



**Thushara Agus**  
FPA Sri Lanka  
Executive Director

Dear Reader,

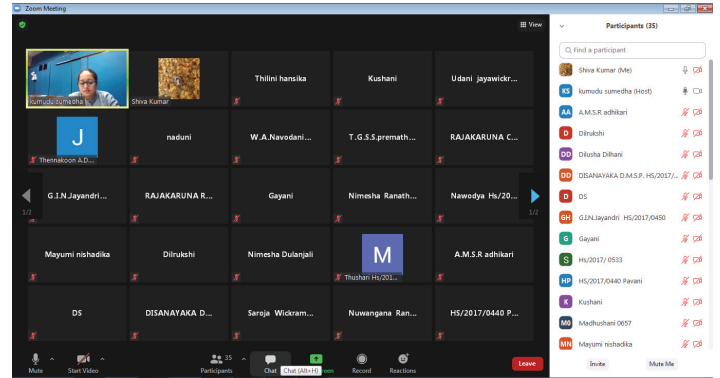
It is with pleasure I send this note for the first newsletter of FPA in the year 2021. The year begins with near-certain hopes on ending the pandemic that ravaged the global health and economy, sometime during its course and we all are keen to get a semblance of normalcy to our lives.

To keep the mission of our beloved organization during 2020 was an uphill task. However, on a positive note, we identified the critical mass of our operation to fulfil our pledge to deliver Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights during the prolonged crisis. Adjusting to the new normal, we managed to keep our Social Marketing of contraceptives going amid the curfew across the country. Our products were available and accessible in all corners of the country, and the credit goes to our Marketing team, who tirelessly worked when the country was locked down. The clinics and outreach operations were affected badly due to the precautionary social methods adopted, and we had to phase out the re-opening of the service delivery points.

We were very fortunate to receive the empathy and understanding of donors whose programs were put on hold for the same reasons given above. Most activities were transferred to internet-based platforms, and we uncovered an effective and cost-effective way to conduct our numerous meetings. We held the Annual General Meeting of 2020 and many council meetings on e-based platforms, and these practices will hopefully outlive the pandemic, making meetings feasible for our busy volunteers as well.

That said, we remain very optimistic about the year 2021, which will hopefully usher in the end of Pandemic with several new Covid 19 vaccines getting approval for emergency use. At this point of writing, I am happy to convey that we were able to vaccinate our frontline staff of The Global Fund program and some clinics, and that will pave the way for us to achieve our programmatic goals.

I conclude with a sincere wish for everyone's safety and that we will be able to meet each other soon.



## Health Education, Online!

Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) remains a cornerstone in improving adolescents and young people's Sexual and Reproductive Health.

When young people have access to quality education about sexual and reproductive health, it empowers them to build safe and healthy relationships. CSE aims to equip children and young people with the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that will empower them to realize their health, well-being and dignity; develop respectful social and sexual relationships; consider the well-being of others that are affected by their choices; and understand and ensure the protection of their rights throughout their lives.

During the COVID -19 pandemic, rates of sexual and gender-based violence have increased. Young people's access to quality sexuality education is essential now more than ever!

Our Nuwara Eliya SDP conducted an online Comprehensive Sexuality Education workshop for undergraduates of the University of Kelaniya on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of February 2021.

The Outreach Unit is now offering three day, online CSE workshops at schools and educational institutes.

From R.M.P.G.I.Lakshi... to Everyone: 04:29 PM

Thank you. apit godak wedagath una api godak sathutu wenw me wedastahanata sambanada vima gna

From Rakshika Rathn... to Everyone: 04:29 PM

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From HS/2017/1244 ... to Everyone: 04:29 PM

goadak sthuthi madam

# Ministry of Youth and Sports led committee meets to finalize penal code reforms



The Ministry of Youth and Sports led committee, comprising members from the Youth Services Council in partnership with Wijeya Newspapers, Women in Need, Child Protection Force, iProbono and The Family Planning Association of Sri Lanka, met on the 5<sup>th</sup> of February to finalise their proposals for reforms to the Penal Code.

## **New offences of harassment, bullying, voyeurism and revenge porn**

The Penal Code reform project, which commenced in October 2020 following an inaugural meeting with the Ministry of Justice, is drafting proposals to introduce new offences to tackle harassment, bullying, voyeurism and revenge porn.

The new offences are being drafted to address, amongst others, the increasing incidents of cyber harassment and bullying which have had a disproportionate impact on youth and children.

## **Aggravated punishments**

For the first time, aggravated punishments are being proposed when victims are harassed or bullied because of certain protected characteristics such as their gender, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability, or if the victim was in an intimate relationship with the accused.

These proposals are in response to increasing incidences of harassment, bullying and revenge porn against intimate partners and vulnerable persons.

## **The unprecedented increase in cyber bullying and harassment**

Technology-based violence has seen unprecedented growth in Sri Lanka. In a recent Women in Need (WIN) published report, survey data revealed that nearly 1 in 4 individuals knew of a friend who experienced online harassment of a sexual nature. With 1 in 5 individuals reporting knowing of someone who had edited, doctored or photoshopped images of them shared on the internet as well as intimate pictures or videos of themselves shared on social media.

The proposed new offences will be tackling doctoring of images for revenge porn purposes and sharing personal contact information of victims.

The WIN survey data also revealed that the highest reporting of instances by women where intimate pictures or videos of a friend were shared on the internet or social network sites or

apps were from Batticaloa (63.9 %), Badulla (58.5 %), Ampara (39.6 %), Trincomalee (37.8 %) and Kalutara (35.6%) Districts. These shocking statistics coming out of Sri Lanka adds further weight to the urgent need for law reform to address these issues.

## **Updating outdated and inadequate offences**

The reforms are also proposing to amend and update parts of the Penal Code to prevent the arbitrary interference into the private affairs of consenting adults, to halt police abuse of offences especially against youth in consensual relationships and to address discrepancies in Sri Lanka's rape and incest laws including making rape and incest a gender-neutral offence and expanding the scope of rape.

## **Amendments to address police abuse and adopt a victim-centric approach to crime**

Recently, several media reported instances of mass-scale arrests by police of young couples under indecency laws for simple acts such as holding hands or even speaking to each other. Media also reported several cases where police conducted raids of private homes and hotel rooms to arrest and prosecute adults for consensual relationships under outdated and vague penal code offences.

The gross abuse of vague offences in the penal code has led to several calls amongst youth and civil society to update and amend outdated legislation, to end the era of victimless and victim-blaming crimes and the arbitrary enforcement of laws. A number of victims of online harassment and bullying have complained that police and law-enforcement often take a victim-blaming approach when complaints are made. The lack of laws to address harassment and bullying, especially cyber harassment and bullying, has often left victims grappling in the dark with an unsympathetic legal system.

The proposed reforms will attempt to address this by adopting a more victim-centric approach to offences and clearly laying out the offences with several illustrations and examples to provide clarity and direction.

Source: PR statement of the Committee





# New Project

## Strengthening the capacity of young LGBTQIA+ community members

Supported by IPPF South Asia Regional Office (SARO)

Members of the Queer or LGBTQIA+ community in Sri Lanka face violence, stigma, discrimination and continue to experience intimidation, harassment and abuse at the hands of both society and state institutions such as the police.

Section 365 and 365a of the Sri Lankan penal code criminalizes consensual same-sex sexual acts, and section 399 of the Vagrants Ordinance is used to arrest members of the transgender community. LGBTQIA+ community members face discrimination in accessing employment, housing, and health services because of their sexual orientation.

While there has been some progress, such as the gender recognition certificate, which allows transgender persons to change their National Identity Cards (NICs), significant attitudinal changes in society and law are required if there is to be a truly sustainable and positive change for community members.

A majority of Sri Lankans, including policymakers, reportedly view LGBTQIA+ persons as having a psychiatric disorder and are considered perverse destroyers of the country's cultural, religious, and traditional values. It is often stated that Sri Lankan society considers homosexuality as an "illness" and as a "foreign" or "Western" import that goes against the national interest. (Human Rights Watch, 2016). Lack of social recognition has gravely affected queer/ LGBTQIA+ members' capacity to access and enjoy their rights as citizens. This is highlighted in the evidenced increase in hate speech on social media and the vilification of the queer society by media outlets.

This project will be carried out under the Advocacy Unit's purview to address some of the negative attitudes towards the LGBTQIA+ community.

Project activities:

- Capacity building of young LGBTQIA+ members to address the issues of stigma and discrimination.
- Empowering and training community members to use social media platforms more effectively to share their stories and address myths and incorrect information on LGBTQIA+ issues and concerns.
- Conducting a sensitization programme for both community and non - community members.
- Conducting intensive training for a group of 40 LGBTQIA+ members, allies, content creators and interested media personnel about creatively and sensitively portraying queer narratives and stories.
- Provision of fellowship opportunities to 10 selected participants from the training to develop creative content including but not limited to, articles, blogs, YouTube videos, Facebook campaigns.
- Understanding the nature of media violence towards the LGBTQIA+ community and identifying the gaps and limitations to approach them through a study.

This project aims to contribute to the long-term objective of supporting and empowering LGBTQIA+ people being able to live without fear, discrimination or harassment based on their sexual orientation and gender identities/expressions.

### Training of Trainer (TOT) programmes – Supported by UNFPA Sri Lanka and People of Japan

The programmes were for volunteers selected from the Community Service Organizations operating in the Districts of Trincomalee and Vavuniya.

The sessions covered Modern Contraceptives, Sexual and Reproductive Health, Planning a family, Unintended pregnancies, Sub Fertility and Counselling.



TOT in Sinhala Medium at the RHDS Office Trincomalee on 9<sup>th</sup> of March



TOR in Tamil Medium at the Rural Development Foundation Training and Resource Centre, Vavuniya on the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> of March



# Sustainability of Key Populations in Asia (SKPA) Project

The SKPA Project aims to promote sustainable services for key population members, scale-up outreach work and improve key population members' access to prevention, testing and treatment and retention in the service cascade. Also, to strengthen advocacy efforts, community response systems, address barriers to access, including addressing stigma and discrimination and other human rights and gender-related barriers to services.

## SKPA - Sri Lanka Monthly Activity Update

### February 2021



Sustainability of HIV Services for Key Populations in Asia Program (SKPA) is a multi-country grant funded by The Global Fund (GF) covering eight (8) countries. The Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations (AFAO) is the Principal Recipient of SKPA and the Sub Recipient for Sri Lanka is The Family Planning Association of Sri Lanka (FPASL).

### Community Based Monitoring



Signing on Community Implementation Partner Young Out Here (YOH)

- Finalisation of CBM Implementation plan for MSM - Colombo documents submitted to PR
- Sign on Community Implementation Partner YOH to start data collection in March 2021

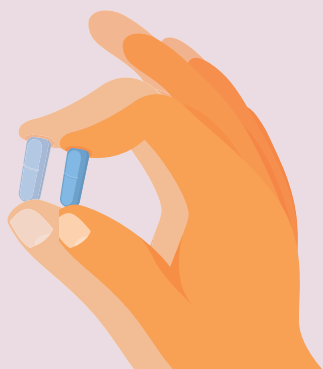
### Activities based on Gender Assessment Recommendations

Preliminary Report on the STI/HIV Risks associated with Sexualized Drug Use submitted for Feedback



### PrEP Training for MSM & TG

SKPA supported a training on PrEP targeted at MSM & TG persons in anticipation to increase demand for the uptake of PrEP through the National Pilot Programme



### Proposal for Penal Code Reform

The joint CSO Submission group held another meeting to draft the Proposal for Penal Code Reform



### Community Discussion on SKPA 2

FPASL supported a community discussion on strategic priorities for a possible next round of the multi-country grant.

- Focus on Community Systems Strengthening, CSO/CBO Capacity development takes precedence.
- Sustainable HIV financing mechanisms should be introduced to Sri Lanka.



### Other Activity Updates

- HIV Financing Activity
- CSO/CBO Capacity Development
- Draft Legal Playbook for Key Population Organizations
- Consultant TORs are being drafted currently
- TG Clinic set up at National Transgender Network Drop in Center
- Capacity Development for TG Clinic through IHRI/Tangerine Clinic Bangkok
- Awaiting approval for reprogrammed activities

For more information about the SKPA Programme in Sri Lanka, Contact  
Sriyal - [sriyal@fpasrilanka.org](mailto:sriyal@fpasrilanka.org)  
Ranaka - [ranaka@fpasrilanka.org](mailto:ranaka@fpasrilanka.org)



**තරුණ ඔබයි ලිංගිකත්වය ගැන ඔබේ දැනුමයි.**

අනුරාධපුර දිස්ත්‍රික්කයේ මායිම වන පදවිය සුදුර්භනාරාමයට අපි ගොඩවැදුණේ ලිංගික හා ප්‍රජනන සෞඛ්‍යය හා අයිතිවාසිකම් පිළිබඳ වැඩමුළුවක් පවත්වන්නැයි ලැබුණු ආරාධනාවක් ඉටු කිරීමටය. කෝවිඩ් තත්ත්වය නිසා වැඩමුළුවකට සහභාගී කරගත හැකි ප්‍රමාණය 10 දෙනෙකු වුවද, තරුණ දරුවන් 15 දෙනෙකු අපේක්ෂා සහගත දැසින් පත්සල් භූමියේ රැඳී සිටියේ අපේ අපිව වැඩමුළුවෙන් ඉවත්කරාවිද යන සැකයෙන් විය යුතුය.

දුරස්ථභාවය, සනීපාරක්ෂාව සියල්ල තහවුරු කිරීමෙන් පසුව වැඩමුළුව ආරම්භ විය. අනුරාධපුර දිස්ත්‍රික් පාසල් සෞඛ්‍ය වෛද්‍ය නිලධාරීන් කිලෝමීටර් හෙන්දවිතාරණ, යූනිෆෝම් ධුමාරෝ ආයතනයේ තරුණ දේශක කොශාල් රණසිංහ සමග ශ්‍රී ලංකා පවුල් සංවිධාන සංගමයේ තුෂාර මනෝජී වන මට දවසක අභියෝගයක් ලැබුණේ ලිංගිකත්වය, ප්‍රජනන සෞඛ්‍යය, නවීන පවුල් සැලසුම් ක්‍රම, ස්ත්‍රී පුරුෂ සමාජභාවය, අනවශ්‍ය ගැබ්ගැනීම් වළක්වාගැනීම වැනි මාතෘකා පිළිබඳ මේ තරුණ තරුණියන්ට දැනුවත් කිරීමටය.

විවිධ ක්‍රියාකාරකම්, ක්‍රීඩාවන්, වාද විවාද කිරීම් සමගින් ආකර්ශනීය ලෙස පැවති තරුණ වැඩමුළුව අවසන් වූයේ තවත් වැඩමුළුවක් ලෙස පමණක්ම නොවේ. ලිංගිකත්වය ගැන කතා කිරීම පවා තහනම් වූ සමාජයක පහසුකම්, අවස්ථාවන්, දීර්ගත්වීම් අවම පදවිය වැනි දුෂ්කර ප්‍රදේශයක තරුණ තරුණියන් පහළොස් දෙනෙකු නිවැරදි සහ නවීන දැනුම මෙන්ම, ආකල්ප, කුසලතා සහ විකිනෙකාට ගරු කිරීමේ මානව ගුණාංගය ද ඉගෙනගත් වැඩමුළුවක් ලෙස විය අවසන් විය.

ශ්‍රී ලංකා පවුල් සංවිධාන සංගමය වර්තමානයේදී හෙදර්ලන්ත තානාපති කාර්යාලය, එක්සත් ජාතීන්ගේ ජනගහණ අරමුදල සමග එක්ව දිවයින පුරා තරුණ කඳවුරු පවත්වමින් සිටී. පරිපූර්ණ ලිංගික අධ්‍යාපනය ලැබීමට තරුණ දරුවන්ට පාසලේදී හෝ වෙනත් ආයතනවලින් නොහැකි වන නිසා, එම හිඬැස පුරවමින්, දැයේ දරුවන් හිරෝගී, ලිංගිකත්වය ගැන දැනුමින් පෝෂිත සහ ආකල්ප අතින් පොහොසත් දරුවන් බවට පත්කිරීමට ශ්‍රී ලංකා පවුල් සංවිධාන සංගමය ලෙස අපට හැකිවීම අතිමානසයේ යුතුව ඔබ සමග බෙදාගනිමු.



**Social Media Campaigns**

**#LoveShouldNotHurt**

FPA Sri Lanka teamed up with WHO Sri Lanka to raise awareness on Intimate Partner Violence (IPV). Promoting healthy, respectful, and nonviolent relationships and communities can help reduce the occurrence of Intimate Partner Violence (IPV).

It is essential to understand that abuse can take various forms — recognizing abuse is the first step towards seeking help. IPV can occur in any age group or demographic segment and across gender and sexual identities. Through the week-long campaign (February 13<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup>), we shared information (posters/videos) on;

- The different 'faces' of violence
- The steps that can be taken to help a friend, co-worker, neighbour, or family member who is being abused by an intimate partner or somebody they are dating
- The national and FPA domestic abuse helpline numbers



To access all campaign materials- Posters and Videos, click [here](#).

**#ChooseToChallenge**

A three-day social media campaign (Commencing 8th March) for International Women's Day was carried out with individuals and organisations' participation from around the country. The theme was Choose to Challenge, a campaign to celebrate women's achievement, raise awareness against bias, take action for equality and help forge a gender equal world!

We focused on the following:

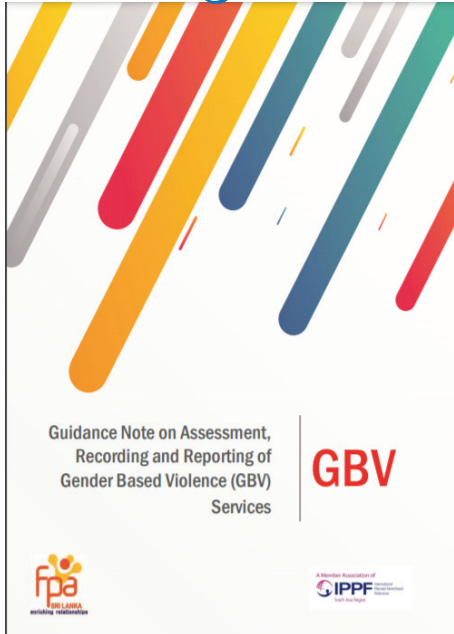
- Ending reproductive injustices is a crucial step to transforming the lives of women and girls. Gender equality exists when women/girls are free to exercise their sexual and reproductive rights, free from coercion or violence.
- Leaders in organisations play a significant part in advancing gender equality within the workplace. Leaders are accountable for fostering an inclusive workplace to ensure that all employees have equitable access to opportunities and ensuring the safety, health and well-being of women at work.
- Persons with disabilities are among the most vulnerable and socially excluded groups in any crisis-affected community. For women and girls with disabilities, the intersection of gender inequality and disability makes them especially vulnerable to gender-based violence. We called for action to define concrete steps to protect people with disabilities.



To access all campaign materials- Posters and Videos, click [here](#).

Video by IPPF SARO for IWD 2021 featuring Director Advocacy, Sonali Gunasekara. To view, click [here](#).

## New Publications



### Publication of Guidance Note

A guidance note on "Assessment, Recording and Reporting of Gender Based Violence (GBV) Services" was published and will be widely circulated within the Federation.

It was developed by the M & E Unit with support from the IPPF-Bangkok Hub and IPPF-SARO.

In her foreword, Executive Director, Thushara Agus stated;

'Sri Lanka despite its impressive track record in health indices, falls short in certain areas of Gender Equality and Women's Rights. The country also records a high prevalence of Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) of 17% according to the DHS of 2016.

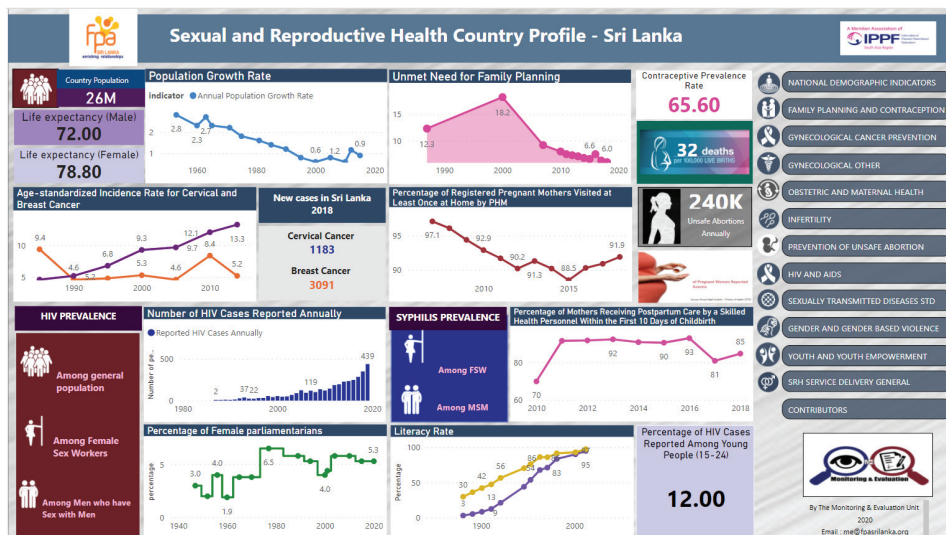
All this despite the regulatory framework installed by the government to ensure Gender Equality, brings out the unpleasant truth about the slow changes to our social norms. Article 12 of Sri Lanka's Constitution of 1978 provides for equality for women and men and non-discrimination based on sex. The country has ratified key international conventions and covenants, which have embedded gender equality principles into State policy. Sri Lanka ratified the UN Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 1981 and the UN

Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1991. However, the recent UN multi-county study on men and violence by CARE, Partners for Prevention, and the UN, conducted in four districts covering 1323 households, revealed that a significant majority of men and women in Sri Lanka subscribe to attitudes that perpetuate gender inequality.

Providing SRH services in this backdrop gives our MA the opportunity to be the first-line of contact for many GBV and SGBV victims. It is important to note the repetitive occurrence of abusive behaviours against women and initiate supportive action. Of the women who reported current IPV, 12.7% were subjected to violence on a daily basis, 15.1% weekly, 47.6% monthly basis respectively. I feel that many of our other MAs would be poised to do the same in their general screening process, where a hesitancy for reporting exists. The Guide will help Member Associations to assess, record and report GBV according to the two classification models presented and services listed out'.

To view, click [here](#).

## M & E Unit develops SRH Country Profile



The SRH Country Profile of Sri Lanka was developed using Microsoft PowerBI data visualization platform. It provides an interactive, detailed, current, visual information and data related to more than 50 national indicators.

To view, click [here](#).

## IASSL Best Research Award - 2020

Suchira Suranga, FPA Sri Lanka's Director - Organizational Learning and Evaluation received the 1<sup>st</sup> Runner-up award, of the 'Best Research Award Programme 2020' of the Institute of Applied Statistics Sri Lanka (IASSL) under the postgraduate category for the abstract titled "Modelling Time Taken to HIV Testing and Follow-up Clinic Visits to Collect the Test Results: Multivariate Survival Analysis"

Through this programme the IASSL encourages undergraduate and postgraduate students and researchers to demonstrate their application of statistics to study, analyse and report on matters and issues for the wellbeing of society.

To read the abstract, click [here](#).





## Combating period poverty: The challenges of the Sri Lankan Government's plan to distribute sanitary napkins to school-going girls

Sri Lanka has approximately 5.7 million menstruating women across the island (2019), however there is yet a large disparity with regards to menstrual hygiene and the use of sanitary products <sup>[1]</sup>. After years of public advocacy and activism, a month ago, the Sri Lankan Government announced plans to distribute sanitary napkins free of charge to approximately 800,000 school going girls via the Ministry of Education. This has been said to be the initial stepping stone in order to combat period poverty. Whilst this is a welcomed and important initiative, a number of factors must be taken into consideration prior to embarking on this venture.

### The Need

Every month, a menstruating female will bleed on average for 4 to 7 days. In order to maintain hygienic conditions, a sanitary napkin has to be changed every 4-6 hours. This implies that every month, a female will use at least 15-25 sanitary napkins every menstrual cycle.

Unfortunately, poor menstrual hygiene is widely prevalent across our island nation. One major contributor to this is the cost of sanitary products. Sanitary napkins and tampons are still taxed in Sri Lanka, with imported sanitary products taxed at 62.6% (previously 101.2% until September 2018). The presence of taxation on sanitary products renders these items unaffordable to the masses, and essentially a luxury item for a basic biological process.

This period tax not only has direct implications on the health of menstruating girls and women in Sri Lanka, but also limits their daily

activities. The lack of access to these products forces many menstruating women to resort to wearing unhygienic fabric material instead of sanitary napkins and/or also wear fabric/sanitary pads for longer periods of time. Both of the factors mentioned increase the risk of reproductive tract infections in females due to the unhygienic conditions. The lack of appropriate sanitary products also causes girls and women to skip school and work every month, directly impacting their education and employment.

A UNICEF Study in 2015 <sup>[2]</sup> found that approximately 1/10th of school going female students believed that cloth or sanitary napkins should be disposed of by burning. The study also found that more than 20% of girls missed school because of menstruation, 2 of the main reasons were for fear of staining clothes and the lack of sanitary napkin disposal systems.

### The Challenges

Whilst no official breakdown of the three-stage sanitary napkin distribution project has been revealed by the Ministry of Education, it is intended to launch later this year in rural areas first as the need is much greater in those areas.

However, there are many vital factors that need to be answered and considered by the government when planning distribution. These include:

1. What criteria will be used to select the rural areas for the distribution of the sanitary pads?
2. How many sanitary napkins will be

distributed to each school girl?

3. For what duration of time will the sanitary napkins be provided to for each girl?
4. Which rank of government official will be in charge of distribution in each area?
5. Will there be concurrent development of washroom and water facilities in schools (i.e. period friendly toilets)?

It is reassuring to know that the Government Medical Officers' Association (GMOA) will be advising the Ministry of Education with the project. Hence, hopefully, an appropriate number of sanitary goods will be distributed to each girl on a monthly basis.

The distribution program is also the perfect opportunity for the Ministry of Education to teach young girls about menstrual hygiene. This would include how to use a sanitary napkin, how to dispose of it, how often to change it, and common disorders associated with menstruation. This will help empower young girls and women to take control of their own health.

Many organizations such as The Family Planning Association Sri Lanka and The Arka Initiative have been conducting sexual and reproductive health sessions to school going children both in and out of Colombo for many years. Additionally, the Arka Initiative also has a "Sustainable Sanitation Project" which distributes reusable sanitary napkins to women from low socioeconomic backgrounds across the island. Utilizing the knowledge and





Participants at an Arka menstrual hygiene session

skills of these organizations which already work in the grassroots, would definitely aid the government with the sanitary napkin distribution project.

### The Global Context

Many countries around the world have already identified the impact of period poverty on women and girls, and made necessary initiatives to combat it. Kenya, Canada, India and Ireland have removed taxes on menstrual products, whilst Scotland has passed “The Period Products (Free Provision) (Scotland) Act which provides period products free of charge for all menstruating females. New Zealand and the United Kingdom have also announced plans for free access to sanitary products for all school going females in an effort to combat period poverty.

Whilst commencing this project in Sri Lanka may seem like a daunting task, it is one that has been long anticipated and if effectively carried out, will make a huge impact to the lives of many young girls. So, whilst many challenges certainly exist, one can only hope that a strategic and realistic plan for distribution is formulated by the Ministry of Education and carried out.

#### References

1. Department of Census and Statistics, 2019. Mid-Year Population Estimates (Female) By Age Group. [Online] Available at: <http://www.statistics.gov.lk/GenderStatistics/StaticAllInformation/Population/Midyearpopulationestimatesfemale2019>.
2. UNICEF, 2015. Knowledge, Attitudes, Practices Behavior (KAPB) Study on School WASH program. [Online] Available at: [https://www.unicef.org/srilanka/media/666/file/Knowledge,%20Attitudes,%20Practices%20Behavior%20\(KAPB\)%20Study%20on%20School%20WASH%20program.pdf](https://www.unicef.org/srilanka/media/666/file/Knowledge,%20Attitudes,%20Practices%20Behavior%20(KAPB)%20Study%20on%20School%20WASH%20program.pdf)

## New Appointment



Our congratulations to Mr. Lakshan Seneviratne for his appointment to the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee of IPPF. He has been a volunteer at FPA Sri Lanka since 2016 and is currently the Assistant Treasurer of the National Council and a Member of the Youth Technical Advisory Committee.

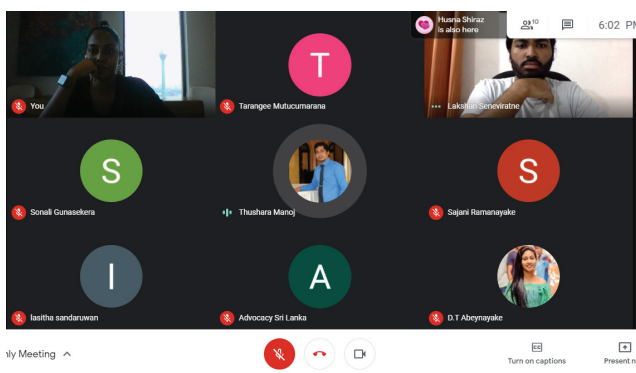
To view the IPPF announcement, click [here](#).

## Update from the Youth Technical Advisory Committee (YTAC)

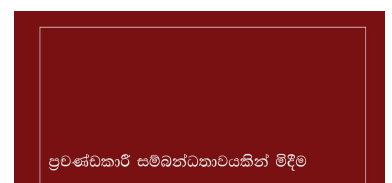
YTAC has planned to run multiple social media campaigns throughout the year on topics and concerns relating to Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights.

In February, YTAC partnered with Bakamoono, a website and social media platform that imparts knowledge and facilitates open conversations on self-respect, respect for others, and respecting differences.

The first campaign will focus on Intimate Partner Violence, and the aim is to promote an online Help and Resource Guide for those looking to leave a violent relationship.

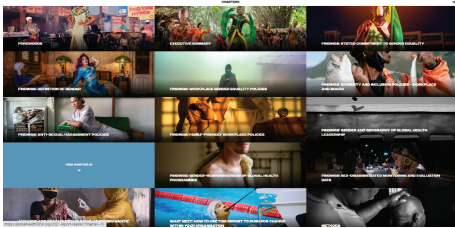


WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO KNOW?



ඔබ දැනගැනීමට කැමති කුමක්ද?





The International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) has been recognized as a very high scorer in the 2021 Global Health 50/50 Report – a review of the equality and gendered-related policies and practices of 201 global organizations active in health and health policy.

IPPF is one of 12 organizations recognized as a very high scorer, and places IPPF in the top 5% of sample organizations used in the report. The 2021 Global Health 50/50 report focused on four key areas for assessment: commitment to gender equality, gender equality and diversity policies at work, gender and geography of gender health leadership and gender responsive of health policy and programmes.

IPPF's Director-General Dr Alvaro Bermejo said:

“I'm pleased to see that IPPF is a high scorer in the 2021 Global Health 50/50 report. But the report shows there is much more work to be done to dismantle the structural legacy of gender inequality, in order to truly advance gender-equality, diversity and inclusion in global health. We know that the majority of the workforce in our organizations are women, we know they are majority of our service users, and most importantly we know we must promote women at the top with determination because the gap everywhere is so very large. And in order to achieve parity one day, global health organizations need to act with urgency to make sure they have more women than men in positions of leadership. IPPF must and will lead by example, we will not shy away from our responsibility and commitment to shaping a future that has gender equality and female empowerment at the centre.”  
To view the Report, click [here](#).

## SE Hub - Annual newsletter

Published every January, the annual e-newsletter 'The Social Enterprise Chronicle' highlights the SE Hub's global activities and impact, training programmes and events, new developments and showcases opportunities for engagement within the Federation.

FPA Sri Lanka was selected by IPPF to function as the Social Enterprise Hub and to ensure the successful implementation of the Social Enterprise Acceleration Program (SEAP) which would enable IPPF's Member Associations to increase their financial resilience.

To view, click [here](#).

## Endometriosis: what you should know



Endometriosis (sometimes shortened to “endo”) is a condition where endometrial tissue that is usually found in the uterus grows in other parts of the pelvis, such as the ovaries and fallopian tubes.

Many people around the world suffer from the effects of endometriosis, yet it can be difficult to identify. Here we explain the causes, symptoms, impact, and diagnosis and treatment methods.

### Symptoms and causes

The symptoms of endometriosis vary greatly, as does the intensity of them, which means that some people don't even know they have it. These are the main symptoms you should look out for:

- strong period pains
- pain in your lower tummy or back, which usually worsens during your period
- pain during or after sex
- pain when going to the toilet during your period
- nausea, constipation, or diarrhea during your period
- blood in your urine during your period
- irregular periods, and/or heavy periods which soak through several pads/ tampons etc, and perhaps even through your clothes
- difficulty getting pregnant

### Impact

Endometriosis can affect anyone with a uterus who has periods, and it can last for years. A main complication is impaired fertility, and approximately a third to a half

of women with endometriosis have difficulty getting pregnant.

Endometriosis can be physically very painful for some people, to the point that they are unable to carry out their usual day-to-day activities. As a result, they might require time off from work or school to rest and recuperate.

It can also lead to mental health problems, and some people consequently develop depression.

### Diagnosis

Many people report that their concerns are sometimes dismissed as 'bad period pains', rather than the specific condition of endometriosis. This is not right, and you deserve for your experience to be taken seriously so you can get the medical care you need.

### Treatment

While there is no cure for endometriosis, there are treatment options to help manage the symptoms including:

- physical therapy, specifically for your pelvic floor
- painkillers (such as ibuprofen)
- certain hormonal contraceptives (such as the Pill)
- surgery to cut away endometrial tissue (if you are living with infertility, this may also help increase your fertility)
- a hysterectomy (to remove part or all of the womb) – this is only for people for whom fertility is not a consideration

It is worth bearing in mind that in some cases the symptoms of endometriosis might improve on their own. But in the meantime you do not need to suffer in silence – make an appointment with your healthcare provider to discuss endometriosis if you think you may have it.

To read IPPF blog online, click [here](#).





**ආලෝකය උපදේශන මධ්‍යස්ථානයේ නියෝජ්‍ය අධ්‍යක්ෂිකා හදා උඩවත්ත මහත්මිය සමඟ කතාබහක**

**උපදේශනය වෘත්තීයයක් ලෙස තෝරා ගැනීමට ඔබට හේතු වූ කරුණු මොනවාද?**

කුඩා කල සිටම මා හෙළි වෘත්තීය හැදෑරීමට ආශාවක් තිබුණා. මේ අතරෙදි තමයි මම මනෝවිද්‍යාව සහ උපදේශනය හැදෑරීමට පටන් ගත්තේ. ඒතුලින් මට දැනුණා තව කෙනෙකු මානසිකව වැටීලා ඉන්න විට ඔවුන්ව හඟාලීමට මට යමක් කලහැකිබව.

මා මුලින්ම 'සහනය' Sahanaya Community Mental Health Centre මානසික සෞඛ්‍ය ආයතනයේ වෛද්‍ය නාලක මෙන්ඩිස් මහතා යටතේ Life Skills Instructor and Counsellor හැටියට සේවය කළා. එම ආයතනය මානසිකව බිඳ වැටීම් වලට ලක්වූවන් පුනරුත්ථාපනය කරන ආයතනයකි. ඉන් පසුව ශ්‍රී ලංකා පවුල් සංවිධාන සංගමයේ මනෝවිද්‍යා උපදේශිකා හැටියට සේවයට බැඳුණ මා අද නියෝජ්‍ය අධ්‍යක්ෂක ලෙස සේවය කරන්නේ ඉතාමත් සතුටිනි.

**ඔබගේ වෘත්තීය කාර්යභාරය සහ "ආලෝකය උපදේශන ඒකකය" මගින් ලබාදෙන පුළුල් වූ සේවාව පිළිබඳ විස්තර කරන්න.**

අප ආයතනයට පැමිණෙන හෝ විවිධ

මනෝ විද්‍යා උපදේශන සේවාවන් වල අවශ්‍යතා ඇති අයට එම උපදේශන සේවාවන් ලබා ගැනීමට කටයුතු සැලසීම. (Hot Line, General Counselling)

උපදේශනයේ සංවර්ධනාත්මක පැතිකඩ ඔස්සේ විවිධ වෘත්තීයයන්ට කුසලතා, දැනුම, ආකල්ප සංවර්ධනය කරගැනීමට කටයුතු කිරීම. විවිධ දේශන, වැඩමුළු, පාඨමාලා සංවිධානය කිරීම සහ දැනුම ලබාදීමට කටයුතු කිරීම. උපදේශකවරුන්, හෙද නිලධාරීන්, ගුරුවරුන් වෙතත් වෘත්තීන්වල නියැලෙන අයට දැනුම ලබා ගැනීමට අවස්ථාවන් සැපයීම. ජීවිතයේ විවිධ තත්වයන් වලදී අප මුහුණ දෙන පීඩාකාරී අවස්ථාවන්හි ඇතිවන ආතතිතත්වයන්, ක්ලමට්කාරී තත්වයන් සඳහා ක්ලමට් කළමනාකරණය වැඩමුළු තුලින් දැනුම, පුහුණුව ලබාගැනීමට අවස්ථාවන් සැලසීම. රංග විකිස්සන වැඩමුළු, ලිංගික ප්‍රතිකාර පාඨමාලා, ආරම්භ කිරීම. මීට අමතරව උපදේශකවරුන්ගේ ජාලීය සම්බන්ධතා පවත්වාගැනීම තුලින් ව්‍යසනකාරී තත්ව, වසංගත තත්වයන්හිදී පවා නොපසුබට ජාලීය සබඳතා තුලින් උපදේශනයෙන් සහාය ලබාදීමට ක්‍රමවේද සැකසීම (උදා: පාස්කු බෝම්බ පිපිරීම, COVID-19 ව්‍යසන තත්වයේදී) දිවයිනේ විවිධ දිස්ත්‍රික්වල සිටින උපදේශකවරුන් සම්බන්ධ කරගැනීම තුලින් දුරකථනනයෙන් ක්‍රමවත් මනෝවිද්‍යා උපදේශන සේවා සැපයීම.

Static clinic ඔස්සේ දිවයිනේ විවිධ ආයතනයන්හි අවශ්‍යතා අනුව මනෝවිද්‍යා උපදේශන සේවය ලබාදීමට සහ ඒ තුලින් ආයතනයට සාර්ථක ආදායමක් ලබාගැනීමට කටයුතු කිරීම (MAS Holdings, Dilmah, Camsco) විවිධ ආයතන මගින් මනෝ විද්‍යා උපදේශනය හදාරන සිසු සිසුවියන්ට උපදේශන කුසලතා (Counselling Practical Skills) හැදෑරීමට අවස්ථාවන් සැලසීම.

**කෝවිඩ් 19 වසංගත තත්වය හේතුවෙන් ශ්‍රී ලංකාව තුළ ස්ත්‍රී පුරුෂ භාවය මත පදනම් වූ නිංසනයන්ගේ වැඩි විමක් දක්නට ලැබෙනවා. මෙලෙස නිංසනයට ලක්වූවන්ට "ආලෝකය" වැඩසටහන මගින් සහය දැක්වූයේ කෙසේද?**

ශ්‍රී ලංකා පවුල් සංවිධාන සංගමයේ ස්ප්‍රින්ට් ව්‍යාපෘතිය සමඟ සම්බන්ධ වී හදිසි ප්‍රතිචාර යටතේ උපදේශන

සේවාවන් දුරකථනය මගින් ආරම්භ කෙරුණි. වෛද්‍ය හරිස්වන්ද්‍ර යකන්දාවල මහතා දෙරණ මාධ්‍ය ජාලයත් සමඟ "සෙනහස" වැඩසටහන තුලින් සම්බන්ධ වී මහජනයා දැනුවත් කිරීමේ වැඩසටහන් නිරන්තරයෙන් සිදු කෙරුණි. මේ සඳහා නුවරවිලිය, හම්බන්තොට, මාතර, රත්නපුර, කොළඹ, ගාල්ල යන දිස්ත්‍රික් වල උපදේශකවරුන්ගේ සහයෝගය ලබා ගැනීමට සිදුවිය.

ප්‍රවණ්ඩත්වයට ගොදුරුවූවන් තුල නුදකලාවීම, නොසලකා හැරීම, අහිමිකිරීම්, ශාරීරික පීඩා, ලිංගික පීඩා, චිත්තවේගික බිඳවැටීම් තනිකම සහ අවිනිවිචිතභාවය වැනි මනෝ විද්‍යාත්මක ගැටළුද ඇතුලත්වේ. නිරෝධායන කාල සීමාව වැඩිවීමත් සමඟ බරපතල මානසික ගැටළු සංවර්ධනය වීමේ අවදානම වැඩිවන බව පර්යේෂකයන් පෙන්වාදෙයි.

මනෝ උපදේශනය හරහා ඔවුනට කටා කිරීමට අවස්ථාවන් සැලසීම, ඇතිවන මානසික, කායික, ලිංගික පීඩා සමනය කරගැනීම සඳහා අවශ්‍ය මානසික ප්‍රතිකාර සහ වෛද්‍ය ප්‍රතිකාර වලට අවශ්‍ය විටදී ඔවුන්ව යොමුකිරීම. පුද්ගලයාට අවශ්‍ය මානසික ප්‍රතිකාර තුලින් තමාව හඳුනාගැනීම සහ තම ශක්තීන් ගොඩනගා ගැනීමට සහායදීම.

**ලංකාව තුළ සියදිවි හානි කර ගැනීමේ ප්‍රවණතාවය පිළිබඳ නිබඳව සැලකිලිමත් වීණි. ඔබේ අත්දැකීම් වලට අනුව තරුණ හා වැඩිහිටි පුද්ගලයන් විශාදයෙන් පෙළීමට ප්‍රධාන ලෙස බලපාන කරුණු මොනවාද?**

අතීතයට සාපේක්ෂව වර්තමාන සමාජයේ පුද්ගලයන් විශාල ප්‍රමාණයක් විශාදයෙන් පෙලෙන බව පැහැදිලි වේ. පෙරට වඩා රෝගය හඳුනාගැනීමේදී වැඩි වී ඇත. ශ්‍රී ලංකා වේ රෝගීන් බොහෝ චිත්තවේගිමය වශයෙන් දුක පිටතට නොපෙන්වයි. තමාට දැනෙන දුක්පීඩා, අපසුතා හිතේ සඟවා නොගෙන උපදේශකවරයකු සමඟ කතා කිරීමෙන් ඔබට සහනයක් ලැබේවි. තෙහෙට්ටුව, කලන්තය, ඇඟපත වේදනාව, කෂම අරුචිය, මහන්සිය, කාංසාව, තනිකම, දෛනික කටයුතු අතපසු කිරීම සහ ආත්ම විශ්වාසය බිඳ වැටීම දැකිය හැකිවේ. විශාදය යනු සුලබව ඇති මානසික රෝගයකි. විශාදය නම් රෝග තත්වයේ ප්‍රධාන ලක්ෂණය වන්නේ එම පුද්ගලයා තුළ පවතින අධික දුකයි.



දුක යනු සියලු දෙනාටම දැනෙන තාවකාලික දෙයකි. නමුත් විශාදය නිසා ඇතිවන දුක දීර්ඝ කාලයක් පවතී. යම්කිසි පුද්ගලයකුගේ දීර්ඝ කාලීනව පවතින( සතියක් හෝ මාසයක් එක දිනට) නොවෙනස් චිත්තවේගීය තත්ත්වය විශාදයේ ප්‍රධාන ලක්ෂණයක් වේ. මීට අමතරව පුද්ගලයාගේ චිත්තවේග සම්බන්ධයෙන් ඇතිවන වෙනස්කම්, නින්ද සහ ආහාර ගැනීම සම්බන්ධයෙන් ඇතිවන වෙනස්කම් පෙරට වඩා වෙනස්ය. සිතුවිලිවල ඇතිවන වෙනස, සාමාන්‍ය සිතුවිලි ඇතිවීම සහ යම්කිසි දෙයක් පිලිබඳ තීරණ ගැනීමට ඇත දුෂ්කරතාවය.

දීර්ඝ කාලීනව පවතින අධික දුක හෝ අධික සතුට (Depressed Mood) මීට පෙර තමන් සතුටු වූ දේවල් වලට සහ කමැත්තක් දැක්වූ දේවල් වලට ඇති කැමැත්ත නැති වීම, සතුටක් නොදැනීම, සුළු වැඩක නිරත වුවද දැඩි වෙහෙසක් දැනීම. ඔහුම පුද්ගලයෙකුට විශාදය ඇතිවිය හැකිය. ජීව විද්‍යාත්මක, මනෝ විද්‍යාත්මක සහ සාමාජික විද්‍යාත්මක වශයෙන් ඇතිවන හේතු සාදක මේ සඳහා බලපායි. විමෝචන ජානමය සාධක, පාරිසරික සාධක, ප්‍රමාදයේ ඇතිවන අමිහිරි අත්දැකීම් යනාදී හේතු පුද්ගලයෙකුට විශාදය ඇති වීමට හේතුවිය හැකිය. පුද්ගලයෙකුට දරාගත නොහැකි ආකාරයේ ප්‍රශ්න ඇතිවීම, ප්‍රේම සබඳතා බිඳ වැටීම් විශාදය ඇති වීමට බලපායි.

**හොඳ මානසික සෞඛ්‍ය තත්වයක් පවත්වා ගැනීමට වැදගත් වන කරුණු මොනවාද?**

**ඔබේ හැඟීම් ගැන කතා කිරීම**  
ඔබ හොඳ මානසික සෞඛ්‍යයෙන් සිටීමට ඔබට කරදරයක් දැනෙන අවස්ථා සමඟ කටයුතු කිරීමට උපකාරී වේ.

**ක්‍රියාශීලීව සිටින්න.**  
යහපත් මානසික සෞඛ්‍යයක් පවතවා ගැනීම සඳහා ක්‍රියාකාරීත්වය සහ ව්‍යායාම අත්‍යවශ්‍ය වේ. ක්‍රියාශීලීව සිටීම ඔබට ජයග්‍රහණය පිළිබඳ හැඟීමක් ලබාදෙනවා. ඔබේ මොළයේ ඇති රසායනික ද්‍රව්‍ය වැඩි දියුණු කරන අතර එය ඔබට හොඳ මනෝභාවයක් ඇති කිරීමට උපකාරවේ.

**හොඳට කන්න**  
හොඳින් ආහාර ගැනීම අපගේ ශරීරයට පමණක් වැදගත් නොවේ නමුත් එය අපගේ මනසටද වැදගත් වේ. යකඩ හා

විටමින් බී12 උග්‍රතාවයන් වැනි ඇතැම් ඛනිජ උග්‍රතාවයන් අපට අඩු මනෝභාවයන් ලබා දියහැකිය. සමබර ආහාර වේලක් ගැනීමට උත්සහ කරන්න. ඔබ විශේෂයෙන් ආතතියට හෝ කනස්සල්ලට පත්ව සිටින පුද්ගලයෙකු බව ඔබ දැනුවහොත්, ඔබ කැපේන් සීමා කිරීමට උත්සහ කලයුතුයි.

**සුවදායක නින්දක් ලබාගන්න**  
අපගේ ශාරීරික හා මානසික සෞඛ්‍ය සඳහා නින්ද සැබවින්ම වැදගත්වේ. තොරතුරු සම්ප්‍රේෂණය කරන අපගේ මොළයේ ඇති රසායනික ද්‍රව්‍යය නියාමනය කිරීමට නින්ද උපකාරවේ. අපගේ මනෝභාවයන් සහ හැඟීම් කළමනාකරණය කිරීමේදී මෙම රසායනික ද්‍රව්‍ය වැදගත්වේ. අපට ප්‍රමාණවත් නින්දක් නොලැබුනේ නම් මානසික අවපීඩනය හෝ කනස්සල්ල දැනෙන්නට පටන් ගත හැකිය.

**මේ දක්වා කාලය තුළ උපදේශන සේවාව ලබාදීම මගින් ඔබ වඩාත්ම සතුටු වූ අවස්ථාව තුමක් ද?**

COVID-19 කොරෝනා වසංගතයට හසුවී සිටින මොහොතක උපදේශනය පතා ඉරේෂා සහ ඇයගේ ස්වාමිපුරුෂයන් ඇය සමඟ පැමිණියා. ශාරීරික හා මානසික හිංසනය නිසා තව දුරටත් ඔවුන්ට එකට ජීවත් වෙන්න අමාරුයි කියන එක තමයි ඔවුන්ගේ ගැටලුව. උපදේශනය ලබා දීමෙන් පසුව ඔවුන් අදත් සතුටින් එකට ජීවත් වෙනවා ඇය ඒ බව කෙටි සටහනක් මගින් දැනුම් දුන්නා(WhatsApp) එය මට මහත් සතුටකි.

**උපදේශන සේවාවෙහි වෘත්තීයයක් ලෙස නියැලීමට බලාපොරොත්තු වන පුද්ගලයන්ට ඔබ විසින් ලබාදෙන උපදෙස් මොනවාද?**

මනෝවිද්‍යා උපදේශන වෘත්තීය මානසික සතුටක් ලබා ගත හැකි වෘත්තීයයක් ඒ නිසා සතුටින් ඉගෙනුම ලබාගෙන පලපුරුදු උපදේශකවරයෙකු යටතේ පුහුණුව ලබාගන්න. ප්‍රායෝගික පුහුණුව මගින් හිපුණතා වලින් හෙබි උපදෙශකවරයෙකු බිහිකරයි.



**WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT PANIC ATTACKS?**

Panic attacks are usually a sign of anxiety.

Someone having a panic attack experiences a sudden and intense sensation of fear.

They may breathe rapidly, sweat, feel very hot or cold, feel sick or feel faint.

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enriching relationships




**WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT DEPRESSION?**

People who are depressed may:

- Have low confidence
- Lose interest in activities they normally enjoy
- Lose their appetite
- Get tired easily
- Be tearful, nervous or irritable

At worst they may feel suicidal.

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**WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT ANXIETY?**

People experiencing anxiety may:

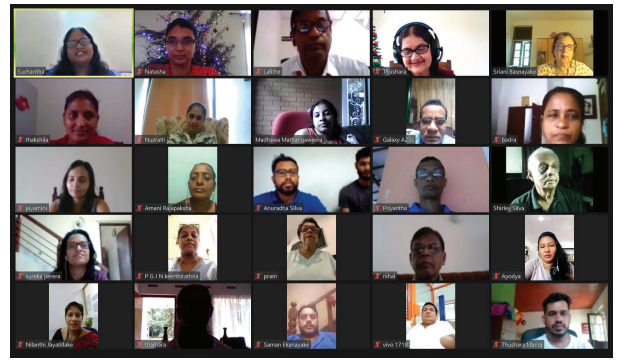
- Have difficulty concentrating
- Be irritable
- Try to avoid certain situations
- Appear pale and tense
- Be easily startled by everyday sounds.

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You don't have to struggle alone in silence. If you need help or know of someone who does, please connect via call/WhatsApp: 0779895252 (Alokaya Counselling Unit – FPA Sri Lanka)



A virtual Awards / Felicitation ceremony was held on the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2021 to recognise the top sales personnel associated with the Sales and Marketing Programme Unit and to felicitate long-serving staff members.



# Service Awards

 <p><b>Suchira Suranga</b> 10 Years</p>	 <p><b>Priyantha Amarasinghe</b> 10 Years</p>	 <p><b>Udeshika Lumbini</b> 10 Years</p>	 <p><b>Milinda Jayalath</b> 10 Years</p>	 <p><b>Ajith Fernando</b> 15 Years</p>
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 <p><b>Rohan Kumara</b> 15 Years</p>	 <p><b>Suraj Opanayake</b> 20 Years</p>	 <p><b>V. G Sunil</b> 30 Years</p>	 <p><b>D. P. A Somasiri</b> 35 Years</p>
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## Sales Person of the Year Awards 2019



**Pradeep Wijekoon**  
Best Sales Person



**Lahiru Kulasinghe**  
1st Runner up



**Lahiru Pathirana**  
2<sup>nd</sup> Runner up

We want to hear your views and suggestions! Please write to: FPA Sri Lanka, 37/27, Bullers Lane, Colombo - 07, Sri Lanka.  
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