

Terms of Reference

Consultant to develop Standard Operating Procedures addressing Violence Against Women

1. Profile of CEJ

Centre for Equality and Justice (CEJ) was established as a company limited by guarantee in late 2017. CEJ's mission is the achievement of gender justice so that men, women and persons with diverse sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and sex characteristics (SOGIESC) live in a society that is free, just and equal. This will be achieved by promoting gender equality, advancing the rule of law, good governance and democratic principles, promoting women's advancement and economic empowerment, advocating for the commitment to international human rights standards and fostering partnerships with grassroots level women's networks. CEJ is primarily a women's organization working on the rights of women in the private and public spheres. CEJ engages with policymakers, government officers and strengthens grassroots level women's capacities to claim their rights.

2. Project Background

A CEJ project titled 'Don't Leave Them Behind': A Clarion Call to Address Domestic Violence during the Economic Crisis and Beyond, is a 09 month initiative designed to maximize visibility to the prevalence of domestic violence and the need to address it in a holistic manner.

SGBV is a deep-rooted problem in Sri Lanka. It is a serious human rights concern, widely prevalent, and takes various forms. It ranges from sexual harassment of women in public transport to sexual violence against girl children. The types of SGBV experienced by women also varies depending on where they live and their socio-economic status. Although not as common as SGBV inflicted upon women (largely by men), SGBV inflicted upon men (by women) is also prevalent. While there are differences in the nature of SGBV experienced by women, the reasons for the high prevalence of SGBV against women are often the same. Sri Lankan society remains heavily patriarchal and male dominated, propagated by various socio-cultural ideologies. Women in Sri Lanka are predominantly literate (the literacy rate of females aged 15 and above in 2019 was 91.5%) and are significant contributors to the economy through both formal and informal employment (female labour force participation in Sri Lanka is 34% which is higher than the South Asian regional average of 22%). However, women have minimal decision-making power, be it within the family or at national level. The woman is cast in the stereotypical homemaker role while the man is portrayed as the breadwinner. This is coupled with the lack of education on reproductive and sexual health, and awareness about SGBV. These reasons are aggravated in certain contexts such as the

armed conflict, the 2004 Tsunami, and the Covid-19 pandemic, and advances in technology which render women even more vulnerable and reduce the visibility of the issue.

While SGBV is experienced by a large proportion of females in Sri Lanka (For instance, 1 in 4 women (24.9%) in Sri Lanka have experienced sexual and/or physical violence since the age of 15), the lack of accountability, the culture of impunity and the obstacles to bring perpetrators to justice remain unaddressed. The state's response to allegations of violations relating to SGBV has been inadequate. It is reported that in 2019 while 1,779 rapes were reported in Sri Lanka only 235 complaints and/or indictments have been filed in relation to those offences. Such obstacles are exacerbated by the delays in the criminal justice process, structural violence such as a patriarchal and violent law enforcement service, and the stigma surrounding SGBV that prevents many survivors from reporting violations. It is important to note that despite the existence of an institutional structure comprising both state and non-state entities to provide services to victims, SGBV is rarely reported due to several factors: fear of social stigma and victim blaming, mistrust towards public institutions such as the Police fuelled by the weak implementation of the law, economic and structural barriers to accessing services, and the lack of availability and adequacy of support services.

4. Scope of work

The Consultant shall work in close consultation with the Project team and report to the Executive Director.

The primary function of the Consultant will be to Develop a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) document for service providers, to better address violence against women. The document should include referral pathways to emergency preparedness plans, including special measures to respond to the needs of LGBTQI+ persons, and persons with disabilities, including mental health issues. The consultant will present a draft to stakeholders for their input and incorporate their feedback through an online event. The SOP will be finalized with an online validation session.

To this end, the Consultant shall:

- Virtually meet with the CEJ Project team as and when required.
- Conduct research on resources and mechanisms available for victim-survivors of violence against women and draft a SOP based on those findings. The SOP should complement existing SOPs if any.
- Present the draft of the SOP to stakeholders in an online meeting and receive feedback.
- Incorporate feedback from CEJ and stakeholders and finalise the SOP.

- Present the finalised SOP at an online validation session.

Please note that all content will have to be approved by CEJ before finalizing the SOP. .

5. Expected Deliverables

Deliverables	Tentative Dates
1. Meet with CEJ for a virtual briefing.	19th February 2025
2. Draft the SOP and share with CEJ for feedback	5th March 2025
3. Present the draft to stakeholders for their input in an online meeting	7th March 2025
4. Incorporate stakeholders and CEJ's feedback and share the revised SOP with the CEJ tea,	14th March 2025
5. Present the revised SOP at a online validation session (with stakeholders)	19th March 2025
6. Finalise the SOP	24st March 2025

6. Duration

The proposed time period of the work will be between **19th February 2025 to 24th March 2025.**

7. Consultancy fee

As per the financial guidelines of CEJ, the contract will be between CEJ and the Consultant.

CEJ will pay an all inclusive consultancy fee based on a quotation provided by the Consultant in installments upon completion of deliverables.

8. Experience and Qualification

- Relevant experience in the field of sexual and gender based violence, law, academia or any other relevant field.
- Able to work independently and produce high-quality outputs under tight time constraints.
- Fluency in English is required. Additional fluency in Sinhala/Tamil is an advantage.
- A sound knowledge of the laws and mechanisms related to sexual and gender based violence in Sri Lanka is an advantage.
- Prior experience in a similar project is an advantage.

9. Confidentiality

Both during and after the end of the contract the Consultant must not disclose any matters that have come to his/her knowledge during the course of his/her duties. This shall not apply to communications made in the normal discharge of duties or to facts that are manifest to the public or which by their nature or importance do not require to be treated as confidential. All deliverables under this project are the property of CEJ. The data gathered from this research cannot be shared with any third party unless express permission has been obtained from CEJ.

10. Copyright

Any material produced will be the sole property of CEJ. It may not be reproduced in whole or in part in any other production without the written approval of CEJ.

Only shortlisted candidates will be notified. Interested candidates may send a CV and quotation to nevindi.cej@gmail.com with the email subject line '**DT3: Consultant**' by **14th February 2025**.