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AHA!

Awareness with Human Action
A project funded by the European Union

The Network for
Religious and
Traditional
Peacemakers



AHA! Project: Safeguarding the Rights of Women and Sexual Minorities in Sri Lanka

I. is a Sri Lankan based youth-led organization, which works across South Asia on empowering, developing and enriching youth from different ethnicities with knowledge and skills that enthuse and spearhead youth-led initiatives geared towards creating communal harmony among their communities. The organization believes in an inclusive approach and therefore strives to include individuals with disabilities, and LGBTQIA+ young people in their workshops and initiatives.

With support from the European Union funded AHA! project, "Safeguarding the Rights of Women and Sexual Minorities in Sri Lanka," addresses the issue of hate speech, misinformation and discrimination against women and sexual minorities. This initiative identifies barriers to peacebuilding and gender equality. The initiative has a diversified target audience, including transgender and Muslim women in order to address the issues they face regarding hate speech, misinformation and discrimination. The vulnerability of women in minority groups has also resulted in negative peace. The higher rates of misinformation and hate speech targeted through social media and the intersectional exposure of the youth demographic into these platforms is even higher.



For more information on the project, contact the AHA! Project Coordinator at simon.woellekua.fi.



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“Hate speech” in Sri Lanka has been prevalent for many years and discussed by many, including activists, researchers as well as policymakers, policy advocates and educators in various platforms and in various dimensions. Yet, there is a necessity to mainstream women’s and LGBTQIA+ voices and focus on minority groups, especially as this issue has surfaced dominantly in local and international forums and has a great impact on society in Sri Lanka. In Sri Lanka, women are considered to belong to minority groups including, Trans Women and Muslim women, both of whom are a numerical minority in Sri Lankan society. Tamil female plantation sector workers can also be considered as the more vulnerable communities considering the issues identified such as hate speech, misinformation and discrimination.

About the AHA! Project

AHA! Awareness with Human Action seeks to contribute to the response efforts of the COVID-19 pandemic by preventing conflict and building social cohesion in Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and broader South Asia. Through a collaborative approach, the project will increase outreach for initiatives that promote awareness of COVID-19 and constructive narratives that reduce discrimination, hate speech, and stigmatization against specific communities, primarily targeting religious leaders, and women and youth leaders as community influencers.

The conclusion of the project will result in enhanced capacities of religious and traditional leaders and women and youth leaders to increase awareness on COVID-19 prevention and response that emphasize collaboration by different faiths and communities as well as increased conflict prevention focused collaborative initiatives at national and regional levels to strengthen inclusive communities beyond COVID-19.

AHA! Awareness with Human Action is funded by the European Union and implemented in a consortium of partners, including: The Network for Religious and Traditional Peacemakers/ Finn Church Aid, World Faiths Development Dialogue (WFDD), the Center for Peace and Justice – Brac University (CPJ), Center for Communication and Development of Bangladesh (CCD), Islamic Relief Worldwide (IRW), Youth Development Foundation (YDF), Sarvodaya, INEB, AMAN, UNOY and KAICIID. The project began in July 2020 and continues for 18 months.

For more information on the project, contact the AHA! Project Coordinator at simon.woelle@kua.fi.



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