



# UNICEF Sri Lanka

Child and Youth Consultations to inform the  
Country Programme Development Process

# CSOs/Youth Networks that nominated Children & Youth for the consultations



Sarvodaya

World Vision

Hope, Joy and Justice for ALL Children



SRI LANKA SCOUTS

SRI LANKA SCOUT ASSOCIATION



SRI LANKA  
GIRL GUIDES  
ASSOCIATION



HIPE  
SRI LANKA



Save the Children



Janathakshan



U-Report  
SRI LANKA



SHANTHI MAARGAM

FOR A PEACEFUL TOMORROW

சாந்தி மார்க்கம்  
மனிதன்

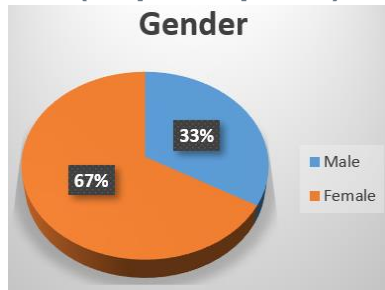


Sri Lanka Model United Nations

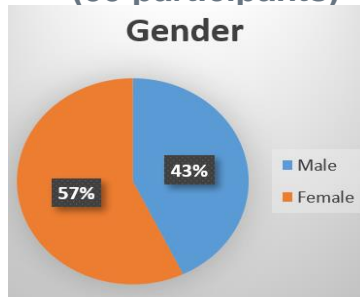
One Country. One Conference. One Future.

# National-level three consultation meetings with Child & Youth network representatives

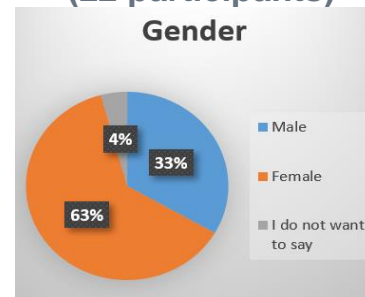
Consultation Conducted in English  
(21 participants)



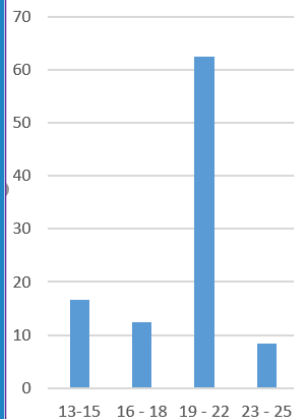
Consultation Conducted in Sinhala  
(35 participants)



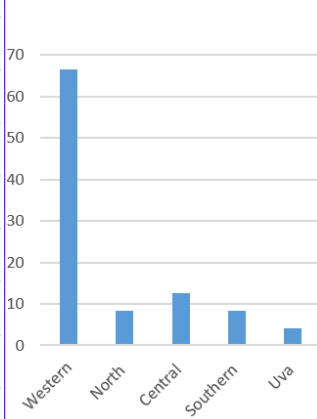
Consultation Conducted in Tamil  
(22 participants)



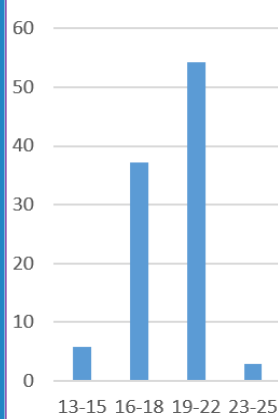
Age (%)



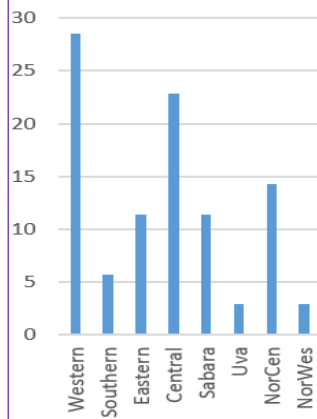
Province (%)



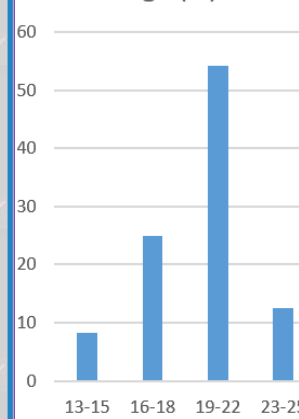
Age (%)



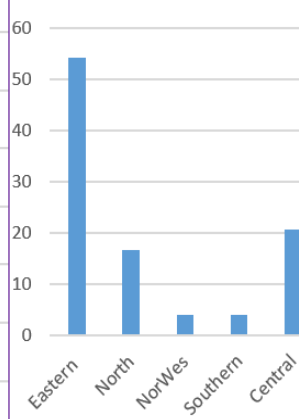
Province (%)



Age (%)



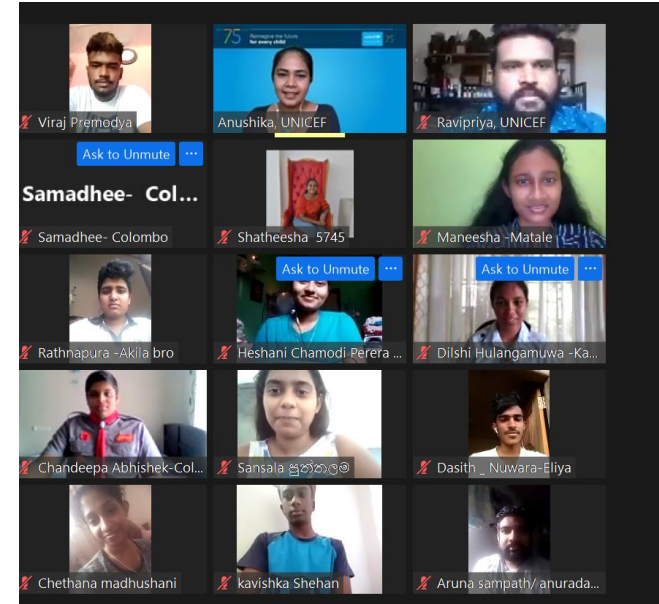
Province (%)



# Areas explored during the consultation meetings

1. *What do you see as the most critical issues faced by children and adolescents today in Sri Lanka?*
2. *What do you think are the top solutions/actions that are needed to address these issues?*
3. *How would you like to be engaged in being a part of the change you want to see?*

Only answers received for Q1 is summarized in next slides



Letter(s) mentioned at the end each of statement indicate the consultation it was highlighted (S-Sinhala, T-Tamil, E-English)

## ▷ Mental Health

- Lack of **awareness** about the subject and support services (S,E)
- **Cultural barriers** and **stigma** about the subject and in seeking support (S, T,E)
- Lack/ limited **access** to the treatment services including counselling services at school system (S,E)
- **Prevalence** of mental health conditions including Depression, Anxiety, Self Harming Behaviours, Behavioural Addictions (Gaming, Excessive use) which have been **increased with COVID-19** related stressors (S,T,E)
- **Mental stress** caused with the high expectations and comparisons made by the parents (S)
- Bottlenecks in the **accreditation process** of Mental Health professionals which has resulted in a smaller number of qualified professionals (E)

## ▷ Education

- Lack of **efficiency** in the education system including additional time spent in between school and university and higher number of years spent within the school system (T, E)
- Drawbacks in the **quality of** education system including **mismatch** between national systems and global standards, mismatch between education and job demands, outdated syllabus and lack of inquiry-based learning and soft skills development (S,T,E)
- Limited **opportunities** for **higher education** and **vocational training** (S,E)
- Lack of **opportunities** to support **career** and **skill development** including community-based programmes (E)

## ▷ Education (Cont.)

- **Rigidity** of the education system including limited progression options and diversification, lack of focus to identify strengths of children (S,T,E)
- **Inequalities** in the education system including the **disparities** between urban and rural schools in distribution of resources and access to online education (devices, network connection etc.) (S,T,E)
- Limited **opportunities** and **infrastructure** for **extra curricular activities** with the education system including for sports, aesthetics and volunteerism (S)
- Lack of **infrastructure** and other **resources** to continue education for **Children with Disabilities** (S)
- Lack of **adequate hygiene** and **sanitation** facilities in schools (S)

## ▷ Child Protection

- Lack of **awareness, skills** and **supervision** of parents and children related to safe use of **digital technology** which has resulted in unhealthy outcomes (T,S)
- Lack of **technology based safe measures** and **increased exposure** to online violence, gaming, online bullying and pornography (T, S)
- Increased **prevalence** of **Child Labour** due to economic constraints in families (T,S)
- **Addictions to drugs** which has resulted to increase incidents of conflicts with law and children being forced to sell drugs to earn money. (T, S)
- Lack of **awareness** on services dedicated to children who are addicted to drugs, and **stigma & discrimination** even after the rehabilitation process (T,S)
- Lack of **care** and **protection** from parents as both parents are employed due to the economic constraints of the families (S)
- **Inefficiencies, discrepancies** and **corruption** in the law enforcement agencies and officials related to child protection (S)
- Common **prevalence** of **Corporal Punishment** at school and home settings (S)



## ▷ Child Participation

- Lack of **safe spaces** to speak out about the **sensitive issues** affecting children including Mental Health, LGBTIQ, Sexual abuse and harassment, Corporal Punishment, Cyber Bulling, Gender Inequality (S,E)
- Lack of **opportunities** given for children by parents to **make decisions** regarding their own education (E)
- Lack of **opportunities** and **platforms** for Youth to act or participate in decision-making due to political influence (S)

## ▷ Racism and Discrimination

- **Isolation** and **discrimination** towards children representing Muslim ethnicity (E)
- Lack of **female representation** in politics and other leadership positions (E)
- Negative **social norms, stereotypes** and **taboo** towards women's roles, participation and rights (E)

## ▷ Environment and Climate Change

- Lack of **knowledge** and **awareness** on the environment and climate change among Children due to exam-oriented education system (S)
- Lack of **knowledge** and **understanding** on **life saving skills** (S)
- **Destruction** of special ecological and bio-diversity systems which has increased natural disasters (E, S)

## ▷ Children with Disabilities

- **Discriminatory practices** faced by Children with Disabilities which has caused severe mental distress and constraints in integrating with society (S)
- Lack of **awareness** among parents in caring for and helping CWD (S)

## ▷ Nutrition and WASH

- Increased **consumption** of unhealthy food items (T)
- Lack of **knowledge** and **skills** to grow and prepare healthy food items (T)
- Lack of **sanitation facilities** in rural areas (E)

## Themes that were highlighted out of other themes 😊

- *Mental Health*
- *Education*
- *Risks in Online/Digital Technology, Drug Abuse*

## Themes that were not highlighted as much as we expected 😞

- *Physical Health*
- *Hygiene and Sanitation*
- *Nutrition*
- *Life in Cities (Urbanization)*

