. Preparation of Care Plans for vulnerable Children

The objective of this is to ensure the protection of children by placing them in their families themselves by the preparation of care plans through multiple approaches, after identifying the risk conditions by following various technical systems with the aim of preventing children being victims of various abuses, and make their development. Currently, 657 care plans have been referred to the department and 105 plans are being implemented under the departmental provisions. 44 plans have been referred for the Asian Development Bank Project and the number of plans which have been solved by the Child Rights Promotion Officers/Assistants is 150 without funds. Further, out of the plans which are provided with funding, 55 plans have been referred with the aim of strengthening families. Currently, the financial progress is Rs, 1.414 mn for implementing 37 plans.

4. Child Centric Studies

Under this, the events, opportunities and places that put children at risk situations are identified by the children themselves and the project proposals are prepared and implemented by them. Funds have been referred to implement 05 projects identified under this, and the financial progress of 03 projects has been reported as Rs. 0.075 mn.

5.Child Centric Disaster Risk Reduction Program (CCDRR)

This program is implemented with the aim of strengthening children as positive mediators in the pre-preparedness process for natural disaster conditions. It is implemented at the divisional, district and national levels. Here, 22 programs have been implemented at the district level and the 3 best projects were evaluated. This program is implemented under UNICEF funding. Projects have been implemented in 143 Divisional Secretariat Divisions and the progress reported is Rs. 1.430 mn.

6. Programs Executed with the aim of Ensuring the Right to Education

Kepakaru Deguru Assistance Program

This is a program implemented under the funding of the government. Under this program, Rs. 12,000 is provided per annum for each child. A progress of Rs. 10.466 has been reported so far, for 847 children. There are 1990 children being benefitted under this.

- **Supporting Program for children who go to school irregularly and are at risk of dropping out of schools**

Under this program school equipment has been supplied for 215 children. Rs. 0.430 mn has been reported as the expenditure on this.

7. Programs implemented under the Sponsorship of External Institutions for Ensuring the Right to Education

Sip Saviya

This program is implemented with the sponsorship of the Atlas Institution. A sponsorship of Rs. 2000 is provided monthly to each child. Currently, provisions are being provided for 230 children, and the total amount of money that has been provided so far is Rs. 4.24 mn.

- **"Sevana Sarana" Foster parent Scheme**

This is a program implemented with the assistance of foster parents to succeed in the educational activities of the children who are studying with economic difficulties. Rs. 0.216 mn has been referred for 10 children under this program.

- **Athwela Program**

This is a program implemented with the objective of providing entire development of children ensuring the right to health, nutrition and education and to live in a safe family. The department coordinates the sponsors and the children/families who are expecting the assistance. Under this program there are about 485 children who are being benefitted.

8. Ensuring the Right to Health and Nutrition according to the Children's Rights Convention

Programs such as Sudden Disasters, Twins support, Medical and nutritional assistance are the programs implemented under this, for the children of the low-income families. The number of beneficiary children under this program, is as follows.

- Medical and Nutritional Assistance - 25 children
- Twins Assistance - 180 children
- Support for Sudden Disasters - 19 children

9. Programs Implemented by Non- Government Organizations

- **Asian Development Bank (ADB)**

The Food Security Livelihood Development Recovery Emergency Aid Program is implemented by the funding of the Asian Development Bank. Under this, the fulfilment of the basic needs of the children's homes, training the staff of children's homes, training of Child Rights Promotion Officers/Assistants at national, district and divisional levels, implementation of care plans for the children at risk, supporting the youth who are in the care

centers in developing their livelihood and improving the facilities of these care centers, are being carried out.

- **UNICEF Programs**

Programs such as child -centric disaster risk reduction identified through child centric research, supporting the reunion of the institutionalized children with their families or socialization, strengthening family-based care to prevent the institutionalization of children and digital storytelling, are the key functions that are being carried out under this.

10. Awareness Raising and Training Programs

- **Capacity Development Programs**

Various awareness programs are being implemented to raise awareness of the civil society with the aim of ensuring children's rights in the society and preventing child abuse. Under this, currently, 291 capacity development programs for children, have been conducted on 'How to become a child to be admired?' and Rs. 2.193 mn has been spent on this. Further, 2,085 awareness programs have been conducted so far without funds. The number of beneficiary children participated on the awareness raising programs is about 103,000.

- **Implementing Programs for Protecting the Rights of the Children of the Marginalized Communities**

This is a program implemented in order to safeguard the rights of the children of marginalized communities such as estates, streets, flats, fisheries and indigenous, who are at high risk of being violated their children's rights. Under this, Rs. 0.750 mn has been referred for 19 programs and it has been reported a progress of Rs. 0.126 mn for a total of 5 programs such as 03 programs for providing birth certificates to the children lacking birth certificates, a program for the children associated to estate sector, a program to raise awareness children and parents of marginalized communities.

- **Digital Story Telling Program**

This is a program implemented for the officers of the department and children of children's clubs with the financial and technical sponsorship of UNICEF aims at providing the necessary skills and knowledge required in socializing the messages and activities relevant to protect children's rights using mobile phones and communication apparatus. 19 programs have been conducted and 570 children and officials have been trained under this. 620 designs that have been submitted by the trainees were evaluated under 12 categories.

11. New Programs Implemented by the Department.

- **Providing Vocational Training for the Children of the Families with Economic Difficulties**

This is a program implemented by the Department of Probation and Child Care Services under the funding of the Asian Development Bank. By identifying the children of families with economic difficulties this program aims at the future welfare of them by providing vocational training guidelines.

Under this, all the arrangements have been made to provide vocational training through Hotel Schools for about 120 children and they are to be attached to the relevant areas of professions at the end of that training.

12. Programs related to Alternative Care Policy

The Department of Probation and Child Care Services has been implementing various special programs to ensure the protection of children for years. Accordingly, the following programs are being executed to implement the Alternative Care Policy.

- Mitigating the reference of children to child development centers.
- Implementation of 9 Action Plans, by formulating at the provincial level for the implementation of the National Alternative Care Policy.
- Rehabilitation of children who have conflicts with the law
- Under this, a three -day workshop has been conducted on raising awareness of Judges on the practical situations existing in the judicial procedure of juvenile justice. Program on providing legal assistance for children who have committed offences and are imprisoned and not in a condition to pay the bails, which could be bailed out.
- Identifying the children who can be socialized in the child development centers through the surveys carried out in Central and Southern provinces.
- Capacity Development/ Awareness programs on Alternative Care Policy
- Training of 47 officers as Trainers on Alternative Care Policy. Worked on to train 460 officers in 8 districts through these Trainers.

6.6 National Child Protection Authority

Introduction

The National Child Protection Authority which was established by the Act, No. 50 of 1998, is the institution at the national level for the prevention of all forms of violence against children and child abuse and for the protection and care of children, and advises the government on policies and legislation related to child protection.

Key Functions

As per Section 14 of the National Child Protection Authority Act No. 50 of 1998, following comprehensive functions have been assigned to the National Child Protection Authority. Recommend the legal, administrative or other reforms required for effective implementation of the national policy for the prevention of child abuse, prepare and maintain a national data base on child abuse; receive complaints from the public relating to child abuse and where necessary, take appropriate steps where necessary for securing the safety and protection of children involved in criminal investigations and criminal proceedings, monitor the progress of all investigations and criminal proceedings relating to child abuse, development and conduct of national programmes in relation to child abuse and child protection, provide information and education to the children, teenagers, professionals and public regarding the safety of children and the protection of the interests of children, engage in dialogue with all sections with a view to minimising the opportunities for child abuse, organise and facilitate, workshops, seminars and discussions, relating to child abuse.

Financial and Physical Progress of Main Development Programmes as at 30.09.2023

1. 1929 Sri Lanka Child Helpline

The main objective is to receive the public complaints on child abuse. Through this, public complaints related to physical, mental, sexual abuse and neglect are accepted 24 hours a day. 87,720 calls and 6,342 complaints have been received to 1929 Help line so far.

Out of those complaints, 1,842 complaints were received regarding the need for safety and protection while 1681 complaints related to cruelty and 1389 complaints related to violations of compulsory education were received.

2. National Programme to Establish School Child Protection Committees. (“*Surakum Pawwa*”)

The objective of establishing the School Child Protection Committees is to ensure the compulsory education right of children and taking appropriate measures to prevent those children from abuses. This programme is carried out by the National Child Protection Authority in collaboration with the Ministry of Education according to the Circular No. 17 of 2011. A number of 717 school child protection committees have been established and 978 schools have been registered under monitoring process of ODK platform.

3. Conducting Special Investigations, Monitoring Investigations, and Cyber Regulatory Measures related to the Criminal Proceedings, Child Abuse and Judicial Proceedings

The main objective of this programme is to ensure the protection of children who are victims of child abuse. For that, special investigations related to child abuse are conducted according to the National Child Protection Authority Act.

Accordingly, Special Police Investigation Unit of the National Child Protection Authority has completed 1567 court appearances so far. Also, the Legal division has made 28 court appearances and provided legal assistance to 1,119 persons while 113 cyber surveillance complaints have received.

4. Establish, Maintain and Support Child-friendly Video Evidence Recording Units and Provide Support for Children whose Rights have been Violated.

The main objective of this is to prevent children who become victims of child abuse from secondary victimization. At present, this service is provided at the Head Office of National Child Protection Authority and Child-friendly video evidence recording unit at the “Lamaa Piyasa” premises of the Colombo South Teaching Hospital (Ragama). 201 video evidence recordings have been completed and 128 evidence transcripts have been issued as per the court orders and Attorney General’s orders.

5. Child Centered National Psychosocial Support Service

The main objectives of this are to reduce the number of child victims and prevent the risk of child abuse and uplift the education, physical and mental health. This provides child – centered psychosocial support to children. Accordingly, psychosocial support has been provided and made interventions for 523 children while 393 follow up actions have also been taken so far. Moreover, 135 psychosocial counseling sessions and 03 case conferences have been conducted and the expenditure incurred so far amounted to Rs.0.112 mn.

6. Providing Assistance and Monitoring of Tsunami Affected Children under Foster Care Programme.

Under the Sustainable Development Goal of Education for all, providing educational facilities for marginalized and insecure children who were victims of the Tsunami disaster by monitoring their guardianship and providing recommendations for custody and care that ensure the best interests of those children are the main objectives of this programme. Accordingly, educational assistance is being provided for 17 children while 02 Tsunami boards have been conducted and the expenditure incurred was Rs.0.442 mn.

7. Supervision and Monitoring of Child Development Centers

In terms of Section 14 (n) of the National Child Protection Authority Act No. 50 of 1998, National Child Protection Authority is entrusted with the supervision and regulation of Child Development Centers run by all religious and charitable institutions providing child care services for children. Accordingly, 03 awareness programmes on child protection for children in child development centers and 01 awareness programme for officers monitoring of child development centers have been conducted so far.

8. Implementation of Awareness Programmes

- **“Student Ambassador National Programme” for School Prefects and “University Ambassador National Programme” for University Students.**

The primary objective of this programme is to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes of senior school prefects and university students on child protection. Moreover, this programme gets the school prefects’ contribution to minimize child abuse and educate the school community about child protection.

This programme is expected to raise the awareness of children and the community about Child Protection and to contribute in the Implementation of the National Policy on Child Protection and popularize the national Policy on Child Protection.

New registrations of schools were 456 and 02 training programmes were conducted for student ambassadors at district level while an expenditure of Rs.0.432 mn has been incurred for this purpose. Further, 08 awareness programmes have been conducted for 2,262 undergraduates. The total cost incurred was Rs. 0.524 mn.

In addition to above mentioned main programmes, Educational support or relevant assistance is provided for marginalized, vulnerable, unnoticed children and victims of child abuse . Media and Communication Programmes on Child Protection , “Sith Saviya”: Sri Lanka's National Child Centered Psychosocial Resource Pool *and* Special Community based Programme for Needy communities and children groups on Child Protection (plantation, urban and estate sectors, drug addicted communities, tourist destinations, socially marginalized communities, children of migrant mothers, Street children, differently able children, child labour, etc) are being implemented.

- **Providing Resources contribution and Develop tools for Advocacy, Awareness and Training Programmes on Violence Against Children in the 10 relevant child protection sectors.**

Under this programme, the programmes to educate medical officers studying in Postgraduate Institute of Medicine about child protection, the national programme to educate student teachers and staff members of the National Colleges of Education about child protection, and the national programme to educate nurses about child protection are implemented. The primary objective of this is to produce a group of professionals who are more sensitive to child protection.

Accordingly, 02 awareness programmes for doctors studying in Post Graduate Institute of Medicine and one awareness programme for students and lecturers in Rajarata University of Sri Lanka have been conducted.

- **Awareness Programmes for Public Sector Officials in District and Divisional Secretariats regarding the National Policy on Child Protection.**

The objective of the programme is to aware the officials at the district level regarding the national policy on child protection and to promote the collaborative child protection interventions among the officers in the field of child protection and care.

Accordingly 05 one day training programmes and 15 awareness programmes have been conducted at a cost of Rs. 0.376 mn.

- **Community Based Programmes to Prevent and Respond the Violence Against Children.**

Under these programmes, the national programmes to ensure child protection in the community and awareness programmes for religious leaders are implemented at the provincial level. A number of 124 programmes have already been conducted at a cost of Rs. 1.305 mn .

9. United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF)

United Nations Children's Fund has spent a sum of Rs.1.560 mn on the operating activities of the child helpline service for child protection.

6.7 Women's Bureau of Sri Lanka

Introduction

It is the national mechanism for implementing projects and programmes for the economic and social empowerment of women. Women's Bureau of Sri Lanka takes action to protect the rights of women and fulfil their needs through a collective process by creating a strong network of organizations.

Key Functions

Identifying, planning, implementing and evaluating programmes for socio - economic empowerment of Sri Lankan women, identifying exceptional qualities of women in all age groups and implementing programmes to make them stakeholders of total development of the country.

Implementing programmes to alleviate difficulties faced by women owing to the sole reason of their femininity, conducting special programmes for the women who confront numerous difficulties due to special social circumstances, delivering programmes to upgrade the knowledge, skills and attitudes of the entire women generation to an esteemed level, organizing women in single network ranging from community-based level to national level to enable them to be operative within one organization.

Financial and Physical Progress of Main Development Programmes as at 30.09.2023

1. Improving Income Generation

This is a programme aimed at the economic development of women by providing technical knowledge to make products that meet the market demand using abundant resources in the respective area.

Under this programme, low-income urban women, low-income women, women engaged in the fisheries industry, women in the estate sector, women with disabilities, women who are expected to go abroad, women who have lost the social sensitivity due to particular reasons, imprisoned women and women in families of prisoners, rural women affected by unregulated microfinance loan schemes, female heads of household will be economically empowered. A sum of Rs. 6.3 mn has been spent on 47 programmes.

2. Improving knowledge, attitudes and skills

This program is organized to identify the unique needs of women of all age groups and fulfill those needs. Under this,

➤ Income Generation Training Programme

Twenty nine(29) programmes were implemented and the expenditure incurred was Rs.0.472 mn.

➤ Providing NVQ level nursing training and providing necessary basic training for the socialization of girls above 18 years of age and leaving children's homes.

Under this, a training programme was implemented at a cost of Rs. 0.731 mn.

3. Market Promotion, Exhibition of Women's Products and the Market Linkages

The women's product market is implemented for sales promotion at the national, district and divisional secretariat division levels. Mobile stalls are provided for low income women who do not have permanent stalls. The expenditure incurred was Rs. 0.180 mn.

4. Special Programmes

A programme implemented for women who are facing various hardships due to particular reasons. Under this,

- Strengthening widows as household entrepreneurs under Budget proposal No.48.1 and a sum of Rs. 11.8 mn has been spent on 124 projects .
- Implementation of 03 special income generation programs for female heads of households by the National Center for the empowerment of female heads of households. The expenditure incurred was Rs. 0.968 mn.

5. Social Empowerment

The aim of this is to implement programmes to avoid the social difficulties faced as women. Under this, centers are actively operated and maintained.

• Temporary Women Shelters

Ten (10) temporary Women Shelters are being maintained in the island with the aim of ensuring women's safety and rights.

- Gampaha, Monaragala, Ratnapura - Ministry
- Colombo, Batticaloa, Anuradhapura and Matara - Women in Need
- Jaffna, Mullaitivu - Jaffna Social Action Center
- Anuradhapura (Thambuththegama) - Disabled Women's Federation

Women victims of domestic violence and sexual abuse are referred to these safe homes by police, hospitals and court orders. Self-employment training is provided during the period of residential care for the economic empowerment of women victims after their socialization. Follow-up actions continue even after they are socialized. Services have been provided to 252 women and the expenditure incurred was Rs. 7.718 mn.

• Counseling Centers.

Under the Women's Bureau of Sri Lanka 12 Counseling centers are being operated all over the island. Counseling Officers and Counseling Assistants provide counseling services to women, men and children through these counseling centers and take follow up action on clients who have received counseling services. The number of clients was 1905 and the expenditure incurred was Rs. 0.765 mn.

• Awareness Programme on Counseling

Five (05) awareness programmes have already been conducted for Counseling Officers and Counseling Assistants via zoom technology.

6. Day Celebrations

• International Women's Day Celebration

The International Women's Day national celebration was proudly held at Waters Edge, Battaramulla on 08 March 2023 with the participation of 300 women under the theme "She: Pride of the Nation". The ceremony was held under the patronage of the Hon. President and the Hon. Prime Minister. Appreciation of 25 women entrepreneurs in Women Action Societies representing 25 districts, introduction on the National Policy on Gender Equality and Women Empowerment, appreciation of 04 outstanding women who have excelled at various sectors and, appreciation of the student with special needs who have obtained the qualification to enter university with the best results of Advanced Level Examination this year and also the launch of "Kantha Saviya" and "Arunodaya" magazines were the special events of that occasion.

• Mental Health Day

Programs are conducted to mark the Mental Health Day that falls on October 10 every year. An awareness programme is to be implemented to improve the knowledge, attitudes and collective work of the Counseling Officers and Counseling Assistants who provide counseling services at divisional, district and national level. Also, delivering lectures based on facts such as drawing attention to new trends in the field of counseling, identifying problems in counseling and conducting counseling programmes accordingly.

7. Supervision and Follow – up

Follow - up and progress reviews of all programmes are implemented at the district level under the supervision of staff officers by the Women's Bureau of Sri Lanka while the progress review meetings of the Field Officers of the Women's Bureau of Sri Lanka on the programmes and projects carried out at the regional level are also conducted. Five (05) supervision and progress review meetings have been conducted so far.

8. Network of Women's Organizations

Development programmes are implemented by the Women's Bureau of Sri Lanka under the key functions of economic and social empowerment of women, empowerment of Female heads of households, technical and value chain development of women in all fields, prevention of gender based violence, psychosocial counseling, achievement of women's participation and equality.

In order to empower women economically and socially, Women Action Societies are formed by gathering all women above 18 years of age at the Grama Niladhari Division level, and Divisional Women Federations are formed with the participation of those women officers at the divisional secretariat division level. In order to mobilize women at the district level, the women officers associated with all the 25 districts establish District Women Federations. Through this network, the entire women community contributes to the development of the country and implements the development programmes carried out by the Women's Bureau of Sri Lanka.

➤ Women Action Societies (at GN Division Level) **12,881**

- Divisional Women Federations (at Divisional Level)**316** and
- District Women Federations (at District Level) **25**, are also functioning.

Foreign funded Projects -2023

- JAICA - JICA (Japan International Cooperation Agency) implements projects for reorganizing the Women Action Societies and empowering women entrepreneurs in Ampara and Monaragala districts for the economic empowerment of women through entrepreneurship, leadership and networking . The project period is from the year 2023-2027 .
- UN WOMEN -Material assistance has been provided under the items of food, clothes, first aid, sanitary materials, and stationery for the 10 temporary shelters by *UN Women* under the project of providing equipment and material support for temporary shelters and the project of providing emergency relief for women affected by the socioeconomic crisis, 11 temporary shelters have been monitored and 15 training programmes have been conducted for 600 women entrepreneurs selected from the districts of Vavunia, Monaragala, Ampara, Colombo and Mullaithivu. The project period is from August 2023 to January 2024.
- The activities carried out are as follows: Empowerment of sustainable community-based families in Nuwara Eliya district- Memorandum of Understanding has been signed by the Semaul (Semaul Global Foundation), opening ceremony was held on 25 August 2023, renovations have been carried out at Shanthipura School. This project is implemented for the period of 2022-2026.
- Food Security and Livelihood Recovery Emergency Assistance Project (ADB) - Providing vocational and capacity building training and implementing programmes to support low-income women. An amount of Rs.0.443mn has been spent by the ADB (Asian Development Bank), and this project is implemented for the period of 2022-2024.
- UNFPA Project for the Protection of Women's Rights - UNFPA (United Nations Population Fund). It is implemented under the Head of Expenditure 171-2-06-003-2509-13. Activities carried out are as follows:
- Payment of bills of 42 CDMA phones for temporary shelters for women, discussion for conducting capacity building course, discussion with the parties relating to temporary shelters and field visits, observation of shelters. The financial progress was Rs.0.208 mn.
- Implementation of Counseling Analysis Pilot Project and related programmes at the national level. Asian Foundation has conducted 05 training programmes on capacity building for Counseling Officers and Counseling Assistants via Zoom technology.

6.8 National Committee on Women

The National Committee on Women established on 08 March 1993 implements the provisions of the Women's Charter. It is the national body that formulates policies and laws for the welfare and protection of women.

Key Functions

The key function of the National Committee on Women which was established to create a violence – free , women –friendly Sri Lankan society that ensures equality is to make recommendations and provide assistance for the formulation of policies and legislation that safeguard and promote the rights of Sri Lankan women, and contribute to their comprehensive development and stimulating the proper implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of the same. A Complaints Centre and Women's Helpline 1938 are operated for 24 hours every day in the National Committee on Women.

➤ Complaints Centre

This centre was established to receive complaints on gender-based discrimination, injustices and violation of rights from both men and women, refer them to public and non-government institutions to investigate them, provide solutions and provide relief where necessary including legal aid and counseling are the functions of this Complaints Centre. Complaints can be handed over in person, by letters, by e mail or over the phone during office hours. The total number of complaints received to the Complaints Centre is 288. Necessary services have been provided according to the nature of these complaints.

➤ Women's Helpline 1938

The 1938 –Toll Free Helpline for Women is operated for 24 hours every day in all three languages with the aim of performing the functions of the National Committee on Women more effectively. It provides services related to accepting complaints, providing solutions and taking follow up action, counselling, legal advices and referring complainants to other relevant institutions. Accordingly, the total number of complaints received by the end of September 2023 is 2,612 out of which 408 complaints have been referred to counseling officers for psychosocial counseling. Another 656 complaints have been referred to legal departments and 535 complaints to Women Development Officers. The number of complaints referred to police stations is 235, and another 41 complaints have been referred to Police Children and Women Bureau.

Financial and Physical Progress of the Main Development Programs as at 30.09.2023

1. Awareness programs

- **Educating children in higher education institutions including tuition classes (regarding cyber crimes, harassments in public transport and health education)**

This programme was held in the Kurunegala district for 200 beneficiaries with the aim of improving knowledge, skills and attitudes in order to prevent harassment of teenagers in public transport and on the internet and to overcome the challenges they face during adolescence.

- **Educating employees in the industrial sector to minimize sexual harassment at Work places**

In order to minimize sexual harassment of women at workplaces, awareness programmes have been planned to be held in private institutions including the Board of Investment of Sri Lanka and its first program was held for 175 employees of the 'Lanka Soy' company in Ratmalana.

2.Capacity building programmes

- **Capacity building of officers as trainers in women and child development units of district secretariats and divisional secretariats**

The primary objective of this programme was to provide training to those officers for the prevention of sexual and gender based cyber violence. Accordingly, two programs were conducted in the districts of Kalutara and Kurunegala by September 2023. Kalutara and Kurunegala district programmes were conducted for 120 beneficiaries.

- **Capacity building programmes for representatives of women federations at regional level to empower women in politic**

This programme is implemented with the aim of producing female leaders with the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes to enter politics and encouraging women to enter politics and one program of this series of programs will be held for two days and the first two-day programme was held in Gampaha District.

3.Policy Programmes

- **Providing a quota for women in parliamentary and provincial council elections**

During this year, discussions have been held with the officials of the Election Commissioner's Office with the aim of making women political activists by ensuring economic and social development of women, thereby minimizing disparities.

6.9 Department of Samurdhi Development (DSD)

Introduction

Samurdhi Development Department has been established by Divineguma Act No. 1 of 2013 and Act No. 2 (Amendment) 2017 Divineguma for the aim of eradicating poverty and ensuring social justice in Sri Lanka

It was established to promote economic development activities and implement programs related to family empowerment, social protection and livelihood promotion by removing barriers that suppress the hidden potential of every poor person.

Functions

Implementation of individual, family, group and community focused economic development, livelihood development, entrepreneurship development and social development programs.

To work towards the economic, social and psychological empowerment of families identified under the Aswasuma welfare benefit scheme

To provide microfinance credit facilities to raise income generation and livelihood of low-income families and provide social security to those families.

Financial and Physical Progress of the main development programmes up to 30.09.2023

1. Livelihood Development Program

- Conducting 01 awareness programs about livelihood development on this program.
- Carrying out additional crop cultivation in 755 acres under Social Security Fund. (1,488 beneficiaries, Rs. 19.70 mn), development of 54 cashew processing centers (100 employment opportunities) through the Cashew Export Village Project under the Agriculture Modernization Project (Wanatawilla). (Rs. 9.71 mn)

2. Entrepreneurship Development Program

- 1 Suva Bojunhall has been established in Kakirava and 275 entrepreneurship development programs for 11,155 entrepreneurs have been conducted in 08 districts.
- 606 trade fairs have been conducted.
- Japanese language training programs have been started in 7 centers and JLPT - 75 out of 238 students and N5 - 25 out of 51 students have successfully passed.
- Locations for starting 25 mini food cities under other financial support have been identified and work is underway to initiate the program. (World food program)
- Conducting career guidance programs for all 8,000 youths (Y-lead Institute, Rs. 7.00 mn)

3. Social Development and Environment Program

- Conducting drug and smoking prevention, household management and “Happy Family” 550 programs (31,813 beneficiaries). Conducting 1,020 sanitation programs (82,707 beneficiaries), conducting 121 skill training programs for social development officers (4,061 officers).(Treasury Allocation)
- Conducting drug and smoking prevention, household management and “Happy Family” 4435 programs (233,378 beneficiaries, Rs. 10.44 mn). Conducting 15,576 sanitation programs (107,696 beneficiaries, Rs. 2.09 mn), Conducting 4,265 Samurdhi Kekulu Children's Societies, Cultural and Literacy Programs (192,596 beneficiaries, Rs. 14.41 mn); Conducting 3,904 International Day Celebration Programs (201,747 beneficiaries, Rs. 26.55 mn), Conducting 443 skill development programs for social development officers (754,801 beneficiaries, Rs. 0.75 mn), Conducting 279 Progress Review Workshops (Rs. 3.09 mn) using other financial sources.

4. Community Based Organization Program

- Identification of 294 economic organizations for empowerment and conducting of 9 district committee meetings under this programme.
- Conducting 25 district committee meetings through the National Social Development Fund (Rs. 0.70 mn), conducting 332 training programs for community leaders (Rs. 1.20 mn), Conducting 9 District and National level sports programs (6,765 beneficiaries, Rs.0.90 mn), Appreciation of Samurdhi Uttama Puja Leaders in conjunction with National Conference, Appreciation of Samurdhi Jana Abhimani Entrepreneurs, appreciation of Samurdhi Flags Program and the winning team of “Tharunyata Soduru Amethumak” Program (Rs. 7.50 mn)

5. Information Technology Program

Conducting an IT program for Samurdhi officers and providing internet facilities for 335 district and regional offices, A+ training program - held at SLIDA Institute, conducting 7 other IT training programs (Rs. 3.09 mn)

6. Human Resource Development Program

Under this program, a training program has been conducted for projects related to livelihood development and 7 subject programs and 2 diplomas have been conducted for field officers. 3 capacity development programs have been conducted for Rs. 1.47 mn. (Treasury Allocation)

7. Media and Publicity Program

Under this program, 6 Samrudhi E news papers have been issued, 20 "Samurdhi Udanaya" television programs have been broadcast and the amount of Rs. 6.65 mn was spent. (Treasury Allocation)

8. Planning and Monitoring program

Conducting 06 progress review meetings at national level and 75 progress review meetings at district level, preparing 2022 performance report and mid-year report for the Central Bank, conducting a workshop on “Aswesuma” and the amount spent is Rs.0.57 mn. (Treasury Allocation)

9. Samurdhi Subsidy Programme

From January to June, regular beneficiaries - 1,637,672, additional payments - 1,637,672, waiting list beneficiaries - 719,666 were given the Samurdhi subsidy and in July, Samurdhi beneficiaries who did not receive relief benefits - 368,310.

Allowances were paid to target beneficiaries from January to June and the approval was received by the cabinet decision no PS/NC/EAD/148/20223 to pay the subsidies through the department of Samurdhi Developm,ent until the fully completion of the process of reviewing appeals and objections under the “Aswasuma” programme for 393,094 beneficiaries , those who have applied for enterinmg to the “Aswasuma” programme from the month of July and those who have not been selected to the programme at present.

10. Samurdhi Bank and Microfinance Loan Program

- 174,586 loans have been given through the Micro Finance Loan Program under Samurdhi Bank and Micro Finance Fund and its financial progress is Rs. 18,242.54 mn.
- Conducting 9 training programs (455 beneficiaries) on accounting, business studies and information technology for bank and bank socities officers under financial sponsorship of the Micro Finance Bank Fund and the amount spent for this purpose was Rs. 6.77 mn.

11. Social Security Benefit Program

94,615 beneficiaries through Social Security Benefit Program under Social Security Fund Rs. 886.67 mn have been benefited and 335,559 beneficiaries have been benefited to the tune of Rs.463.03 mn under the “Sipdora” scholarship programme.

12. Housing Development Program

For 4,145 housing units through the housing development program operating under the Housing Lottery Fund, Rs. 1,020.75 mn has been given in return.

13. Other development programmes

- Conducting 605 exercise book distribution programs for 62,934 children from Grade 1 to Grade 5. (Expenditure Rs. 15.02 mn)
- Implementation of nutrition program for 6900 children in 345 preschools.
- Providing Assistance to 4,715 beneficiaries under the World Food Program at the rate of Rs.22,500 per beneficiary. (Expenditure Rs. 106.9 mn)

- Providing school books to 8,883 students under Community Based Samurdhi Students Empowerment Program. (Expenditure Rs. 18.00 mn, National Social Development Fund)
- Providing school books to 62,000 students under the Community Based Samurdhi Students Empowerment Programme. (Expenditure Rs. 11.55 mn, Community Based Organization Fund)

6.10 Department of Social Services (DSS)

Introduction

The Department of Social Services was established on February 1, 1948 on the recommendations of the Commission appointed in 1944 under the initiative of Mr. Sir Ivor Jennings and this institution has been established for create a better environment for the marginalized and disadvantaged sections of the country.

Functions

- Rehabilitation of disabled community, providing full time residential care and empowerment
- Intervention for drug prevention
- Carrying out the activities of the Visually Handycapped Trust Fund
- Conducting research/surveys on current social issues, intervention and formulation of policies

Financial and Physical Progress of the main development programmes up to 30.09.2023

1. Vocational training for youth with disabilities

11 vocational training institutes are operating throughout the island for providing vocational training for young people with disabilities between the ages of 16-35. Under this, 473 trainees have been given professional training and daily allowances.

2. Development of pre- professional skills of youth with disabilities

The skill development of 38 people is being carried out under this program, which is being implemented to direct youth with disabilities between the ages of 14-30 to vocational training in the future.

1. To direct children with disabilities to interactive education through early intervention.

02 institutions operated by the department provide services to 119 children by identifying the disabilities of children with disabilities from 06 months to 16 years and reducing disabilities and develop them.

2. Provision of lifelong care for persons with disabilities who have lost their guardians

88 persons with disabilities are provided care through 02 care centers operated by the department.

3. Provide financial assistance to skill development centers run for the welfare of persons with disabilities

Assistance has been provided to the 27 institutions operating throughout the island and assistance has been provided for 225 clients of those institutions.

4. Rehabilitation of drug addicts

Provisions have been made for the rehabilitation of 77 drug addicts through the Puwakpitiya Jayawiru Samadhi Institute and for carrying out drug prevention programs at the district level.

5. Provision of necessary services to persons with disabilities under the Community Based Rehabilitation Development Programme

- Provided assistive devices for 10 persons
- 1561 rehabilitation plans have been prepared
- 1460 progress review meetings and “Swashakthi” groups meetings have been conducted at regional, district and national levels

Expenditure was Rs. 3.49 for implementing these programmes.

6. Training for officers

Conducted 14 programmes for 305 officers and expenditure was Rs. 1.12 mn.

7. National celebrations

- Swabhimani National Award Ceremony was held on 03.08.2023 at Kalutara District Secretariat.
- Sign Language Day celebration was held on 23.09.2023 at Battaramulla Setshiripaya premises. An international flag for the hearing impaired, a YouTube channel related to sign language and a code of ethics with professional principles for sign language interpreters were unveiled here.

8. Visually Handycapped Trust Fund

The Parliament of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka passed an act named the Visually Impaired Rehabilitation Trust Fund No. 09 of 1992 with the aim of providing necessary services, rehabilitation and providing relief to people who become visually impaired and it has been published through a Government Gazette Notification and This fund is managed through a committee chaired by the Secretary of the Ministry in charge of the subject and is maintained at the head office of the Department of Social Services. Following projects are implemented by this Fund.

- Monthly allowance for 341 students of G.E.C.O/L, G.C.E A/L and under graduet students .
- Issued 9 brail magazines
- Provided eye lenses for 3 persons
- Monthly allowance for 3 instructors

Expenditure was Rs 3.65 Mn for the above programmes.

9. Other Development Projects

- Project of Employment Support for Persons with Disabilities – ESPD

98 people with disabilities have been successfully employed in various private companies under this project, which was started in November 2021 in collaboration with the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and the Department of Social Services, with the aim of providing employment support for job seekers with disabilities in the private sector.

- Conducting a survey on beggars in all the urban councils and municipal councils areas of the Island
- Preparation of syllabi for 05 new vocational training courses with the support of Child Fund Institute
- Provision of food, hygienic items, first aids, clothes and stationeries required for 06 months of period for *Manusat Piyasa* Women's Care Center by UN Women Institute
- Start of basic activities related to development of 05 vocational training institutes as specialized institutes
- Initiation of activities related to the employment of the trainees of Katawala Vocational Training Institute joint with ILO and Automobile Council.

6.11 "Saubhagya" Development Bureau (SDB)

Introduction

Saubhagya production village programme was introduced In order to increase the national production by involving the rural people directly in the production process through "Saubhagya" Development Bureau and the villages which produce value added goods or provide services based on the availability of resources, production potential, market and sustainability in implementation in each village, are developed as production villages.

Function

The main functions are to uplift the rural economy by promoting household products and raising the income level of the rural people and encouraging and promoting local products and reducing unemployment by creating job opportunities.

Financial & physical Progress of main development programs up to 30.09.2023

Implementation projects with Treasury allocations

Rs. 121.96 mn has been released to the district secretariats for 58 of approved projects for 3,692 beneficiaries and the expenditure is Rs. 5.3 mn as at 30.09.2023.

Implementation projects without Treasury allocations

➤ Creating new production villages

Two garment manufacturing villages were started for 60 beneficiaries without using Government funds but using the underutilized machines provided by various organizations

➤ Development of the existing villages

The total number of developed villages is 77 and number of beneficiaries are 3,396. Following strategies were used to make necessary development of the villages.

1. Development of necessary infrastructure facilities / Providing raw materials

necessary infrastructure facilities and raw materials for production activities were given to 78 beneficiaries of 2 projects.

2. Implementation of marketing promotion programs

Implementation the marketing promotion programs such as connecting buyers, referring to enterprise promotion programs for 263 beneficiaries in 29 production villages.

3. Conducting Training Programs

Training programs were conducted coordinating with various government institutes for 3095 of beneficiaries in 46 production villages started in year 2023.

30 training programs related to attitude development and business development have been conducted for 2254 beneficiaries and 16 technical training programs including addition of values have been conducted for 841 beneficiaries.

6.12 National Council and National Secretariat for Persons with Disabilities (NSPD)

Introduction

The National Secretariat for Persons with Disabilities was established under the Protection of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act No. 28 of 1996 to promote the rights of persons with disabilities and to provide relief, including their welfare, in order to create a conducive environment for persons with disabilities and the main role of the National Secretariat for Persons with Disabilities is to implement the policy decisions taken by the National Council for Persons with Disabilities on behalf of the disabled.

Function

- Promote the welfare and protection the rights of persons with disabilities to create a better life standard for them.
- Providing residential facilities and caring facilities for persons with disabilities and monitor, instruct, and assist to the Institutes which were established for persons with disabilities
- Making programs and policies and providing guidelines to build appropriate physical environment.
- Prevent and control the main causes of being disabled, create systems rehabilitation and promote those.

Financial & phical Progress of main development programmes up to 30.09.2023

1. Providing assistances for persons with disabilities

- **Assistive devices**
11 mobile services have been conducted spending Rs. 8.54 mn and 7 of financial supports, 6 clutches, 6 walkers, 13 wheelchairs, 10 prostheses, 4 hearing aids, 5,730 spectacles, 13 long-distance and short-distance spectacles, and 1 special pair of shoes have been provided for this.
- **Medical Assistance**
Medical assistance has been provided to 421 persons with disabilities spending Rs. 7.20 mn for this.
- **Educational Assistance**
Educational assistance has been provided to 419 students with disabilities spending Rs.4.63 mn for this.

➤ **Providing job opportunities**

Rs. 0.10 mn has been spent for this purpose and 50% of the salary is paid per person. Further, 21 people have been employed for Pizza hut.

➤ **Providing assistances to run Victoriya Home**

Rs.5.25 mn has been spent to pay the salaries of the employees, water and electricity bills.

➤ **Housing assistance**

- 5% of the Supiri Wasana Sampatha Lottery revenue is allocated as provisions to the Housing Fund and provisions worth of Rs.12.94 mn has been provided for 144 house units.
- Conducting 11 awareness and benefit providing programs spending Rs.0.93 mn. Under Food Security and Livelihood Recovery Provision Emergency Assistance Project under the funds of Asian Development Bank.

2. Providing monthly allowances

- Rs.3,702.61 mn.has been given as monthly allowances for disabled persons to 72,000 regular beneficiaries, 17,882 additional payments and 16,139 waiting list beneficiaries.
- Rs.1,930.98 mn.has been given as monthly allowances for kidney patients to 39,150 regular beneficiaries, 18,159 additional payments and 1,924 of waiting list beneficiaries.

3. Other development programs

- National Action Plan for persons with disabilities are being prepared.

6.13 National Council and National Secretariat for Elders (NSE)

Introduction

As a unique opportunity to secure and develop the rights of the Sri Lankan elderly community, the National Council and the National Secretariat for Elders have been established by way of the Act No. 05 of 2011 and amended Act No. 9 of 2000.

Objectives

- To educate the society that providing care, safety and welfare to the elders is a role to be played by the family itself.
- Increasing opportunities for private sector investment in elderly care.
- Development of the abilities and skills of the elderly to lead them to income generating ways.
- Prepare to overcome problems faced in retirement by developing awareness.
- Providing care for the elderly in need of assistance.

Financial & phical Progress of Main Development Activities up to 30.09.2023

1. Providing Assistance to Elders

- Providing self-employment assistance to 385 elders - Rs 19.41 mn
- Providing benefits to 1,160 elders under the "Arogya" medical assistance program, which provides Rs.25,000 each elder suffering from chronic non-communicable diseases who are not entitled to any allowance. - Rs. 29.53 mn
- Providing hearing aids to 822 low income senior citizens – Rs. 22.59 mn
- Providing contact lenses to 509 low income senior citizens – Rs . 3.61 mn
- Conducting health camps for 1,333 elderly persons – Rs. 2.35 mn

(Expenses were made through Elders Security Fund.)

2. Maintaining Elders Homes and Day Centers for Elders

- Maintennace and adminstation of “Welcome Villlage” Pannala – Rs. 21.11 mn
- Administration of Sarana Elders Home (Dehiattakandiya)- Rs.0.12 mn
- Administrative work of Kataragama Elders Home – Rs. 0.86 mn
- construction of Kataragama Elders Home – Rs. 67. 91 /% Mn/physical progress 48%
- Construction and renovation of 19 elders homes – Rs.10.93 mn
- Construction of 16 elders day care centers – Rs 45.75 mn
- Purchasing equipments for 9 elders day care centers – Rs 5.75 mn

(Expenses were made through Elders Security Fund.)

3. Monthly Allowances for Elders

- Payment of monthly allowance for elders over 70 years of age have been made for 416,667 permanent beneficiaries, 217,995 additional payments and 94,791 wait- list beneficiaries. (Expenditure R. 15,905.85 mn)
- Payment of monthly allowance for elders over 100 years of age have been made for 465 permanent beneficiaries, 239 additional payments.(Expenditure Rs. 22.92 mn) (Expenses were made through Treasury Fund.)

4. Empowering Elders committees

- Empowerment of 421 Elders Committees at Village Level – Rs. 41.87 mn
- Establishment of National Federation for Elders - Rs 0.46 mn
- Conducting 1 District Elderly Committee Meeting

5. Providing necessary infrastructure facilities for elders

- Construction or renovation of 49 houses for low income elders under the “Diriya Piyasa” housing programme – Rs. 34.95 Mn
- Provision of minimum amenities and sanitary facilities for 1,784 elderly people to live in their own homes under the “Suwapahasu” financing scheme. – Rs. 93.25 mn

6. Conducting awareness programmes and capacity development programmes

- Conducting elderly care training programs with the Ministry of Health for 192 supervisors of elders homes – Rs. 2.01 mn
- Conducting 125 capacity building workshops for treasurers of village level elders committees - Rs 3.70 mn
- Conducting 21 yoga motivational programs for the development of digital literacy and elderly health in elders day care centers - Rs 3.61 mn
- Conducting a training of trainers program for yoga exercises and simple exercises for elders - Rs 1.33 mn
- Conducting 19 awareness programmes for school students and pre-retired persons about retirement.

7. Other programmes

- Conducting 57 district progress review meetings – (Treasury allocation - Rs 1.27 mn)
- Organization of 235 elders religious tours – (Elders Security Fund - Rs. 17.29 mn)
- Issuing 25,503 Elders ID cards. (Treasury allocation - Rs 0.37 mn)
- Solving 100 cases in elders maintenance board. (Treasury allocation - Rs 1.2 mn)
- Conducting 6 field inspections . (Treasury allocation - Rs 0.8 mn)

6.14 Sri Lanka Social Security Board (SLSSB)

Introduction

This is an Institute which was established and operated by Social Security Board Act No. 17 of 1996 and Sri Lanka Social Security Board (Amendment) Act No.33 of 1999. The main role of the Social Security Board is implementation of contributory pension schemes and social security schemes for the self-employed who are not entitled to a Government Pension.

Functions

- Provide social security for self-employed person in the period of their elderly or when they met a disablement.
- Providing assistance to their dependents in case of death of self-employed persons.
- Encouraging self-employed people to engage in their businesses and improve their skills and abilities.
- Encouraging youth to engage in self-employments and improve their skills and abilities.
- Awareness the self-employed persons about the benefits of thriftiness and resource management.
- Improving the living conditions of the self-employed person live in normal life

Financial & physical Progress of main development programs up to 30.09.2023.

i. Providing benefits for persons engage in self-employments and their dependents

- 32,423 members have been enrolled for the Pension and Social Security Benefit Scheme and Rs. 74.87 mn has been collected as the first premium.
- Payments of Rs.303.34 mn for 34,717 of members as the monthly pension up to now.
- Payments of Rs.1.54 mn for 41 of members as the death gratuity, partially disability gratuity and completely disability monthly allowances
- Payment of Rs.5.119 mn for 475 of members as additional benefits (Grade 5 scholarship, G.C.E. (O/L) G.C.E. (A/L))

ii. Encouraging the youth community to engage in self-employment and improve their skills and abilities

- 12 programs are being conducted in conjunction with Vocational Training Institutes through the year for awareness to encourage, motivate the youth community towards self-employments and Development of entrepreneurial skills and recruitment them for the pension scheme.
- Implementation of 50 of Island-wide programs to educate the school community on promotion the knowledge and need of social security in the school community, resource management, entrepreneurship, getting rid of dependent mentality, giving appropriate professional respect.

- Actions have been taken to include the subject matters related to social security to the school syllabus for popularization the knowledge and need of the social security in collaboration with the National Institute of Education. In the proposed new school syllabus revision, subject matters related to social security and self-reliance have been included to the Conceptual Framework of syllabus of “Citizenship Studies”.

iii. Encouraging the self-employed to engage in their respective professions, awareness them on the benefits of thriftiness and resource management

- Encouraging for self-employments and introducing existing social security schemes for that, conducting 2338 awareness programs for thriftiness and resource management.
- Issuance of pension and social security policy certificates to 526 persons through pension schemes such as “Seafarer” Social Security Scheme for navigation field, “Manusavi” pension scheme for foreign employees and “Kalakaru” pension scheme for the arts sector.

6.15 National Institute of Social Development (NISD)

Introduction

This Institute established as a higher studies Institute named National of Institute Social Development by Parliament Act no:41 of 1992, is declared as an Institute authorized to award degrees under Section 25A of the University Grant Commission Act no:16 of 1978 and this is the only Government Institution that provides education on social works of Sri Lanka.

The Governing Council, the central body of the Institute which deals with the administration, management and financial affairs of the institution. The Academic Affairs Board functioning under the Governing Council provides advice and guidance for the academic affairs of the institution.

The operational functions of the institute are carried out by four integrated divisions. They are;

1. School of Social Work
2. Training Division
3. Social Policy Research and Publications Division
4. Administration and Finance Division

Functions

- Formulating plans for promoting social work and social development education
- Conducting Bachelors and Post Graduates in Social Work and Social Development.
- Conducting studies on social welfare schemes and social development programs and promoting them.
- Initiating and promoting a creative practice of Social work and social development education system including utilization of technology in social work

Financial and Physical Progress of the main development programmes up to 30.09.2023

ii. The building complex to be constructed in Seeduwa for the National Institute of Social Development

The construction of this building consisting of two parts, A and B, was started on 01.01.2017 and was planned to be completed in October 2022, but the planning period has been extended.

The estimated cost of this building is Rs.1000 mn and a financial progress of Rs.853.03 mn has been achieved from 01.01.2017 to 30.09.2023. 98.14% physical progress has been achieved for the construction of Section A and 100% progress for Section B.

Programmes implemented under the treasury

i. Diploma and degree programmes

- 871 students are studying in Bachelor of Social Work degree programmes (Progress Rs 2.98 mn).
- Providing scholarships to 258 students studying Bachelor of Arts in Social Work (Progress Rs. 1.08 mn).
- Related activities are being done to resubmit the revised proposal that is required to get the approval of the University Grants Commission for the syllabus of the Master of Counseling course.
- Syllabus of Certificate Course in Social Work Research has been submitted to the Curriculum Development Committee.
- Syllabus of Diploma in Women Empowerment has been submitted to Curriculum Development Committee.
- Bachelor of Social Work Graduation Ceremony was (2017/2018) held

ii. Training Programmes

- 20 programs have been conducted under short term training courses on demand in other departments. (Progress Rs 0.10 million)
- 02 programs have been conducted related to the training activities for agency field and faculty supervisors.
- Conducting staff development programs. (100%)

iii. Research and Publications

- 04 magazines and 02 news letters have been published under the issue of biannual publications on social work. (Progress Rs 0.10 mn)
- Curriculum development demand surveys for Bachelor of Arts in Social Development are being conducted. (60%)
- Papers are under review for the International Conference on Social Work. (70%)
- Preliminary work is being done for publication of Manifesto III on Social Policy. (60%)

3. Courses/Training programs conducted by charging money

i. Diploma and degree programmes

- Conducting advanced research training for 57 students of 2020/2021 batch.
- Classroom lectures are conducted for 83 students of the 2021/2022 student group.
- Conducting Diploma Course in Counseling for 623 beneficiaries. (Expenditure - Rs. 2.48 mn)
- Conducting Advanced Diploma Course in Counseling for 21 beneficiaries. (Expenditure - Rs.0.81 mn)
- Master of Social Work (MSW) 2019/2020 academic year (English Medium) graduation ceremony held. (08 students)

ii. Certificate Courses

- 500 students have participated in Certificate Course in Community Development (Child).

6.16 Rural Development Training and Research Institute (RDTRI)

Introduction

This institute, which started in the year 1974, as a strategy for rural development and poverty alleviation from the year 1978, through the transformational training and research program based on the concept of participatory development, to raise the potential strengths of the poor community marginalized by the development stream, to develop their self-reliance and collectivity. A national institution that introduced a new development methodology. Catalyzing the required empowerment is a leading role of this institution to transform into a more favorable situation in the socio-economic process of the poor community.

Functions

- Knowledge management of community development
- Enhance efficiency and effectiveness of community development programmes
- Introducing innovative development approaches

Financial and Physical Progress of the main development programmes up to 30.09.2023

Researches, Surveys and Studies

- Action research on empowering street vendors to ensure community food rights and increase satisfaction is being going on
- The survey report on the impact on the economy of the beneficiary families through the Entrepreneurs Development Program is being prepared.
- Study on Saubhagya Villages has been completed and 20 related reports have been given to the Ministry.
- Data collected from the survey on the role of microfinance institutions in the economic status of women is being analysed.

training and Capacity building programmes

- 06 training programs related to training and mediation have been conducted to build the officers assigned to the Divisional Secretariats as mediators.
- 01 promotion programs have been conducted on low income families' entrepreneurship development training interventions and household management.
- 12 capacity development programs have been conducted for the officers of the institute.

Publications

- The first volume of Prajashakti e-magazine has been released on the website and the editing of the second volume is in progress.
- Development news of the institute has been distributed to the electronic media.
- 04 articles (SCAN) have been released on the website under the development of the library.
- 02 leaflets prepared about the institute's facilities have been released online.

Other programmes

09 progress review meetings related to the development activities of the institution have been held

Income in 2023

An income of Rs. 2.246 mn has been obtained by providing the hostels and lecture halls in Borella and Pirmatalawa centers to external institutions.

6.17 Counseling Division

Introduction

This Division is functioning for building mental well-being of the community using psychological counseling and psychological therapies for mental issues, mental imbalances and various types of psychosocial issues faced by the community.

Functions

- Conducting community awareness group counseling programs at District and Divisional secretariat levels to identify the psychological problems, mental disorders, mental illnesses and various types of psychosocial issues faced by people and reduce those conditions.
- To conduct awareness group counseling programs using psychological counseling intervention to mentally empower the community.
- Building mental well-being providing quality counseling services to the clients with mental disorders and psychological issues.
- Providing individual counseling services through mobile phone counseling service.
- To identify community groups who are more needed the social sensitivity and conduct counseling programs to promote their mental well-being.

Financial & physical Progress of main development programs up to 30.09.2023.

- Conducting 6,183 counseling programs for 256,162 beneficiaries at District and Divisional Secretariat levels to reduce mental illnesses, mental problems and various types of psychosocial issues.
- Conducting 16,150 of individual counseling sessions for clients with mental disorders and distressing conditions.
- Providing service through 2,986 telephone calls of clients through mobile phone counseling service.
- Implementation of 22 programs in 22 districts to promote the mental health of people with special needs (Rs. 0.498 mn).
- In line with the World Mental Health Day, 24 of public officials and community awareness programs are subjected to be held at the Ministry, District and Divisional Secretariat levels with participation of 1500 beneficiaries.
- Conducting 04 training programs related to psychology counseling field for Psychological Counseling Officers, Development Officer (Counseling) and Counseling Assistant Officers with contribution of funds of Asian Foundation.
- Conducting 09 Mental Health Promotion Programs for Sri Lanka Police Officers (Supervisory level)
- Conducting 90 group counseling programs (610 beneficiaries), 01 yoga program (40 beneficiaries), 1 songs entertainment program (200 beneficiaries) for the rehabilitation of dangerous drug addicts and misguided fighters at Kandakadu, Senapura, Vavnia centers.

- Providing the services of Counseling Officers to the Government and Non-Government Organizations which are needed the counseling services (hospitals, prisons, children's and elder's homes, airlines)

Most of programs have been implemented without allocations and amount of Treasury allocation spent to implement programs is Rs.0.65 mn.

6.18 Other operational divisions

Administration Divisions

The Administration divisions operate in accordance with the regulations and circulars for the management of human resources and physical resources of the Ministry and its affiliated institutions.

- Conducting organizational and administrative activities related to the staff of ministries and institutions belonging to ministries.
- Development of human resource capabilities through local and foreign training.
- Contributing to policy formulation by properly submitting Cabinet Memoranda, Bills, Drafts etc. related to the scope of the Ministry.
- Arrangements to provide necessary human resources and infrastructure.
- Implementation of human resource development programs

Accordingly, under the implementation of human resource development programs, 5 skill and knowledge development training programs and one attitude development training program were conducted with the participation of 299 and 107 officers respectively. Also, 66 officers have been referred under 9 individual training programs. Provision has been made for one officer to renew the membership of the Institute of Chartered Accountants.

Development Divisions

The main role of this divisions is to provide advice, guidance and direction to achieve the objectives of the departments, institutions and divisions under this ministry. Furthermore, the supervision of the following special development programs has also been carried out by this division.

- 1) Under the 2022/2023 Maha season government rice purchasing program, the program to provide 10 kilos of rice per family in the months of March and April for the existing beneficiaries of Samurdhi, disabled, elderly and kidney patients and waiting list beneficiaries (177,129.24 metric tons of rice between 2,709,469 beneficiaries)
- 2) The necessary preliminary work has been done for the establishment of the secretariat of voluntary activities expected to be implemented within the ministry.

Accounts Divisions

The section, assigned duties of obtaining of annual provisions for operation and development programmes, financial management and making payments, exercising the authority vested on the Chief Accounting Officer by the Financial Regulations to keep state accounts and maintain a transparent financial discipline is the Accounts Division.

In addition to maintaining accounts and all the procurement activities of the Ministry, it involves to monitoring accounts of Departments, Statutory Institutes and Boards functioned under the Ministry.

Internal Audit Divisions

This Division is functioning under the Chief Internal Auditor, who commits responsible directly to the Secretary of the Ministry and it guides to achieve expected development goals of the Ministry conducting financial audits, performance audits, management audits, environment audits, system controlling audits and risk factor audits, require to deliver quality and efficient services and programmes conducted by the Social Empowerment Sector.

Planning & Monitoring Division (Social Empowerment)

Facilitating for preparation of policies, Programmes and Projects, monitoring the ongoing programmes and progress reviewing related with the subjects of Statutory bodies established under the social empowerment sector and coordinating the progress implementing by other line Ministries, Departments and Institutions are functioned under the Planning and Operation subject.

6.19 New Programmes and Projects expected to be implemented

Future action pertaining to Laws, Acts and Action Plans

- Amendment of Vagrants Ordinance and Retention Homes Act
- Introducing a policy to empower families by taking action to implement all the programs implemented at the national level by the various departments/institutions of the Ministry, at the district, divisional and grassroots level with an integrated approach
- Formulation of a strategic plan to implement the policy on family empowerment through an integrated approach
- Amendment of the policy for elders to meet current needs
- Take future action regarding the national policy on voluntary work
- Launch of the guidelines on maintaining the temporary shelters for women
- Implementation of the five-year National Action Plan (2024 – 2028) for the prevention of sexual and gender-based violence.
- Implementation of activities not implemented in the National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security
- Implementation of the National Action Plan in line with the National Policy on Gender Equality and Women Empowerment
- Carry out the necessary activities for the effective implementation of the National Policy on Child Protection and implement new methods and approaches for child protection and care to prevent violence against children.
- Strengthening the mechanism of empowerment of the existing social structures and introducing new methods
- Prepare and implement the strategic plan for early childhood development and care

Other Programmes and Projects

- Empowerment of 1.2 mn poor and extreme poor families identified under “Aswasuma” Social Welfare Benefit Scheme during the period 2024 - 2026.
- Completion of the construction works of Vocational Training Institute for Disabled Persons in Kilinochchi under Public-Private Partnership
- Construction of a new building at the Puwakpitiya Institute for the care of persons with disabilities under Public-Private Partnership
- Introduce the subject of "Disability Studies" to the university system and school system.
- Job creation programme for child and elderly care through an integrated approach
- Establishing a new computerized pension management system to make the services provided to the members of the pension schemes more efficient and entering the documents including members' applications into a digital system.
- Make necessary arrangements to convert the National Institute of Social Development into a University
- Commence a certificate and diploma course in rural development
- Open a model Elders' Home in Kataragama
- Implementation of Alternative Care Policy for Children