

## TERMS OF REFERENCE

**Young female photographer/photojournalist position for a project to document women living in urban spaces of poverty in Colombo and the unique challenges faced by them due to the economic crisis**

### **1. Organization Background**

Centre for Equality and Justice (CEJ) is a women's organization based in Colombo, working primarily with war-affected women from the Sinhala, Tamil and Muslim communities and the rights of those affected by political violence and other forms of civil unrest. CEJ also works on issues of democracy, rule of law, and social inclusion and brings a gender perspective into all its work. CEJ engages with policymakers, and government officers and strengthens grassroots-level women's capacities to claim their rights. CEJ also works closely with youth across Sri Lanka on key areas such as preventing violent extremism and reconciliation

### **2. Project background**

The current economic crisis in Sri Lanka has adversely impacted many facets of society, particularly women in poverty in the urban space. The rising cost of living and the overall contraction of the economy has made these women increasingly vulnerable, and more so, invisible. The daily challenges they face are often overlooked by the wider public, who are both unaware of such obstacles and unable to help due to the lack of visibility.

Women in poverty in the urban space face unique challenges due to the economic crisis. Women in female-headed households find it increasingly difficult to clothe and feed their families due to the rising inflation, the lack of essential items such as milk powder and gas has a direct impact on the quality of nourishment, they can provide their children, and the high prices of hygiene products such as sanitary napkins have increased period poverty and reduced their mobility, to name just a few daily obstacles. These uniquely women-centric challenges are often overlooked by society at large, and women are often compelled to find practical and innovative solutions to these obstacles on their own.

The recent wave of protests in the country and the subsequent people's movement it created provided temporary relief to the most poverty-stricken communities, particularly women in Colombo. The provision of daily meals and shelter was a refuge to the women most vulnerable to the ensuing economic crisis, who would bring their children and entire families to the "Gotagogama" protest site daily. The large numbers of people from Colombo's slum settlements such as Slave island, Wanathamulla, and so on that came to the protest site for food and shelter is testament to the fact that the economic crisis was impacting the demographic of urban settlement dwellers, the hardest.

Throughout all this, the unique challenges faced by women continue to be overlooked, yet many women have shown remarkable resilience in adapting to this “new normal”. Compelled out of a need to care for their families and themselves, these women have turned to innovative and practical solutions to beat the rising cost of living and other crises. These efforts are almost wholly unknown to the wider public, and there is a lack of awareness on the issue at large. There is a timely need to draw attention to the challenges’ women in poverty in the urban space are facing currently, so that the general public may be aware and more open towards community outreach and support initiatives that address these challenges.

To address these issues, CEJ is implementing a project **“Crisis 2022 and Poverty in the Urban Space: Through the Eyes of Young Women”**. CEJ hopes to raise awareness on the unique challenges women in poverty in the urban space face due to the ongoing economic crisis in Sri Lanka, as well as provide a platform to showcase and nurture the skills of young, women photographers/photojournalists that will document the lived narratives through photography.

This initiative also seeks to promote young women photographers in capturing contextual challenges for women during the economic crisis and provides a space for these youth to reflect and become agents of change to address social inequalities and discrimination.

### **3. Scope of Work**

CEJ seeks the services of young and upcoming female photographers/photojournalists to document the lived narratives of women living in urban spaces of poverty around Colombo, and the unique challenges they face due to the current economic crisis.

The photographs will capture and portray all facets of the daily lives of women adjusting to the economic crisis and will highlight the unique challenges faced by women in this transition (period poverty worsening, food inflation directly impacting female headed households, the rising cost of milk powder impacting early child development and nutrition etc.). The photographers will also document the various measures the women have taken to cope and adapt to the evolving crisis.

#### **1. Photographers will be tasked with identifying and documenting the many ways in which urban women are impacted due to the crisis.**

The photographers will travel to the most crisis hit areas of Colombo such as the urban settlements of Slave Island, Wanathamulla, and other poverty-stricken urban settlements in Colombo to directly interact with and document women in the urban space conducting their daily activities and engaging in mitigation measures due to the current crisis. CEJ will work with reputed organizations/individuals that work closely with these communities to gain their

confidence and trust. Consent forms and confidentiality agreements will be signed by women that will be photographed.

2. **To create a digital photo exhibition (virtual scrapbook concept)**, which will be accessible to the general public on CEJ social media platforms, depicting the unique ways in which women in poverty in the urban space are directly and indirectly impacted by the current economic crisis in Sri Lanka. The digital photo exhibition will also highlight ways in which women have adapted to the evolving crisis.
3. Participate in a virtual presentation for women's organizations and other stakeholders to highlight the challenges faced by these communities and to promote collective advocacy initiatives.
4. Participate in a virtual event where young women photographers speak about their experiences with smaller women's organizations and youth, to publicize their photography and experiences.

#### **4. Expected Deliverables**

- Deliverable 01: Meet with CEJ to agree to documentation guidelines and discuss overall documentation strategy/direction/plan.
- Deliverable 02: Provide CEJ with a concept and documentation plan and incorporate any feedback given.
- Deliverable 03: Documentation of women in poverty in the urban spaces around Colombo. Incorporation of CEJ feedback and suggestions where applicable.
- Deliverable 04: Submit and present the digital photo exhibition with captions and photo descriptions. Should consist of a minimum of 20 photographs.
- Deliverable 05: Participate in 1-2 virtual events to relate experiences and explain the digital photo exhibition to relevant stakeholders.
- Deliverable 06: Provide CEJ with a end of project brief report on experiences and challenges experiences when engaging in the photo documentation.

#### **5. Duration**

The proposed time period of the consultancy will be from **November 28th 2022 to April 15th 2023**.

## 6. Payment and fees

The Consultant will be paid a fee of **LKR** ..... (.....) as an all-inclusive payment. The amount will be agreed upon between CEJ and the Consultant and set-out in the contract, as per the Financial Guidelines of CEJ. The contract will be between CEJ and the Consultant. Payments will be made in installments upon the submission and approval of satisfactory deliverables.

1st installment	20% upon completion of deliverables 01 and 02
2nd installment	60% upon completion of deliverables 03 and 04
3rd installment	20% upon completion of deliverables 05 and 06

The **photographers/photojournalists** will work in collaboration with CEJ staff and report to the Executive Director.

## 7. Qualifications

- Interested women photographers must have prior experience in documenting social inequalities and human adaptation to socio-economic factors, and should submit a portfolio of previous photographs/documentation/work focussing on the same for reference.
- Interested women photographers must have prior experience, and be comfortable with traveling to urban spaces of poverty around Colombo for photo documentation.

*Only short-listed candidates will be notified. Interested candidates may send a resume and portfolio of relevant photographs to [suhanya.cej@gmail.com](mailto:suhanya.cej@gmail.com) with the email subject line **TF2 Photographer/Photojournalist Position by 22nd November 2022.***