



## **Association of Professional Sri Lankans in the UK**

### **Annual Report for year 2023-2024**

Year 2023-24 was a productive period for APSL (Association of Professional Sri Lankans in the UK). This report provides a summary of the key activities carried out during the year.

#### **Executive Committee Meetings**

Three executive committee meetings were held during the past year via Microsoft Office Teams.

1. The first executive committee meeting was held on Sunday 06<sup>th</sup> of August 2023. A review of APSL current project portfolio took place and committee focused on developing a Strategic plan to promote APSL to youngsters as part of succession planning.
2. The second executive committee meeting was held on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> of January 2024. Internal governance and developing best practices took centre stage amongst discussions and updates from ongoing projects.
3. The third executive committee meeting was held on Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> of May 2024. The progress of all existing projects reviewed, and new targets set for fundraising efforts and events. Office bearers for the year 2024-2025 was also discussed and agreed.

In addition to executive committee meetings, regular sub-committee meetings were held during the year for the APSL Scholarship Scheme, APSL Solar Power Projects, APSL Media team and APSL We Sri Lanka and for other event coordination.

#### **Projects and Events**

##### **1. 19<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting**

The 19th Annual General Meeting (AGM) was held on Saturday 27 May 2023 at the Windsor/ Heathrow Marriott Hotel

Mr. Sameera Dayasekara, Second Secretary, of the Sri Lanka High Commission in the United Kingdom, joined the occasion. The AGM was also attended by the APSL Executive

Committee, APSL members and representatives of other Sri Lankan associations. At the AGM, a new Executive Committee was elected for the year 2023-2024.

In the absence of any nominations for the AGM notice circulated prior to the AGM, the list of office bearers, nominated by the outgoing committee was elected and accordingly, Dr. Mohan Siriwardena was elected as the President of APSL.

## **2. APSL Florence De Silva Memorial Trust Fund for children**

APSL launched the APSL Florence De Silva memorial trust for children in 2019 to help children in Sri Lanka. Since its inception, APSL has spent four million rupees towards 20 projects in Sri Lanka.

During the past year, there were 2 projects completed successfully totalling £2,197.00 (Rs 837,462) were funded including school essential Packs for Kandaketiya Vidyalaya, Donation for pairs of shoes to 53 needy children in Yatiyana Primary School Nittabuwa and testing kits for children of HIV-positive mothers in Sri Lanka organised through The Sri Lanka College of Sexual Health and HIV Medicine-.

A sum of £50,000 was invested in a Fixed deposit from the Late Florence De Silva's legacy, in order to grow the capital and make funds last a few more years than otherwise expected, exclusively to benefit more children.

During the past 5 years, funds were used to improve facilities and resources in schools, providing school essentials and providing medicine and equipment for paediatric units during medical emergency situations in various hospitals. At present £1,000 budget allocation per quarter is in place in line with the proposed long-term allocations plan.

Our appreciation goes to Mrs Aruni De Alwis, the executor of the will of the late Florence Cecilia De Silva for her kind and thoughtful consideration to enhance the well-being of the less fortunate children in Sri Lanka.

## **3. APSL Scholarship Scheme**

Launched in 2014, the APSL Scholarship Scheme provides financial assistance to gifted schoolchildren from poor and disadvantaged families in Sri Lanka - especially for those from rural areas to gain access to a good education.

We in APSL believe that if a child's true potential is left undiscovered and their dreams unrealised, their ambition would get blunted and their self-esteem lowered. This could result in them under-achieving - settling for unskilled low-paid jobs; or turning to drugs or crime. This in turn, perpetuates poverty, denies the country of a skilled workforce it needs to become a developed, prosperous nation.

The APSL scholarship scheme provides Sri Lankans around the world, with a simple and effective channel for 'giving something back' to their motherland. Also, for our non-Sri Lankan friends and well-wishers, it offers an efficient and reliable vehicle for helping Sri Lanka and be part of this life changing initiative.

As the programme is run by volunteers working from home, via a virtual offices, keeping the overheads to an minimum, allows almost all the donations go to the recipients. As a UK registered charity, APSL claims Gift Aid for donations from UK taxpayers which further increases the value of your giving. This makes our scheme one of the most efficient ways of helping Sri Lanka.

Unlike other charities, we haven't set aside a marketing budget to promote our services and we don't publicise the scheme too widely to avoid creating a big demand and disappointing children. Most of our funding applications and donors hear about us through word of mouth and personal recommendations.

Since it's inauguration, scholarship programme has continued as a beacon of hope for these families. Despite the disruptions, the Scholarship Scheme has grown during last year increasing the total number of beneficiaries (aged between 9 to 18). Over the years the scholarship scheme as funded a total of 153 students, out of which 25 have completed and left the scheme so far. Therefore, currently we are funding 128 students. who are spread across the island, with funds donated by 72 sponsors - based in UK, Sri Lanka, Singapore, and Australia

The two online spoken English classes that started in November 2021 and , have continued weekly under Mrs. Gayani Senaratne and Mrs. Janet Silva . Adding the third class, Mrs Grace Gunaratne conducted them since 2022. These classes are popular among the children who are showing an improved grasp of English language and a greater self-confidence as a result. As there is a big demand for English, we are looking for more volunteers, willing to give a couple of hours a week to teach a small group of children via Microsoft Teams.

During last year, we managed to send another lot of used IT equipment - laptops and smart phones, received from UK donors to Sri Lanka. This has helped several children who attend our online classes who have been struggling without suitable equipment.

We had some excellent GCE O level and A/L results in 2023,

We also celebrated world children's day in November 2023, by conducting an online workshop by Professor Chis Nester.

In addition, we also managed to help many students in several areas and schools in the following ways during this period:

With the help of Rakitha L. Dias, The Founder/Managing Director of Terias Consulting, a London-based IT company with a branch in Sri Lanka, has donated 125 school bags and 100 pair of shoes to needy children in 5 schools across the island.

### **Ways you could help:**

- Sponsor one or more children at £20 per month per child.
- Donate for education, school meals or books and shoes.
- Leave a legacy.
- Become a voluntary teacher

### **4. Walk4Lanka Fund**

APSL fundraising walk, Walk4lanka raised £9,700 to provide food and medicine for the most vulnerable in Sri Lanka in 2022.

The funds were allocated to a school meal programme and APSL joined the Student Food Programme initiated in Anuradhapura by a group of doctors led by Dr. Kiloshini Hendhavitharana to provide meals for over 100 schools from disadvantage backgrounds.

APSL has provided funds to two primary schools for 5 days a week from November 2022 to August 2023 - Moraththegama Primary school (61 children) Dewahuwa and Mudalidu Rathnayake primary school (73 Children) in Mkichchawa Seepukulama. At present meals are provided 3 days a week. The meals are prepared by parents and manged by the principal and teachers.

Under school food programme, Siddhartha College-Ampitiya Kandy received £650 towards their school meal programmes.

As a part of school food programme, funds were allocated to use to disseminate good practice and educate and immerse some sustainable habits among the future generation.

As a part of this, Sri Dheerananda School Boosa was rewarded £100 for their ongoing school allotment project.

Approximately £3,000 worth of medicine including plasters and suturing material were provided to Panadura Base Hospital.

### **5. APSL Cancer Relief Project**

APSL Cancer Relief Fund (CRF) was launched in September 2017. We formed partnerships with in 2019 with Kurunegala General Hospital and, Batticaloa Teaching Hospital, and Anuradhapura Hospital in 2020.

Over six years and eight months, we have spent **5.32 million rupees** through the scheme to provide **medication, financial help, facility renovations and awareness campaigns**. We provided 510 financial aid payments of 3000 rupees each (2500 rupees until December 2023) to Kurunegala Hospital, 310 financial aid payments to Batticaloa, and 205 financial aid payments to Anuradhapura Hospital. We are planning to expand the scheme further to other parts of Sri Lanka, where we have identified urgent needs. The team is currently working on it.

We especially want to mention the service rendered by Dr. Dassanayake, the late president of the Wayamba Cancer Society, Sri Lanka who passed away peacefully last year due to terminal cancer. He was instrumental in establishing APSL Cancer Relief Fund's relationship with Sri Lanka, and we sincerely offer our condolences to Dr. Dassanayake's family, friends, and the Wayamba Cancer Society on behalf of APSL.

We also want to thank all the medical and admin staff linked to the program in Sri Lanka, including the Wayamba Cancer Society, Cancer Society Batticaloa, Cancer Society Anuradhapura, and Cancer Society Karapitiya, for their continued support.

A special thank you goes to our main sponsors of the program: Luminii Consulting, Mrs Lushani Kodithuwakku, Managing Director of Luminii Consulting, and the Director of LA & EA Consultants Ltd, Mr Lloyd Abeywickrama, and their team for supporting APSL.

Finally, we would like to thank all our donors in the UK and overseas for their regular and one-off payments to help deserving patients in Sri Lanka.

## **6. APSL Emergency Relief Fund**

APSL launched the Emergency Relief Fund ("ERF") on 25th March 2020 to support vulnerable people and deserving families in Sri Lanka. During three years and two months, we have spent over **13 million** rupees through the scheme to provide dry rations for 1650 families covering all nine provinces in 2020, Medical equipment and PPEs for hospitals on 16 occasions in 2021, medical aids worth 8.2 million rupees on 37 occasions to 33 hospitals across the island in 2022.

A special thank goes to the Association of Hela Sarana, Heal Sri Lanka UK team, The Aspire Community Foundation - Sri Lanka, Medical staff and the friends of APSL who contributed, helped and facilitated these donations. Importantly our sincere thank goes to all our donors for their continuous support.

## **7. Solar Village Projects**

Currently there are five Solar villages established in Sri Lanka by APSL-UK and Helasarana under the guidance of Prof Dharmadasa and the team. These are situated in Kaduruwewa, Pulmudai, Puthiya Nagar, Nochchiya, and Monaragala for the sustainable development of these areas. These were completed through generous personal donations, corporate

funding, and support from charity organisations such as APSL, Helasarana and the Foundation of Goodness.

Prof Dharmadasa initiated and provided all the necessary technical guidance to the Monaragala Solar Village project established by Helasarana to mark the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the charity. Mr. Leslie Dep is coordinating this project on behalf of the Helasarana charity.

Mr Gihantha Jayasinghe is liaising with the Foundation of Goodness about how income from solar energy generation can be re-invested for the sustainable development of the Solar Village in Puthiya Nagar.**in Mullaitivu District, Sri Lanka**

Mr Gihantha Jayasinghe, Programme Lead, APSL WE SRI LANKA visited the WE SRI LANKA Solar Village in Puthiya Nagar in February 2024 along with Mr Arnold Jenoosan of the Foundation of Goodness (FOG), Sri Lanka. During the time of this visit women in the village were receiving education on prevention of cervical cancer at the Community Centre from a mid-wife of the local health system. Afterwards, Mr Jayasinghe consulted the VDC Chairman and members present about how income generated from the solar roof could be reinvested. During the productive conversations that followed, village needs were identified for evaluation and costing by FOG., they will continue to assist APSL in liaising with the VDC for the sustainable development of the village.

There are four more villages currently under formation with interested parties within Sri Lanka. With the initiation by Ms Paola Bethmage, a “Go Fund Me” programme was established to raise funds to develop future solar villages. Adequate funds have been raised through this programme and a raffle organised by Dr Anuradha Samarasinghe. The APSL is in the process of establishing the 6<sup>th</sup> solar village in Mediyawa at present. Dr Anuradha Samarasinghe is coordinating this project on behalf of the APSL charity. The 7<sup>th</sup> solar village is also currently establishing in Sobithagama village cluster with generous donations from a UK family.

Electricity tariff in Sri Lanka has gone up drastically in the recent past. As a response to these high electricity bills, the village committee in Medagama/Galgamuwa has decided to discontinue their two water pumping systems using 3-phase electricity, and now working to install solar water pumping systems with their own available funds. Prof Dharmadasa is working with this VDC to apply solar village concepts to accelerate their sustainable development. This will be the 8<sup>th</sup> Solar Village in Sri Lanka and is a good example for solar village replication using “Crowd Funding” in the country, going away from the personal donations and charity funding.

## **8. APSL We Sri Lanka Project,**

APSL’S We Sri Lanka Programme aims to build thought leadership and raise awareness for topics on Sustainability, Inclusivity, and Governance. During 2023-24, the We Sri Lanka programme undertook the following activities in relation to talks,

## **WE SRI LANKA TALK with Dr Indrajit Coomaraswamy, Economist and Governor of the Central Bank of Sri Lanka form 2016-19**

In a very insightful talk delivered in December 2023, Dr Indrajit Coomaraswamy talked about contributory factors that led to Sri Lanka's economic woes over time. He also spoke about steps taken by the current government to stabilise the economy, policy reforms undertaken to put the economy on a growth trajectory, and progress made in attracting foreign investment into the country. He also pointed out the significant challenges that lay ahead in alleviating worsening poverty and human suffering because of the recent economic debacle.

## **WE SRI LANKA 2024, Nunn Hall, University College London (UCL)**

During March 2024 APSL WE SRI LANKA in collaboration with Sri Lankan Societies at leading universities in the UK presented a WE SRI LANKA TALKS event on the theme 'Transcending the Climate Crisis and creating a Sustainable Green Growth Economy'.

**Professor Mohan Munasinghe, Vice Chair, UN IPCC that shared the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize, and Chairman, Presidential Expert Committee, Sustainable Sri Lanka 2030 Vision, presented a wide ranging and informative keynote address on "Climate change and balanced inclusive green growth (BIGG) in Sri Lanka, in a multipolar world." Next, Professor Emeritus IM Dharmadasa delivered an engaging talk on the theme "Solar Villages: Harnessing renewable energy to alleviate poverty and create sustainable livelihoods in rural Sri Lanka."** The event concluded with a panel discussion on Practices, Technologies and Opportunities of the Green Growth Net Zero Economy with sustainability champions in academia, business and consulting. While Sri Lankan cultural dance performances showcased the rich cultural heritage of Sri Lanka, this event successfully brought together professionals and students via in-person and online participation, focusing on both existing climate challenges as well as the promise of the emerging green growth net zero economy in Sri Lanka, and in the UK.

## **9. Other Activities**

APSL has also continued the knowledge sharing forum for the benefit of Ex Co members led by Mr. Mervyn Silva and Mr. Rohan de Alwis.

During November 2023 organised APSL Scholarship Event in celebration of UN Childrens Day. Together with scholarship scheme funded children from Sri Lanka

Feb 2024 - Young Professionals networking session at UCL

This was a collaboration with the university students organised by David Gunawardana under the theme Link to Lanka. Some of our Exco members shared their life experience of career progression and gave advice and mentoring to students at form various UK universities.

April 2024 - ASK THE EXPERT SERIES had a "Ask the Lawyer event discussing Last Wills and Lasting Powers of Attorney event presented by Miss Sayuri Serasinghe and moderated by

Rohan De Alwis giving advice on setting up wills and Trusts. This was well received by the audience with a large number of positive feedback to be very useful and vital knowledge for everyone.

The dedication and hard work by the respective project and event leaders, and the support given by the executive committee and members, was vital for the success of all the above projects and events.

On behalf of APSL, I would like to thank our Patron His Excellency, the High Commissioner for Sri Lanka, Mr. Rohitha Bogollagama, together with the Deputy High Commissioner Mrs. Manorie Mallikaratchy, and the High Commission staff for the support given to the association in numerous ways.

My sincere thanks go to the representative of other Sri Lankan associations in the UK, to name a few, Hela Sarana, SLMDA, COSMOS and in Sri Lanka, Wayamba Cancer Society, Sri Lanka cancer Society, Batticaloa branch, and Red Cross for working hand in hand with APSL delivering collaborative projects.

My thanks also extended to our media outlets, Sathyajith Creations, BBC Sinhala Service, Ceylon mirror, and Sri Lankans in the UK Facebook community platforms for providing publicity for our activities. APSL is also grateful to the various organisations and individuals who provided sponsorships for our events throughout the year.

My sincere thanks goes to the President Dr. Mohan Siriwardena and the Executive Committee for their commitment and professionalism shown in fulfilling the objectives of the Association during the past two years. It was a pleasure to work with such a committed Team, which in turn made my task much easier and enjoyable.

I would also like to thank our family members for the enormous support that they have given us throughout the years.

Finally, I would like to extend my best wishes to the incoming new Executive Committee. I look forward to working with you all during the coming year.

Thank you.

Mr. Sanjaya C. Kodituwakku  
General Secretary  
Association of Professional Sri Lankans in the UK (APSL)  
2023 -2024



## **APSL Income and Expenditure Statement**

	<b><u>Y/E 31st March</u></b>	<b><u>Y/E 31st March</u></b>	<b><u>Y/E 31st</u></b>
	<b><u>2024</u></b>	<b><u>2023</u></b>	<b><u>March 2022</u></b>
		£	£
<b><u>Income Membership/Gift Aid</u></b>			
Membership Fees	165	402	383
Other Donations, Gift Aid and Interest	915	476	2,239
		-	-
<b><u>Project /Event Income</u></b>			
Social Events - Dinner Dance/AGM	644	5,125	-
Scholarship	20,395	17,726	17,381
Cancer Relief Project	5,464	1,105	-
Cancer Relief Project/ERF	-	9,968	9,446
Walk4 lanka	777	9,699	-
Donations Received in Sri Lanka	-	-	-
Rehabilitation Center for the Communication Impared	-	-	-
Solar Village / WeSL	4,324		
Megumi Wedding Donations	-	1,677	-
SLMDA Donation	-		250
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>32,684</b>	<b>46,178</b>	<b>29,699</b>
<b><u>Event Expenditure</u></b>			
Dinner dance expenditure	-	4,821	-
Administration & Other expenses	- 1,295	2,205	2,082
Annual General Meeting	- 1,362	320	-
<b>Total Event Expenditure</b>	<b>-2,657</b>	<b>7,346</b>	<b>2,082</b>
<b><u>Donations to Charities and Community Development Projects</u></b>			
Sri Lanka Community Relief Projects - COVID 19	-		2,738
Walk4 Lanka Projects	- 4,869	5,615	-
Scholarship Scheme payments	- 17,186	15,207	15,910
Florence De Silva Scholarships/projects	-	2,000	3,714
Emmergency Response Fund Projects	-	8,622	-
Florence De Silva - Scholarships	-	600	-
Cancer Relief Fund	- 4,017	4,970	5,382
Foundation of Goodness Partnership	-		-
Rehabilitation Center for the Communication Impared	-		-
Solar Village / We SL	- 548		
Donation to IDH through Helasarana	-		-
Donation to Temple	-		-
Donation to SLMDA			750
<b>Total Donations</b>	<b>-26,620</b>	<b>37,014</b>	<b>28,494</b>
<b>Total Expenditure for the period</b>	<b>-29,277</b>	<b>44,360</b>	<b>30,576</b>
<b>Net Surplus/ (loss) for the period</b>	<b>3,406</b>	<b>1,818</b>	<b>-877</b>
<b><u>Bank Reconciliation</u></b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
HSBC Account	7,463	10,898	13,382
Florence De Silva Trust	71,583	73,484	69,182
<b>Bank Balance as at 31st March</b>	<b>79,046</b>	<b>84,382</b>	<b>82,564</b>





Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees

Charity Name

THE ASSOCIATION OF PROFESSIONAL SRI LANKANS IN THE UK (APSL)

On accounts for the year  
ended

31<sup>ST</sup> MARCH 2024

Charity no  
(if any)

1145786

Set out on pages

(remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31 / 03 / 2024.

Responsibilities and  
basis of report

As the charity's trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent  
examiner's statement

I am qualified to undertake the examination by being a qualified member of The Institute of Financial Accountants(IFA).

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

*\* Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.*

Signed:

Date:

15/11/2024

Name:

Roshan Abeyawickrama

Relevant professional  
qualification(s) or body  
(if any):

Fellow Financial Accountant  
Institute of Financial Accountants (IFA)

Address:

35 ROE GREEN LANE

HATFIELD

HERTFORDSHIRE AL10 0SH