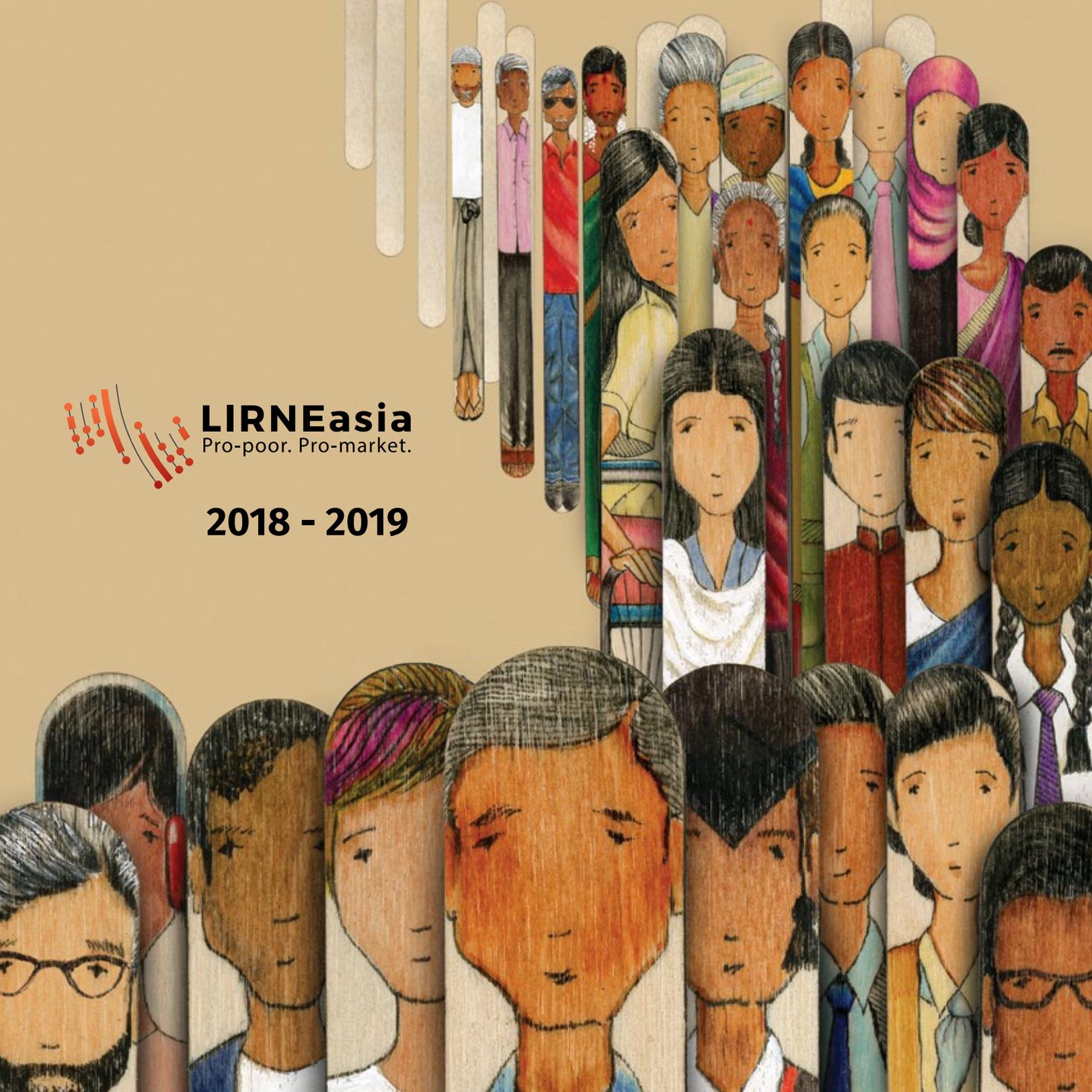


LIRNEasia
Pro-poor. Pro-market.

2018 - 2019



*Preamble to the theme chapter on “
Inclusion” and a description of the cover
and other illustrations*

Rogers’ theory of diffusion of innovation^[i]

Although we have a new theme for the Annual Report each year, there is always one factor that ties it all together: people. Everything we do is ultimately about people and the quality of their lives. “Inclusion” is the story of how we keep changing our perspective: looking at smaller, more diverse groups of people, zooming in on individual lives, learning about the details of their day-to-day that set them apart from the next person. So, we wanted our cover for the “Inclusion” report to show these people in as much of their diversity as possible.

In 1962, Everett Rogers described the pattern by which technologies are typically adopted by a group of people over time. Rogers described adoption as an “S-shaped function,” identifying different categories of adopters including innovators, early adopters, the early majority, the late majority, and laggards. The characteristics of each group tend to be constant across time and technologies, with the most privileged (socially, economically, etc.) being among the first to adopt and the marginalized (particularly those at the intersections of different dimensions of marginalization) among the last, if at all.

(continued on page 14)

ⁱRogers, E. (1962). Diffusion of innovations. New York: Free Press.

Catalyzing policy change through research to improve people's lives in the emerging Asia Pacific by facilitating their use of hard and soft infrastructures through the use of knowledge, information and technology

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 9** List of Abbreviations
- 10** Message from the Chair
- 12** Message from the CEO

14 ABOUT US

- 16** About LIRNEasia
- 18** People and Culture
- 24** Learning Organization
- 26** Board of Directors
- 27** Scientific Advisory Council
- 28** Who we've worked with this year

30 INCLUSION

38 THE YEAR IN REVIEW

- 40** AfterAccess
- 44** Big Data for Development
- 46** Capacity Building
- 48** *THE COAL TRAIN*
- 54** Enabling the Disabled
- 57** *WHY DISABILITY. WHY NOW?*
- 60** Future of Work and Workers
- 62** Gender
- 64** Inclusive agriculture
- 65** Policy and Regulation
- 66** Global presence and media

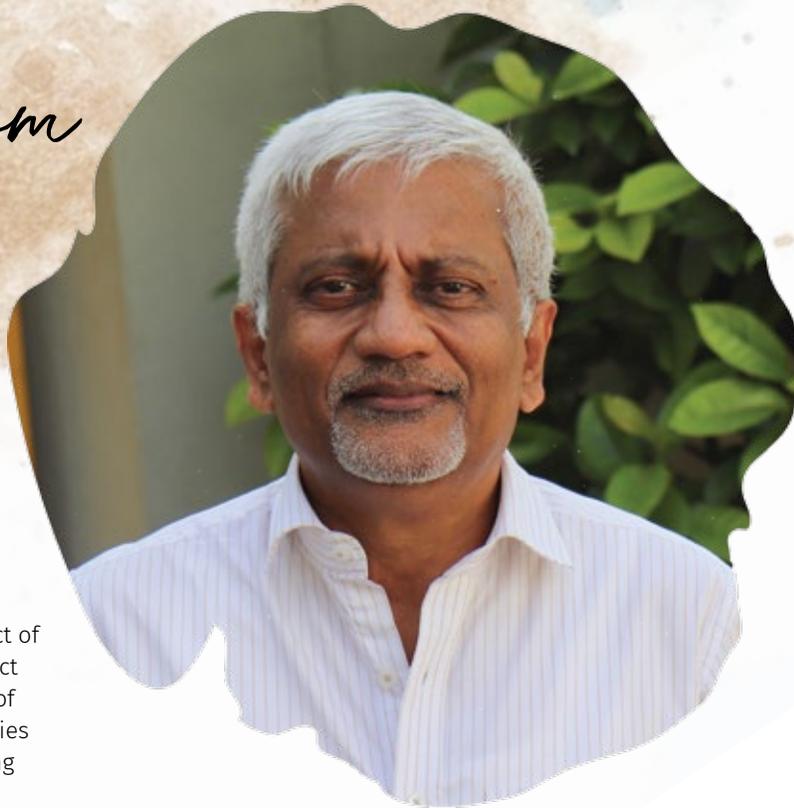
72 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

- 76** STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2019
- 76** STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 31ST MARCH 2019
- 78** STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2019
- 79** STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2019
- 81** Notes to the Financial Statements – 31st March 2019
- 96** INCOME STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2019
- 97** SCHEDULES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS – 31ST MARCH 2019

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BOP	Bottom of the pyramid
BD4D	Big data for development
CDR	Call detail records
DIRSI	Dialogo Regional sobre Sociedad de la Informacion
DCS	Department of Census and Statistics
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
ICTA	Information Communications Technology Agency
IDRC	International Development Research Centre
IGF	Internet Governance Forum
ISOC	Internet Society
ITID	Information Technologies & International Development
ITU	International Telecommunication Union
MNBD	Mobile network big data
NUS	National University of Singapore
NLP	Natural language processing
PWD	Person with disability
RIA	Research ICT Africa
YSA	Young Scholar Academy

Message from the Chair



Impact. That is what really matters. The impact of our research on the lives of people. The impact of our work and ethic on the life trajectories of those who learn using the various opportunities we create. The impact we have towards making the world a more inclusive one.

Three major activities we did this past year make me think about impact: stories from CPRsouth, systematic reviews in the Information Technologies and International Development (ITID) Journal and AfterAccess dissemination.

In 2019, we compiled text and video stories that would tell what had been achieved through CPRsouth, our primary capacity-building initiative. Sujata had already shown impact through various tracer studies and surveys over the period 2006-2019. But the poster in our office says, “people hear statistics, they feel stories” so,

we thought we’d collect some stories from those who had used the various learning opportunities we had created.

The impact of CPRsouth was in the form of policy intellectuals who were taking evidence to the policy space in their own countries – on their own or with their organizations. We are fortunate that the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) funded this work continuously for 14 years. You cannot see these kinds of results within the usual one- to three-year time-frames of funded projects. But with the stories we collected at CPRsouth.org, the impact can be felt. On their own (and, in a few cases, partnering with CPRsouth colleagues or with LIRNEasia), these policy intellectuals are assembling evidence and engaging in policy processes and in the media to support the inclusion of the poor, rural-dwellers, migrant communities... the list goes on.

Then, there was the special section of ITID (Vol 14) on systematic reviews that came out in 2018. This was the end product of a rather complex and overlong project that we did through CPRsouth, starting with a training workshop in Wadduwa, Sri Lanka, in 2013. The project sought to compile the most robust research findings on the impact of information and communication technology (ICT)-centered initiatives and provide policy makers with the best possible knowledge stripped of bias as far as possible. The four systematic reviews covered the impact of mobile phones on rural livelihoods, of mobile money on household and micro enterprise finances, of various ICT interventions on the functioning of micro, small and medium enterprises, and within classrooms.

This was not simply about producing systematic reviews, but also about providing learning opportunities in multiple forms for those in the CPRsouth community. Here, impact could be interrogated at multiple levels. Did the learning opportunities change the academic careers of those we offered them to? Do they think and act differently now, in terms of assessing research and reaching conclusions?

Did our articles, published online in an open journal, attract readers and citations? They did, and we would be happier with more citations, but there is time. Did the reviews actually demonstrate impact on people's lives? Yes, for the most part, though not at the level of the extravagant claims made about mobile financial services, for example.

The third activity related to impact was the release of the AfterAccess results across Asia. Here, one of the objectives was to quantify the gaps, but they have much broader potential. As can be seen from the data on media coverage, AfterAccess yielded much publicity, a veritable spike compared to what we achieve otherwise.

But is this the impact we desire? At LIRNEasia, we see media coverage as a means to an end most of the time. Our real

objective is impact on the actions of decision makers in government, the private sector, and civil society. Because the media constitute the symbolic universe these people live in, we value coverage.

In all instances, we and our local partners make best efforts to get the findings in the hands of, and before the eyes of, decision makers. Ranging from the Minister of Digital Infrastructure and Information Technology in Sri Lanka to the Secretary of State to the Ministry of Post and Telecommunications in Cambodia who actively participated in our launch events, we succeeded. The only country where this interaction proved impractical was Pakistan. But that loss was more than made up for in media coverage, which was the highest in all the countries.

So, we got the results of the AfterAccess research, from the surprising and disturbing to the mundane, into the hands of decision makers in six Asian countries. Good, but is this the desired impact? It is the necessary condition. When those decision makers use our research findings to make evidence-based decisions that improve the lives of the billion-plus people who live around the Bay of Bengal and in Pakistan is when we can say we have had real impact.

That was not all we did in 2018/19. But the described activities well illustrate the work we do and the different kinds of impacts we seek to achieve. We do not do research and capacity building for their own sake. We communicate our findings using all means available, from peer-reviewed publications to news releases, tweets and Facebook posts. We make best efforts to provide learning opportunities to policy intellectuals. And we always, always strive for impact.

Rohan Samarajiva



Message from the CEO

The past year saw us really expanding even more our definition of what it means to be inclusive. Our research delved deeply into a non-binary examination of gender, to understand the factors that bar certain groups from a livelihood-improving, human-rights-protecting internet experience. We first examined this in field work where we studied how various marginalized communities experience the digital world. We also examined this more theoretically and even philosophically in our big data work – by asking ourselves whether algorithms which are meant reduce bias and marginalization in the real world can sometimes exacerbate them, and whether it is even possible to do so.

The LIRNEasia family expanded by two this year with the arrival of Yanik (son of Thavisha Perera-Gomez and husband Praveen) in June 2018 and Tharul (son of Tharaka Amarasinghe and his wife Tharindra) in March 2019. Our commitment to supporting women in the workforce continued, with Thavisha joining the pool of researchers who work from home part of the week. I was even

more proud of Tharaka taking time off and working from home for several weeks after the birth of his son – mandatory paternity leave should surely be encouraged everywhere.

We were delighted to welcome Tahani Iqbal back to the team in November 2018, proving yet again that no one ever really gets to leave LIRNEasia for good. Tahani was one of LIRNEasia's original employees, who left to pursue graduate studies at the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy at the National University of Singapore (NUS). Her subsequent work in regulatory affairs at a regional telecommunications company is now reconnecting us to research topics which we had partially moved away from. Isuru Samaratinga joined us in September 2018 and is leading the qualitative research work that LIRNEasia conducts across a variety of topics. Viren Dias and Merl Chandana joined the Big Data team, and are studying the challenges of

artificial intelligence, bias, marginalization and future trends. Firas Mohamed also joined the Big Data team in April 2018 but ended up using his statistical skills mostly with the AfterAccess team, developing models to predict factors influencing internet adoption in emerging Asia.

Gayani Hurulle, who led all our research in Myanmar, went to pursue her Master's in Public Policy at the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy at NUS, continuing a long tradition of LIRNEasia researchers who have received full scholarships for pursuing that degree. Laleema Senanayake who researched technology and the future of work moved on to new adventures at the Mines Advisory Group.

For many years we resisted hiring interns for anything less than six months because that's how long it took to fully immerse them in a project. But it also meant we were missing out on the opportunity to attract the young and bright who were often only available for a short three-month summer internship. So, we changed course and hired many interns at varying levels of seniority, for short periods. Sujata had a whole team cleaning data and assisting her on electoral mapping for Sri Lanka while more senior Graduate Interns led significant pieces of research. Pamudu Tennakoon worked with us between April and August in 2018, before she left for Brown University to pursue her PhD, examining the literature on how ICTs could help increase women's labor force participation in Asia. Dilshan Fernando joined us for the summer of 2018 while obtaining a Master's degree at Clemson University. He conducted field research on how persons with disabilities (PWD) in Myanmar could use technology to lead more independent lives.

As an organization that started under a tree, over time we have had to become more formal and implement procedures that aid in the management of a growing organization. Towards the end of 2018, we hired an external consultant to update and document some management practices that have become the norm.

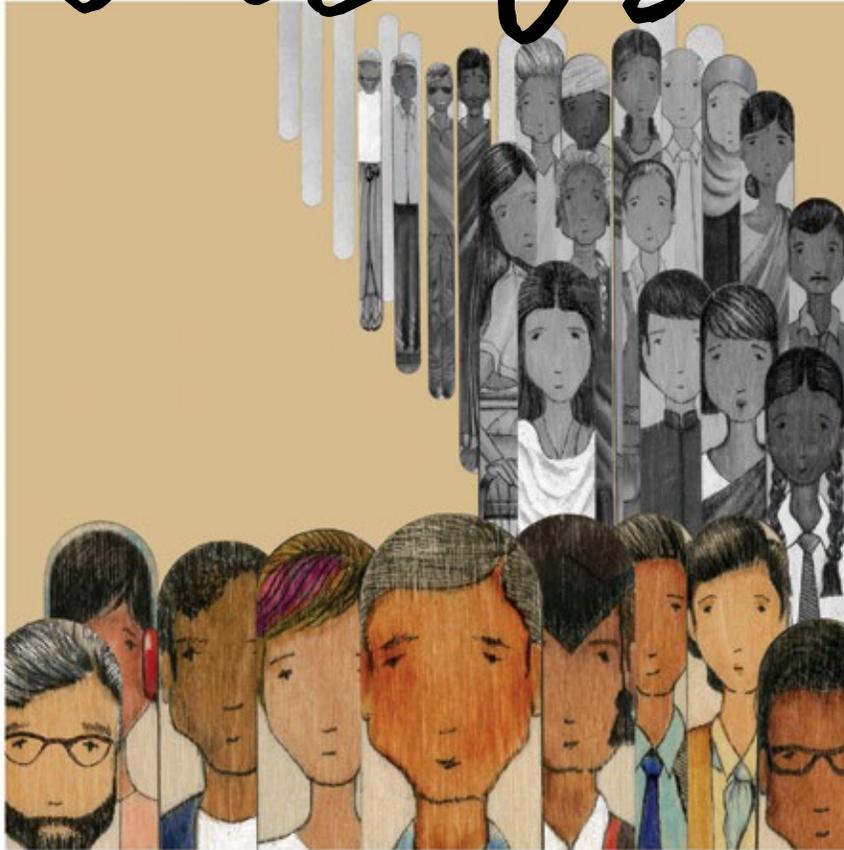
But as we grow, and the organization has more new researchers than the old guard, operations manuals are not what will keep us on our mission – that can only be done through shared values. Instilling values is never straightforward – you can post the organizational values on a wall, but every staff member has to internalize them and live them out day by day in order for the values to guide the organization. In January 2019 we spent time examining whether we embodied the core values we originally adopted and documented (back in 2006), whether the values had changed over time, or whether they should change in keeping with the evolving organization and the changing world.

In these discussions, it was interesting (and heartening) to see that without it ever being explicitly described, many new researchers understood much of the core characteristics of LIRNEasia – a learning organization, independent and rigorous in our research, valuing and supporting family, welcoming dissent, service/mission oriented, seeking impact, willing to settle for the possible (for now) and fight for the perfect next. It was also enlightening what many new staff members thought about what we should be doing differently – prominent were things like “I wish we celebrated our successes, even the little wins, more”. Many of us have been lucky to be at LIRNEasia at times in the past when we've managed to make major contributions to the policy processes in emerging Asia. And we still get such wins. But most of the time, policy change is an incremental, and incredibly slow, process. And we have to be ready to play the long game and fight for small wins, as long as the cumulation of small wins leads to meaningful change in the end.

So, here's to celebrating the small wins.

Helani Galpaya

About Us



The innovators

In emerging Asia, our AfterAccess data shows that early internet adopters, or users, tend to be those endowed with the skills and resources to get online. This happens to be those who are urban, educated, male, from younger age groups, and from households with higher socioeconomic levels. This is across countries as well as within a given country.

(continued on page 31)



About LIRNEasia

When we started our work in 2004, the priority was ICTs. We studied telecommunications and how the technologies around the industry helped or did not help those at the bottom of the pyramid (BOP). Over the years, we've ventured out into new arenas, and sometimes pulled back to home base.

But ICTs are evolving at an increasing pace. It is no longer simply about telephone cables and mobile phones. The smartphone has changed the way we use the internet and the issues are now much broader and more fluid than what they were 15 years ago.

Regulation becomes more and more concerned with softer issues such as privacy, rights and marginalization.

As the world in which we work shifts and changes, we have a commitment to shift and change with it. We are no longer simply about telecommunications but about everything that advancement in telecommunications has brought with it: the digital life. In 2018, we marked this transition by changing how we describe LIRNEasia. We no longer call ourselves “an ICT-policy think tank”, we are now “a digital-policy think tank”.

While the scope of our work

has thus evolved, our core mission and vision have not. We are still catalyzers of policy change, and our end goal is still the improvement of the lives and livelihoods of those in the emerging Asia Pacific.

We want to see life improve for people in the emerging Asia Pacific.

We believe that one pathway is through better access to and use of knowledge, information and technology.

Our mandate is to help facilitate the use of hard and soft infrastructures in the region through research that catalyzes policy change.





People and Culture

LIRNEasia's principal strength is its integrity. And integrity cannot be maintained without people who value it. The LIRNEasia family comes from different backgrounds and different arenas of practice and are connected by a few common tendencies.

We question everything. We read and re-read. We like perfection, but we understand that to impact policy, one must often settle for second, third or fourth best. We want practical solutions. We want to strike a balance between the different systems that help make this world better. We value creativity. We encourage debate. We will never stop learning.



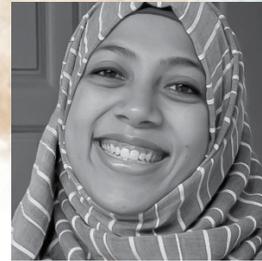
Helani Neelakshi Galpaya
Chief Executive Officer
Colombo, Sri Lanka



Abu Saeed Khan
Senior Policy Fellow
Dhaka, Bangladesh



Ashwini Natesan
Research Fellow
Colombo, Sri Lanka



Ayesha Zainudeen
Senior Research Manager
Colombo, Sri Lanka



Ayumi Arai
Research Fellow
Tokyo, Japan



Babu Ram Aryal
Policy Fellow
Kathmandu, Nepal



Chathurike Athuraliya
Research Fellow
Colombo, Sri Lanka



Christoph Stork
Senior Research Fellow
Cape Town, South Africa



Danaja Maldeniya
Research Fellow
Ann Arbor, MI, United States



Dharshana Kasthurirathna
Research Fellow
Colombo, Sri Lanka



Erwin Alampay
Senior Research Fellow
Manila, Philippines



Gabriel Kreindler
Research Fellow
Cambridge, MA, United States



Gayani Hurulle
Research Manager
Colombo, Sri Lanka



Grace Mirandilla-Santos
Research Fellow
Manila, Philippines



Htaike Htaike Aung
Policy Fellow
Yangon, Myanmar



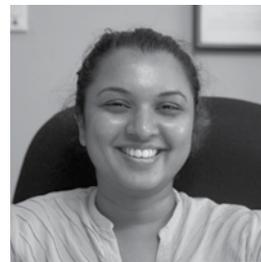
Isuru Samaratunga
Researcher
Colombo, Sri Lanka



Jagath Perera
Office Assistant
Colombo, Sri Lanka



Juni Soehardjo
Research Fellow
Jakarta, Indonesia



Laleema Senanayake
Research Manager
Colombo, Sri Lanka



Lasantha Fernando
Researcher
Colombo, Sri Lanka



M Parvati
Office Assistant
Colombo, Sri Lanka



Mohamed Firas
Researcher
Colombo, Sri Lanka



Moinul Zaber
Research Fellow
Dhaka, Bangladesh



Namali Premawardhana
Communications Coordinator
Colombo, Sri Lanka



Nirmita Narasimhan
Policy Fellow
New Delhi, India



Nuwan Waidyanatha
Senior Research Fellow
Kunming, China



Payal Malik
Senior Research Fellow
New Delhi, India



Phyu Phyu Thi
Research Fellow
Yangon, Myanmar



Pradeepa Jayaratne
Research Fellow
Colombo, Sri Lanka



Prashanthi Weragoda
Finance Manager
Colombo, Sri Lanka



Priyadharshini Liyanage
Accountant
Colombo, Sri Lanka



Rajat Kathuria
Senior Research Fellow
New Delhi, India



Samali Perera
Research Manager
Colombo, Sri Lanka



Shazna Zhuhyale
Senior Research Manager
Colombo, Sri Lanka



Sriganesh Lokanathan
Team Lead, Big Data
Colombo, Sri Lanka



Srimantha Katukurunda
Office Manager
Colombo, Sri Lanka



Sujata Gamage
Senior Research Fellow
Colombo, Sri Lanka



Suthaharan Perampalam
Research Fellow
Colombo, Sri Lanka



Tahani Iqbal
Research Manager
Colombo, Sri Lanka



Tharaka Amarasinghe
Statistician
Colombo, Sri Lanka



Thavisha Perera
Research Manager
Colombo, Sri Lanka



Vigneswara Ilavarasan
Senior Research Fellow
New Delhi, India



Viren Harindra Dias
Researcher
Colombo, Sri Lanka



Yashothara Shanmugarasa
Researcher
Colombo, Sri Lanka



Yatanar Htun
Policy Fellow
Yangon, Myanmar



Yudhanjaya Wijeratne
Researcher
Colombo, Sri Lanka



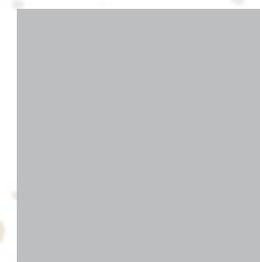
Yuhei Miyauchi
Research Fellow
Cambridge, MA, United States



Mariko Shibasaki
Graduate Research Assistant
Tokyo, Japan

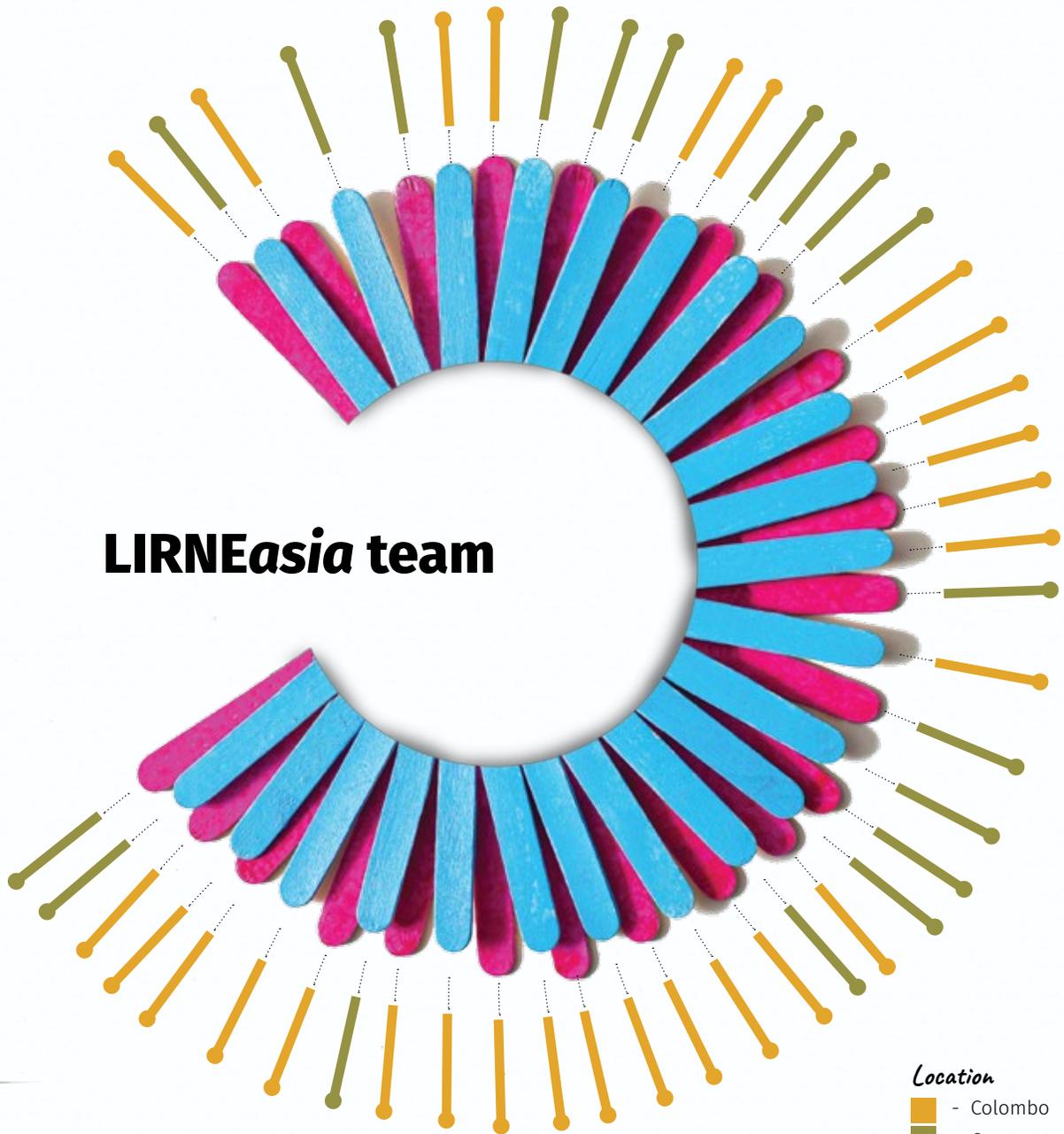


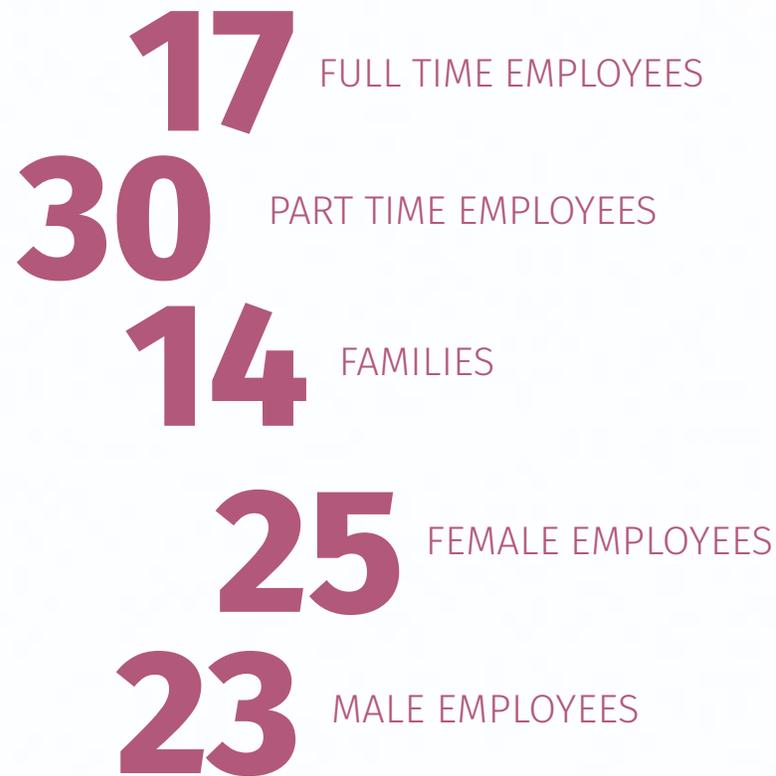
Pamudu Tennekoon
Graduate Research Assistant
Colombo, Sri Lanka



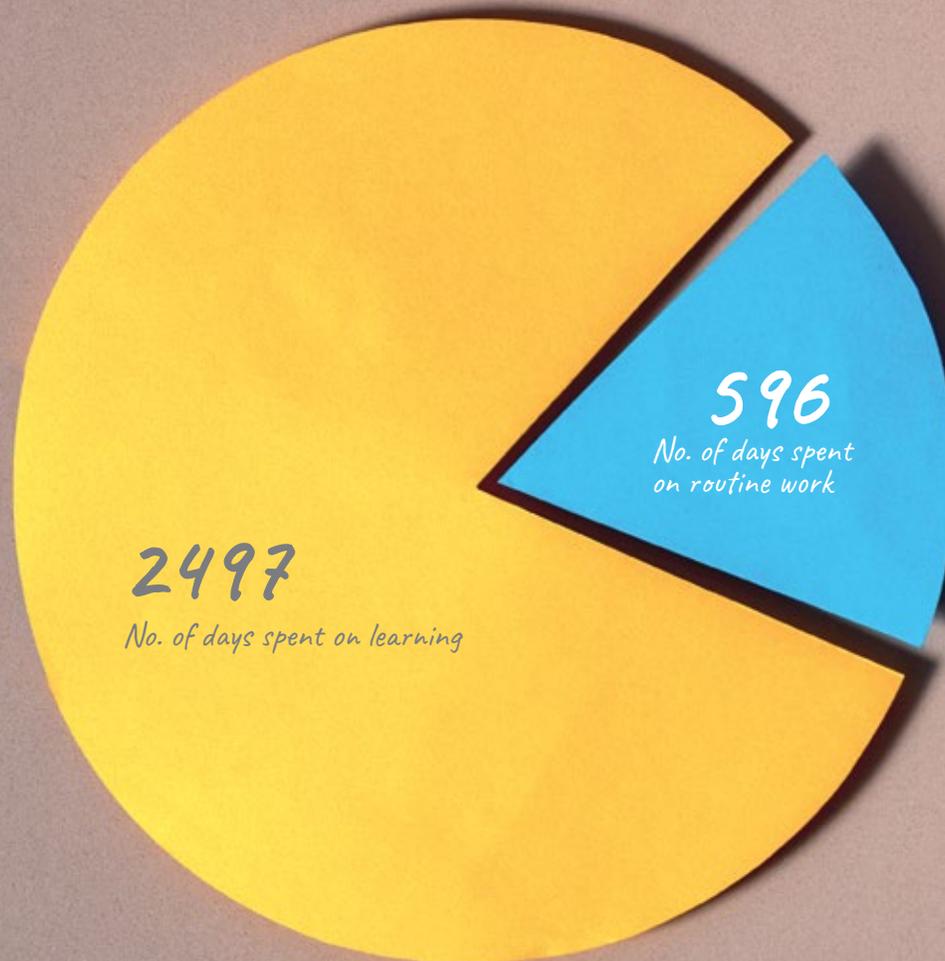
Dilshan Fernando
Graduate Research Assistant
Colombo, Sri Lanka

LIRNEasia team

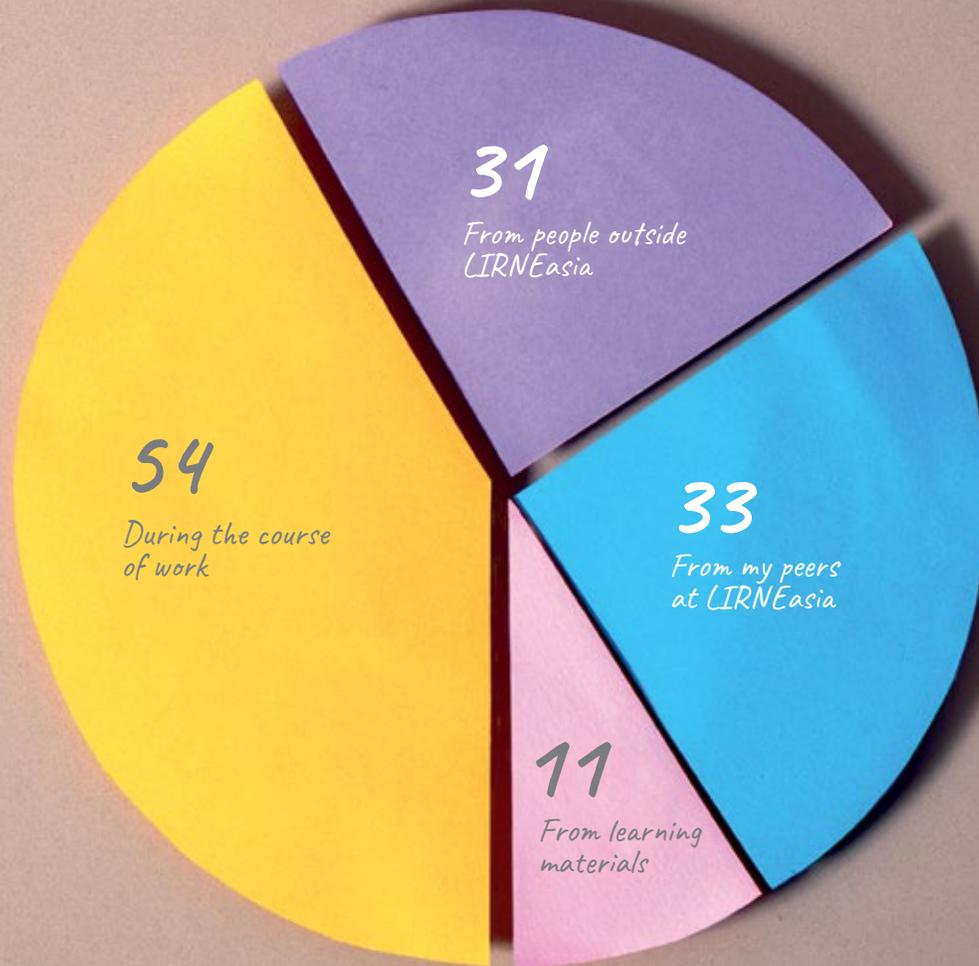




Learning Organization



How we spent our time: routine work vs. learning



“Where did your most enriching learning opportunity come from?”

Board of Directors

LIRNEasia was incorporated under the Sri Lankan Companies Act as a non-profit organization in 2004. The company is governed by a Board of Directors that represents both the private and non-profit sectors.



Rohan Samarajiva (Chair) – Chair, Information and Communication Technology Agency of Sri Lanka (ICTA)

Anoja Obeyesekere – Consultant, Telecom/Technology Business

Lakshaman Bandaranayake – Chairman, Sarvodaya SEEDS

Luxman Siriwardena – Executive Director, The Pathfinder Foundation

Mervyn de Silva – Chief Financial Officer, Sierra Cables PLC

Vinya Ariyaratne – General Secretary, Lanka Jatika Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement

Vishaka Nanayakkara – Senior Lecturer, University of Moratuwa

Shaheen Cader – Former CEO (Sri Lanka), The Nielsen Company

Scientific Advisory Council

Our Scientific Advisory Council consists of international experts from a variety of domains. They help hone our research agenda and bring in new ideas. They provide important perspective to our ongoing work, strengthen our networks, and facilitate collaborations.

William H. Melody (Chair) | Managing Director, LIRNE.NET | Holte, Denmark

Alison Gillwald | Executive Director, Research ICT Africa (RIA) | Cape Town, South Africa

Ashok Jhunjhunwala | Professor, Department of Electrical Engineering, Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Madras | Chennai, India

Hernan Galperin | Research Fellow, Annenberg School for Communications, University of Southern California | Los Angeles, CA, USA

Johannes M. Bauer | Professor, Department of Media and Information, Michigan State University | East Lansing, MI, USA

KF Lai | Co-founder & Chief Executive Officer, BuzzCity | Singapore

Partha Mukhopadhyay | Senior Research Fellow, Centre for Policy Research | New Delhi, India

Randy Spence | Director, Economic and Social Development Affiliates (ESDA) | Toronto, Canada

Robin Mansell | Professor, Department of Media and Communications, London School of Economics and Political Science | London, UK

Sam Paltridge | Directorate – Science, Technology and Industry, Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) | Paris, France

Shalini Kala | Independent Consultant | New Delhi, India

Sherille Ismail | Senior Counsel, Federal Communications Commission (FCC) | Washington DC, USA

Tim Kelly | Lead ICT Policy Specialist (Transport and ICT), World Bank Group | Washington DC, USA

Visoot Phongsathorn | Independent Regulatory Expert | Bangkok, Thailand

Who we've worked with this year..

Athena Informomics, India

BSA Solutions

Center for Internet and Society, India

Center for Law and Technology, Nepal

Citra Social Innovation Lab

Croptronix

DataSEARCH

Department for International Development,
United Kingdom

Department of Agriculture and Plantation Management,
Wayamba University of Sri Lanka

Department of Computer Science and Engineering, University
of Moratuwa

Department of Transport Logistics and Management,
University of Moratuwa

Economic Policy Institute, United States

Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data

Indian Council for Research on International Economic
Relations (ICRIER)

Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Delhi

Internet Society (ISOC) Nepal

IPSOS Research

iRights

Kantar Cambodia

Kantar Public Myanmar

London School of Economics and Political Science
mLab

Myanmar ICT for Development Organization (MIDO)

Myanmar Independent Living Initiative (MILI)

Nanyang Technological University

NetRadar

Nielsen Lanka

Nielsen Nepal

PepperCube Consultants, Sri Lanka

PricewaterhouseCoopers

REDHILL Communications

School of Information, University of California, Berkeley

Sparkwinn Research

Sri Lanka Export Development Board

Synergy Skills

The Dynamics Research

The Global Initiative for Inclusive ICTs

Tribhuvan University, Nepal

UNESCAP

University of Maryland

Vriens & Partners

Women's Group for Disability Rights (WGDR)



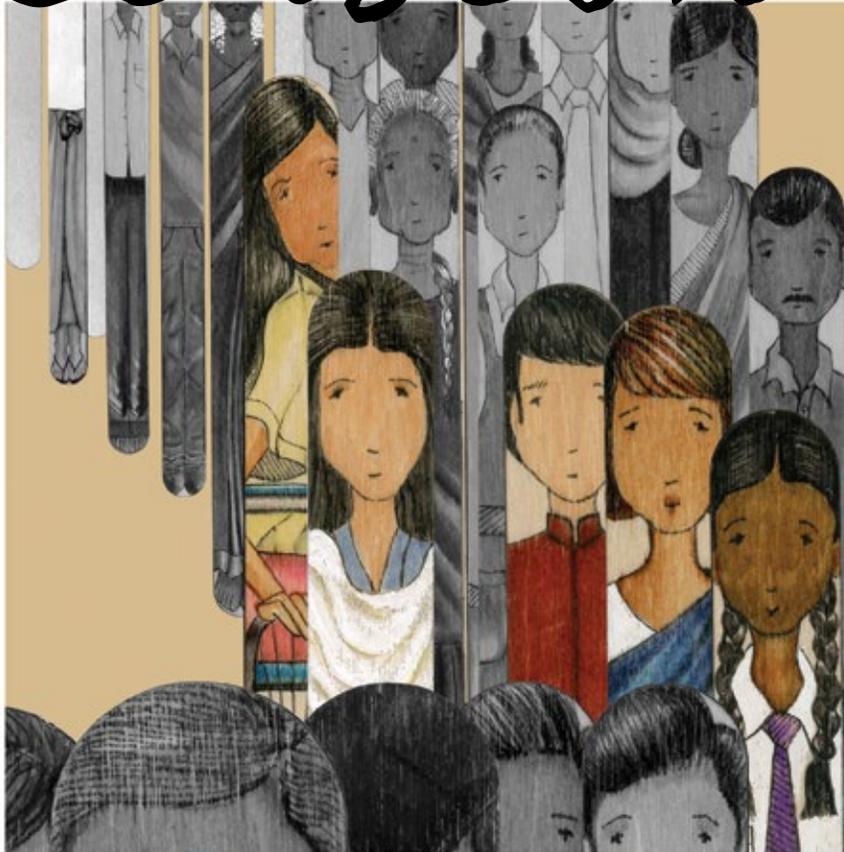
Canada



RIA and the Institute of Peruvian Studies (IEP, elsewhere also identified as DIRSI, Regional Dialogue on the Information Society) are our sister organizations. They engage in work that is very similar to ours, RIA in the African continent and DIRSI in Latin America. These are strategic, long-term partnerships built on a common vision for the development of the Global South.



Inclusion



The early adopters

Those with basic levels of education come online next. The women, girls and those from other marginalized communities that come online at this stage, tend to be those who are also of some degree of privilege. They have been exposed to technology either through school or work, and might even be able to afford a device—a smartphone—or to use that of a family member or a close friend.

(continued on page 39)

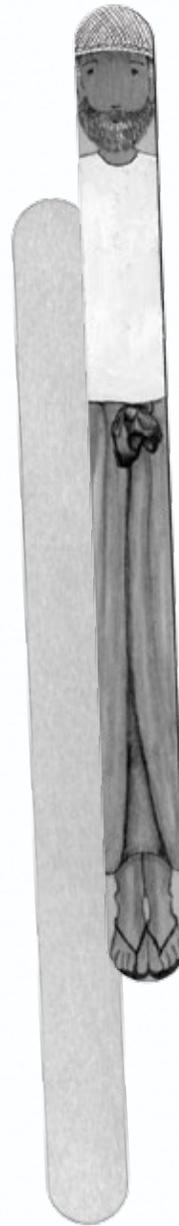


What does INCLUSION mean to a pro-poor, pro-market think tank?

LIRNEasia's tag line reads pro-poor, pro-market. We adopted this a few years after we started operations because we wanted our mission to be about the poor – those at the BOP socio-economically, and more precisely those living under USD 2 per day (as per the definitions of the World Bank and others).

But we soon realized that including the poor was not enough – exclusion was amplified if one was at the intersection of poverty and other forms of marginalization such as gender, education, ethnicity or physical ability. Our work over time has therefore focused on including these marginalized groups.

We've evolved the answer to the question "Included in what?" In the beginning, it was a straightforward focus on getting the poor connected – first to voice and SMS, then to the internet. This is still something we study and attempt to influence because large proportions of marginalized people are still offline – as we found out in our AfterAccess surveys. And because access to mobile phones and ICTs enables other forms of inclusion (such as inclusion in better education, healthcare and market access) we keep working towards meaningful inclusion with discernible impacts. But we know that even when people finally get online, "inclusion" means very different things to different people. For example, we have seen their offline forms of marginalization being exacerbated, leading to a very different online experience compared to the economically rich, higher educated internet users. We have increasingly been asking "Is the internet that is used by people in Asia, an economically enabling, human rights respecting, inclusive one?" as a minimum definition of what it means to be included in digital society.



Connecting the unconnected

In 2001, the UN Secretary General, in an address to the World Economic Forum, made a statement that half of humanity had not made a phone call. This was a time when most operators addressed only the USD 100 per month market and didn't think the poor would spend money on mobile phones. So, the statement continued to be cited for years. But our Teleuse survey in 2006 showed that over 90% of those at the BOP across emerging Asia had made or received a call in the three months preceding the survey. Not all of them were on the operators' radar because they were making those calls on *someone else's phone*. Our surveys found, further, that they were willing to spend up to USD 5 per month on mobile communication services in a time when there really wasn't much other than calls and SMS.

We knew that if anyone could see the potential of the BOP and develop services to address their needs, it was the operators. So, we disseminated our research findings first among the CEOs of these companies. We were happy to document (albeit years later) the micro-recharges, pre-paid services, high network loading and other network and business innovations that operators were using to serve people earning under USD 2 per day, while still making a profit. But as smartphone and internet use

became more prevalent, the cost of a device, call or SMS ceased to be the primary concern. What of data? Our recent multi-country surveys from 2017 and 2018 showed that affordability is among the top three barriers to people in Asia getting, and staying, online. A number of countries already meet the new affordability targets set in 2018 by the UN Broadband Commission for Sustainable Development, which is for entry level broadband plans to be less than 2 per cent of gross national income per capita. But further analysis on the price of data as a percentage of average monthly household income per capita by income decile showed us that the target is met only among the wealthy of these countries.



Understanding the unconnected

South Asia, with the lowest mobile usage prices in the world, is proof that affordability is a necessary but not sufficient condition to getting online. We saw through demand-side data that not all poor people were getting connected at the same rate. Poor women were often slower to connect than poor men. The poor who lived in rural areas were slower to connect than those in urban areas. And if you were at the intersection of more than one of these forms of marginalization (i.e. if you were poor, female, and lived rurally) you were significantly worse off.

Thanks to prompting (and funding) by one of our main research funders, we

were able to explore how inclusion could be ensured for these groups of people who were still left behind. We found that nuanced and localized solutions were required to get phones into more hands. In Myanmar, for example, it was important that a second or third phone be purchased by a household, preferably paid for in installments, if women were to have sufficient access.

But inclusion is not just about having a phone in your hand or owning a device. It's about the nature of your participation in the digital world – the quality of your digital life, so to speak. So, as more and more poor people started getting online, we started asking new research questions: are people able to improve their life and livelihood through digital inclusion? Under what circumstances is this possible? And is the internet opening up new opportunities to everyone equally?



Going beyond connectivity – understanding types and degrees of connectedness

We did quantitative and qualitative work on online rights in Myanmar. We realized, with increasing clarity, that while more and more women, rural dwellers, and gender non-binary persons were getting online and using the internet, the biases and prejudices that affected them offline were carried through to their online activities.

In Myanmar, for example, religious and ethnic minorities faced forms of online harassment that specifically targeted their religion or their ethnicity in a way that those from majority groups did not. In fact, among the high percentage of internet users in Myanmar that had a fake online identity, the most popular identity to take on was that of a Buddhist Bamar male. In other words, life online was just easier if others thought you were someone already included in most spheres of day to day life – a man of the majority religion and of the largest ethnic group.

In Myanmar and many other countries, we saw Facebook being the only service used by those who were online. In other words, Facebook and internet were synonymous. We found ourselves concerned about the dangers of an essentially monopoly provider dominating the internet experience. However, we could also see the benefits of Facebook in increasing connectedness, social and emotional wellbeing, and economic opportunity for users. So, we

called for more affordable and high-quality content, instead of banning the only content that was available (Facebook).

Our recent nationally representative surveys across Asia showed that comparable (and in some countries, slightly higher) percentages of men reported being harassed online (compared to women) – making it look, on the surface, like gender doesn't factor into your online experience. But when we dug a little deeper, statistically controlling for differences in demographics, socioeconomic factors, etc., the statistical models showed that gender does in fact matter. If you take a man and a woman of equal age, education and socio-economic status, with similar levels of social media use, the woman will be 43% more likely to be harassed online than the man.

We also knew from the Myanmar qualitative research (conducted earlier, in 2017) that the motivations of harassment are different across genders. Men's account passwords

were stolen in order to get them to pay money to recover the password, while women's accounts were hacked so that the hacker could post content (often altered photos downloaded from the account itself) that would bring shame to the women.



Identifying analog complements

Problems of digital inclusion and digital gaps have their roots in problems of inclusion outside the digital domain. It became clear through our research that even where economic and social gains are possible through the use of digital tools, the benefits cannot be reaped by all automatically. In fact, adding a digital tool may not bridge the gap for everyone, since those with the necessary skills, finances and knowledge can make better use of the tool, increasing the gap between themselves and others even more. Further, those who are able to experience true inclusion and truly benefit are endowed with various analog complements – i.e. the non-digital contextual factors such as the requisite skills and capacity, the conducive policy environment, and so on.

For example, when we studied digital workers in India, Sri Lanka and Myanmar, we saw that one could indeed earn a significant income by doing gig-work online. Digital platforms that connected global demand for labor with skill in Asia were at least partially successful in including in the workforce some who were traditionally excluded - young mothers, workers without traditional qualifications, and persons with disabilities. But only through constant re-skilling could it be ensured that digitization didn't also disintermediate those jobs. Similarly, in Sri Lanka we saw digital inclusion improve

income for smallholder farmers through integration into global value chains. But the improvements in income were limited for farmers who lacked off-line complements - land reform policies, access to credit, and forward contracts in commodities markets, for example.

Physical and mental disabilities were an extreme form of marginalization that we started studying in 2011. Rohan invited our Policy Fellow and well-known activist in the space, Nirmita Narasimhan (then Policy Director at the Center for Internet Societies) to Sri Lanka. Nirmita examined policies relating to accessibility of ICTs for persons with disabilities and met with policy makers and regulators in the country to raise awareness.

We started our research proper in 2017, aiming to understand how people with disabilities related to vision, hearing and mobility in Myanmar and Nepal interacted with ICTs and the barriers they faced. It was evident that the challenges to digital inclusion almost always

required a combination of digital and analog solutions.

Some of the analog solutions identified for inclusion were policy-related. In Myanmar, for example, there was a call to sign and ratify the Marrakesh Treaty. This would allow for braille prints of otherwise copyrighted works to be made available for use by persons living with visual impairment. Some solutions were technology related. In Nepal, there was a need for better broadband speeds. This would mean better video calling, allowing those with hearing and speech impairments to communicate more easily, and allowing those with visual impairment to use apps such as “BeMyEyes” that would enable volunteers help the blind walk Katmandu. Some solutions required hard infrastructure. Some buses and sidewalks in Katmandu are disabled accessible, for example, while others are not. Mapping accessible sidewalks is of no use, if there are inaccessible sections in between these.



Catalyzing change – moving beyond description

Our pathway to inclusion has been through policy change based on rigorous research. We have stayed away from rolling out solutions because that's not our core competency as a small think tank. But we haven't been averse to small experimental roll-outs, testing and improving, and then enabling others to implement solutions at scale. In our work to improve the lives of PWDs, we are moving a step closer to bringing about solutions at scale. In Nepal, we reached out to the technical community and ran modified hackathons and competitions that developed inclusive applications for the disabled. We are doing the same in India and Sri Lanka, and will take another step further towards scaling the solutions by connecting the app developers with investors.



Refining our understanding through alternate methodologies

For a long time, many, including ourselves, thought of gender in ICT as the problem of including women in the digital space. Of course, over a decade ago we had evidence to show that while being a woman was a disadvantage when it came to ICT access, being a poor woman was far more disadvantageous. Since then, even the notion of what a “woman” is, has been challenged, by non-binary gender identification. We see this in the “male” or “female” persona people take on, through “fake” accounts, in order to present themselves to the world online. The reasons for inhabiting a different online self has many motivations – to have difficult, often politically sensitive, conversations anonymously, to have relationships outside the traditional, to avoid being harassed online.

As much as our definitions (of “gender” and “poor”) keep evolving, so do our methods. Asking people questions in surveys or focus groups gives us a set of answers. But people have biases in answering such questions – they have reason to lie, or they forget past behaviors

and give unclear answers. Luckily, some of their behavior has left a digital trace, and we can study this. This is what our big data analytics team does, by analyzing the trillions of historical, pseudonymized call detail records (CDRs) we get from mobile operators in Sri Lanka. It enables us to study where people live and work, for example.

The analytical techniques and computational power of big data also mean that we no longer have to work with limited samples but can study whole populations – data and algorithms provide faster and seemingly exhaustive methodologies at varied levels of granularity. At a personal level, your bank can now use your entire credit history to calculate the likelihood of a loan repayment. At a more public level, we have been using pseudonymized digital trails from mobile network big data (MNBD) to understand transportation needs and inform planning in Sri Lanka.



But what of those who have no credit history? What of those who don't carry a mobile phone on their person during the daily commute to work? Insofar as some were – and still are – excluded from connectivity, some are excluded from the data. And being illegible (i.e. not represented) in the data can adversely impact those already marginalized, who tend to have much smaller digital footprints, if any. Just as biases in the offline world are replicated in the online world, we may – and do – see them replicated in the world of algorithms and machine learning.

The problem of exclusion from the data also applies to data sources other than human behavior. A lack of sufficient digitized language corpuses, for example, makes it harder to bring machine-aided solutions to monitor online harassment and/or hate speech in large swathes of the Global South.

As algorithms gain traction in more complex decision-making processes such as criminal justice and financial assessments, we need to ask ourselves how they may perpetuate or in some cases even amplify biases and prejudices (and often exclusions) that exist in the data. However, it is also conversely true that the use of these same algorithms can actually help identify potential biases that would have remained undiscovered in human decision-making systems.

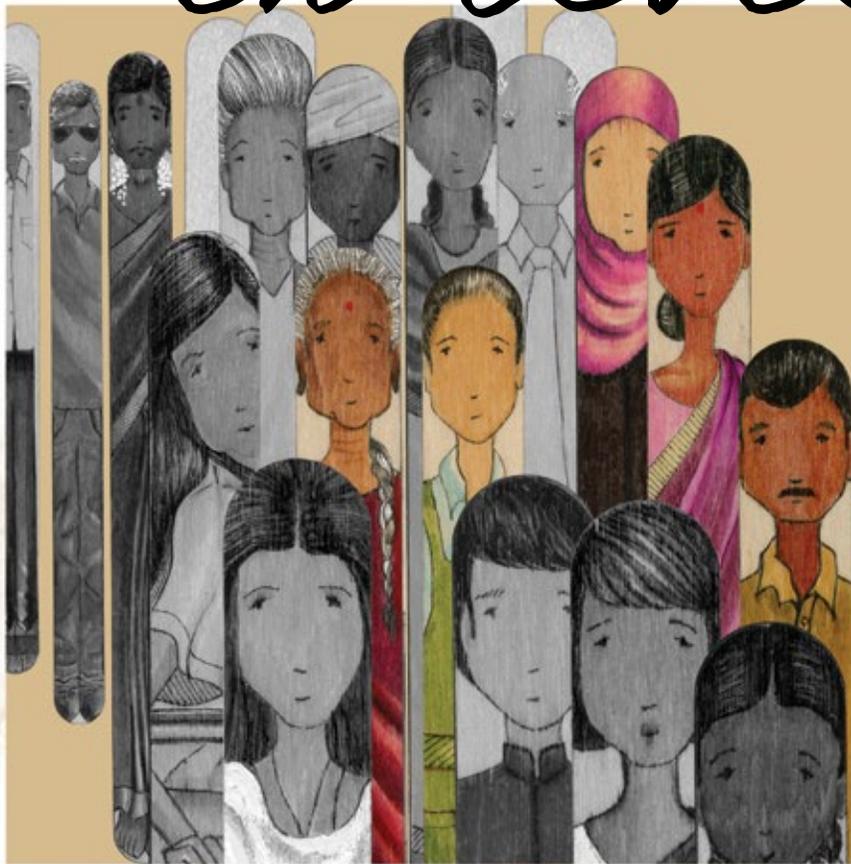
So, we have now started developing supplementary techniques, with our partners, to adjust our big data-based mobility analyses from pseudonymized CDRs to include those who do not use a mobile phone. We have also begun work to understand how we can efficiently build large digital corpuses of the languages of the Global South.



Always changing. Always.

Over the years, our understanding of who is marginalized – and even what “marginalized” means – has changed, and so, conversely, has our understanding of “inclusion”. As our perspective broadens and deepens, the questions we ask will change. And if we are to give pertinent answers and find pertinent solutions as we seek to expand the boundaries of a human-rights respecting, livelihood-improving, internet/data-driven ecosystem, it is inevitable, that our definition of inclusion and our modes of engagement with the ideas around inclusion, must change. We must remember that there are always more questions and always more answers. As there are always more people to be included.

The year in review



The early and late majorities

The early and late majorities tend to come online as device affordability barriers are overcome. The poorer, less educated working classes tend to come online at these stages, particularly those from rural areas. They acquire the necessary skills in different ways, men often learning from friends or colleagues, while women learn from male family members and young children, sometimes friends. Elderly members of privileged households (e.g. the urban, the rich, etc.) where many might already be online, tend to get online during these later stages too.

(continued on page 72)



AfterAccess

The AfterAccess surveys are our in-depth examination of the state of access and use of ICTs in multiple countries in the Global South. We undertook the research in the Asia region while our sister organizations RIA and DIRSI conducted the surveys in Africa and Latin America respectively. While we have done similar work with RIA and DIRSI, this was the first time we jointly raised funding and used comparable methodology and survey questionnaires to conduct research simultaneously.

The surveys are nationally representative of the populations aged 15-65. In the 2017/2018 financial year, we completed AfterAccess surveys in India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Cambodia. This year, we added Nepal and Sri Lanka to the portfolio, bringing the total number of countries surveyed to 23.

In Nepal, the main household and individual ICT access and use survey included an additional component on PWDs. The Sri Lanka survey included two new components: one on PWDs and the other on small and medium enterprises. The surveys of PWDs were added to complement the disability work we have been doing in both countries (more on this component is included in the Enabling the Disabled section on page 54).

A new questionnaire was developed, using the Washington Group Short Set of Questions on Disability to identify and classify levels of disability, with another set of questions to explore technology use among PWDs. The enterprise survey builds on work we have done in the past to understand how businesses use ICTs and what potential exists.

In March 2018, the Government of Sri Lanka applied a blanket block on Facebook, WhatsApp, and a number of other social media across the country with the aim of stemming communal violence that erupted in one part of the country. We used the



AfterAccess surveys to understand people's perceptions about the social media block.

The AfterAccess survey teams in each Asian country carried mobile phones on the field with the NetRadar app installed for broadband measurement. The app collected useful data in the background while the enumerator carried out the AfterAccess survey. The results showed that even where service was available and download speeds seemed as promised by the providers, latency was sub-par, indicating that video and voice over internet protocol call quality would suffer.

In September, the AfterAccess initiative was announced winner of the EQUALSInTech award in the Research category at the EQUALS partnership of the International Telecommunications Union (ITU), beating 350 other nominees. We leveraged the award in the region as a precursor to the dissemination of the AfterAccess findings in each country that was surveyed.



Regional dissemination in Asia began in August 2018 with India, followed by Bangladesh and Nepal in October and Pakistan and Cambodia in November. Dissemination was focused around the launch of the *AfterAccess: ICT access and use in Asia and the Global South* report, which we published in September 2018. Each event saw the participation of very senior policy makers, regulators, CEOs of telecom operators/internet service providers, and other stakeholders in the countries.

The glaring issue across the South Asian countries surveyed was the gender gap and low internet use. Women in India were 46% less likely to own a mobile phone than men. This was the widest gap among all 16 countries surveyed at the time. Even worse was the gender gap in Internet use, which stood at 56% (see the full report online at bit.ly/AAAsia3).



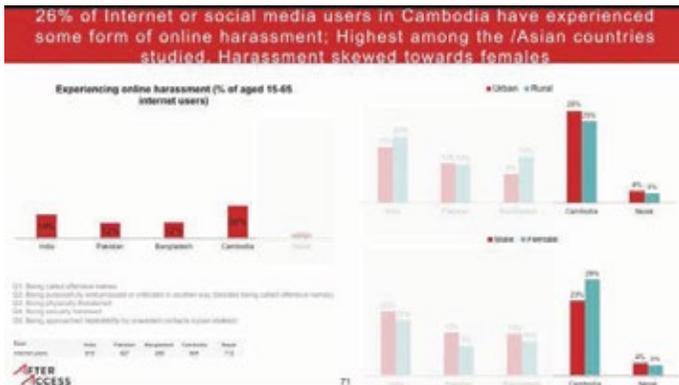


When we released these results in New Delhi, Special Secretary of the Department of Telecom, Shri N. Sivasailam spoke positively: “It is possible to act on this data and develop policies. I am pleased that we have a baseline for the first time ever.”

Media take up of the findings was unprecedented. We had coverage in some of India’s biggest publications including The Economic Times, The Indian Express, and The Telegraph. On August 16, the gender issue headlined The Economic Times again, this time demonstrating an immediate direct policy win for LIRNEasia. “Telecom department to officers: Attend seminar on gender gap” the headline read. The body of the story, amplified by other media (as in the case of the gender gap stories), tied the directive of the DOT, to the LIRNEasia results released less than 10 days before.



Of course, not everyone liked what our research revealed. In most countries, the regulator conflates the number of active SIM cards in circulation (as reported by operators) with the number of internet users. We know that these two numbers are not the same thing. There is very high multi-SIM ownership, there are SIM cards inside various devices, and not all SIM owners are knowingly using the internet. So, our numbers are far more likely to indicate the accurate number of unique individual users and are also significantly lower than the regulator reported numbers. There were instances where we had to follow up on our publicity by writing op-eds explaining the differences in counting methods in order to appease certain stakeholders.



We also relied heavily on the AfterAccess data in our invited talks and presentations in the global arena. Because of the wide scope of questions in the survey, the research team was able to draw from the findings for presentations related to the future of work and others related to digital development. Helani used the access and online human rights related findings in her keynote speeches at the “Shaping a digital future for all: Our voice, our data, our privacy” event by GIZ (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit, German Society for International Cooperation) in Berlin, and the “International Conference on Rural Development” hosted by Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) in Bali. She presented findings on ecommerce and the digital gender divide at the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development Intergovernmental Group of Experts on eCommerce and the Digital Economy in Geneva, RightsCon in Toronto, and IGF 2018 in Paris.

The AfterAccess gender gap findings were presented at the Imagining a Feminist Internet: Asia conference in February 2019. The presentation set the context for further discussion through the conference and was used in the conference declaration which will be circulated among policymakers and stakeholders. Various organizations (e.g.: UNCTAD, GSM Association) and key influencers used the AfterAccess findings in their own outputs and policy work, which were heavily cited and shared. It is evident that the data is filling the dearth of robust and comparable data for the Global South.

Academic papers based on the AfterAccess data were presented at the International Telecommunications Society conference in Korea, the Telecom Policy Research Conference in the US, the Communication Policy Research South (CPRSouth) conference in Mozambique, and other events.

Big Data for Development



Hate speech is everywhere. Many want to understand why it is so difficult to moderate, particularly on social media platforms in the Global South. So, this year, we opened up new lines of work around language and the use of natural language processing for governance. The use cases are limited because the Global South has many resource-poor languages. Yudhanjaya worked with Yashothara and our alumnus Nisansa de Silva (now at the University of Oregon) to produce a white paper to develop thinking on this important area. The white paper outlined issues in relation to languages in the Global South and identified use cases as well as related lines of research for the future.

We also worked in partnership with ICTA to develop a discussion document on a health data protection policy for Sri Lanka. Sriganesh and our research fellow Ashwini Natesan developed thinking on policies that facilitate the responsible use of health data for both individual and public health. Ashwini shared some of our initial thoughts during the October 2018 Digital Health Week organized by the Sri Lanka Medical Association and these were also reported in the media along

with comments from Sri Lanka's Minister of Health.

As these new lines of work opened up, we continued our incremental innovation on the use of big data for development purposes.

In November 2018, we completed the development of a dynamic census model in collaboration with the University of Tokyo. The model was developed to utilize MNBD to provide real-time complements to traditional censuses. The study relied on a mixed-methods approach, leveraging CDRs, transport survey data, transport network data, as well as household survey data and data derived from a smartphone app survey. The resulting mobility patterns were triangulated using household survey data on socio-economic status and mobility patterns from 2,000 households in the Western Province. Results and findings were shared with the Department of Census and Statistics (DCS) of Sri Lanka.

We helped catalyze work on using innovative techniques and alternate data sources for development projects with the University of Moratuwa's Data Science,



Engineering and Analytics Research Hub (DataSEARCH) and Citra (Sri Lanka's first Social Innovation Lab, where Sriganesh is part of the advisory board). Our efforts at bringing Southern perspective to the global discourse on big data for development through evidence continue through the IDRC-funded BD4D Network of research and policy hubs in the Global South.

Sriganesh was invited to share his thoughts on the role of data for development in multiple forums – at the 2018 United Nations Economic and Social Council Partnership Forum, the

18th Rencontres Économiques d'Aix-en-Provence, and the 2018 Neural Information Processing Systems (NeurIPS) conference among others – reaffirming the global recognition we have received in the arena.

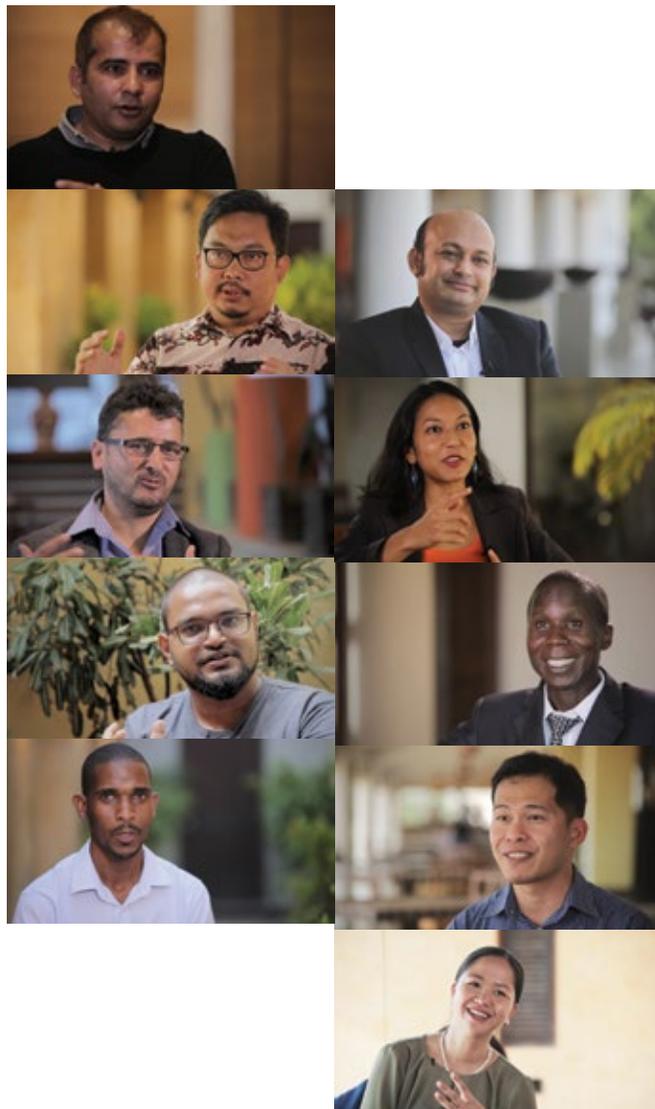
Capacity Building

CPRsouth has been the core of our Capacity Building work, since its inception in 2006. This year, we hosted the CPRsouth Young Scholar Academy (YSA) and Conference in Maputo, Mozambique, 1-5 September 2018. Later, in March 2019, we invited select alumni from the YSA to Colombo to share the story of their policy-influence journey.

We changed how the CPRsouth conference was structured this year, based on conversation from the Yangon conference in August 2017. Each session was curated by a Board Member or a combination of two board members, or a board member and an external expert. Thematic sessions were centered on the AfterAccess surveys and included conversations on broadband, digital literacy, gender, rights, platforms, cyber policy, financial inclusion, and e-government.

The knowledge-sharing workshop in March brought together some of the most active policy intellectuals from among the YSA alumni as well as key stakeholders from their audience: government, regulatory bodies, and media. The two days of knowledge-sharing were interspersed with story-telling opportunities. A creative team of writers, illustrators and videographers engaged with each of the alumni in a bid to retell the story of their journeys as young independent researchers who influence policy. These stories can be read and watched on the CPRsouth website.

Our broadband policy course was presented again this year, in Pokhara, Nepal. This was the ninth in a series of short courses designed to inform decision makers and stakeholders in India, Nepal and Sri Lanka on good practices in policy and regulatory activities affecting broadband access. The intention was to promote learning among the stakeholders and to facilitate a policy discourse that takes into account the interests of the poor. The event took place 16-19 February 2019, culminating in a gala dinner with the Mayor of Pokhara.





CPRsouth Young Scholars in Maputo, Mozambique



CPRsouth participants in Maputo, Mozambique

THE COAL TRAIN

A personal reflection on the people of CPRsouth by Yudhanjaya Wijeratne.

Yudha, a Sri Lankan, joined the CPRsouth community in Maropeng, 2014, as a young scholar. He has since participated in the conference as a paper presenter and as a teaching assistant to the YSA.



*Stimela sihamba ngamalahle,
THE TRAIN THAT DRIVES USING COAL*

*Sivela eDalaku Bay
COMING FROM DELGOA BAY*

*Sangilahla kwa-Guqa
IT DROPPED ME OFF KWA-GUQA*

*Bathi sizomba amalahlle
THEY SAY WE ARE HERE TO MINE FOR COAL*

*Sihleli njenge Zinja
WE LIVE LIKE DOGS*

*Emigodini
UNDERGROUND*

*Sikhalel' izihlobo zethu
WE WEEP FOR OUR RELATIVES*

*Masibuyeleni ekhaya bo
LET'S GO BACK HOME*

*Sikhalel' izingane zethu
WE WEEP FOR OUR CHILDREN*

*Masibuyeleni ekhaya bo
LET'S GO BACK HOME*

- Hugh Masekela, Stimela (Coal Train), 1994

If you had told me five days ago that I would be discussing Hugh Masekela with a man from Uganda, I would have given you the skeptical eyebrow and moved on. After all, I know nothing about jazz and nobody from Uganda.

Yet this is precisely what happened yesterday. People from twenty-five or so countries have descended on Maputo, Mozambique, for the CPRsouth conference. Some of them, including myself, are here to present policy papers. More of them are Young Scholars, hand-picked from across the world to be flown here and taught how to write and influence policy. And in this crowd is the Ugandan who will introduce me to Hugh Masekela.

Maputo was a Portuguese colony – and a poor one at that – until quite recently. There is a train station here that serves as a glorified remnant of its colonial past. The Africans in the CPRsouth crowd had walked out to this largely defunct station and declared it incredible. The Asians in the crowd had done the same and declared it boring.



Mwesiga Daniel

*I wondered aloud about this split in perception, and Mwesigwa Daniel told me about the father of South African jazz Hugh Masekela's 1994 song *Stimela**

talks of the slavery that generations of African men were subjected to. The "Delgoa Bay" of the song is what we now call Maputo. The train came from here. For Daniel and the others, this place is more than a colonial hangover. It is a symbol.

Daniel, like many of the Young Scholars here, has problems on his mind. He tells me about Bobi Wine, a Ugandan politician who was recently arrested and tortured by soldiers. He tells me about the social media tax in Uganda that their Parliament has endorsed, and the Ugandan Communications Commission's plan to make bloggers register and pay an annual fee. Both of these he sees as a dangerous impediment to free speech. I learn a lot about Uganda from these conversations.

Evelyne Wanjiku

In between these threads is a narrative: Daniel cares about these problems, and he wants to figure out how he can make a change. He seems excited to bump heads with people who have thought about these things – many of whom he has never met. He is interested in anything and everything that will give him a better chance.

Daniel is not the only one looking for solutions to seemingly impossible problems. Evelyne Wanjiku, who is working on her PhD at Kenyatta University, is worried about pornography – in particular, the kind made and shared without the consent of all parties involved. Her paper presented at CPRsouth points to glaring flaws in how Kenyan law deals with non-consensual





pornography, and explains that *de minimis non curat lex* (the law cares not for trifles) has trivialized a rising trend of revenge porn in Kenya – and how, once generated, this content cannot be controlled by a thing as simple as national law.

Evelyne, too, is here for answers. On our way out of the train station she tells us about women in Kenya, and how much there is to be done about getting them on an equal footing, especially in education and politics. We talk about the incredibly violent tribalism which leaves hundreds of Kenyans dead every election. Evelyne is fascinated by similarities with Myanmar – an Asian parallel she

has learned about from a paper presented at CPRsouth. A little later, poking through the nearby crafts market, we bump into Wairimu Macharia, also from Kenya. Wairimu is a member of the Internet Society and a digital lead at Afrobarometer – a data portal that hosts a vast number of surveys on governance and society from over thirty African countries. Wairimu is working on several partnerships with software engineers and civil socio-tech activists to make sure their research gets to journalists, politicians, and diplomats – the kind of eyes and ears they need to make a change.

Her work has strong parallels in that of the Sri Lankan woman who was seated next to her: Deepanjalie Abeywardana, who runs the Media Research team at Verite Research. Deepanjalie's team pores over the news every day, identifying sentiment, trends, and breaches of journalistic ethics in Sri Lanka. They are making an indirect attempt to elevate journalistic standards in our country.

There are still more people to meet here at CPRsouth, and I have not even unearthed a tenth of them yet. But this

is the Global South in a nutshell: a series of nations with a laundry list of problems that makes Mordor look positively friendly. We have had ruthless colonial exploitation, banana republics, collapsing economies, journalists shot in the streets. And in every country, there is a resistance of sorts – young people who have thrown themselves into the fray to stem the tide of madness.

Some, like Evelyne and Deepanjali, are pushing back. Others, like Wairimu and Daniel, are holding the line. And today they are all here at CPRsouth, all hungry for answers.

They are thrown briefly into a melting pot of people like themselves – many who have met the same problems over and over again, and have learned how to fight. Out of the resulting soup emerges strange bones. Curious minds meet in long trails of conversation that chain and fork and pick up research methods here, datasets there, partnerships here. Asia learns from Africa and vice versa.

Daniel peppers me with questions. How does one get into data science? What kind of skills do policymakers need? He is thoughtful.

He wonders if he should keep writing. Evelyne, who just heard about the mammoth AfterAccess surveys, is hugely excited about the work she can do with this data.

Deepanjali, who I will be stuck at the airport with for twelve hours later today, tells me that she now has a much richer understanding of comparative policy in the region, and policy loopholes that she was not aware of before, which she intends to look into.

Wairimu, meanwhile, wants to know about LIRNEasia, and what kind of data and tooling we might have.

Slowly, the Global South knits together. We synchronize like gears in a far-flung timepiece, debating issues that many in the West neither know nor care about. Those isolated in the madness reach out to each other. Jaypy Tenerife, who is researching disaster response, gets an introduction to Nuwan Waidyanatha, Director of the Sahana Software Foundation, which provides open-source disaster management tooling to over thirty governments. Someone wants to do a study of legal frameworks for data privacy; they talk to Ashwini Natesan, a lawyer who is examining health data policy in Sri Lanka.

The great pity here is that this kind of thing happens all too rarely. Barring a few, almost everyone here has never met each other before, never come across each other's work, except in remote news articles skimmed through by accident.

There is only one CPRsouth. There should be more – more conferences, more connections, more people explaining the value of a train station to someone who would never understand otherwise.

Evelyne asks me what I'm working on and I try to explain my idea of using topic modeling to map information flows in

media. The explanation is haphazard: I'm mentally sorting through notes from all the hate speech and fake news research discussed at the conference. There are systems from the West, built for English and other Latin-based languages, but we play a different game. From Thailand and South Korea comes research that I can actually use. In all my searches I've seen nothing from this side of the world – except in this handful of sessions here in Maputo.

Sihleli njenge Zinja

WE LIVE LIKE DOGS

Emigodini

UNDERGROUND

And, for some bizarre reason, Hugh Masekela's song is stuck in my head.

Somehow, Evelyne makes sense of my scrambled explanation and gleans that I've gotten something useful out of CPRsouth.

I ask her if she plans to carry on her work in policy after her PhD is done. "Definitely," she responds. She now knows how to turn her research to policy and plans to

work with Helani in the future. She wants to know how people keep in touch, whether there is a Facebook group, whether the conference will happen again.

I don't know, I say. Let's wait for them to announce it. I mentally write, rewrite, cut and paste. In my head I now have something that looks like the research proposal I need it to be. I know I need to hold on to it until I can write it down.

Daniel walks ahead, humming, a tall shadow written by the scorching Maputo sun. He twirls his walking stick. Down this road, eventually, is the train station. We will begin scattering home soon, to all the work we have ahead.

Sikhalel' izihlobo zethu

WE WEEP FOR OUR RELATIVES

Masibuyeleni ekhaya bo

LET'S GO BACK HOME

Yudhanjaya Wijeratne
September 2018





Enabling the Disabled

Last year, we made our first real foray into studying the specific forms of digital marginalization brought about as a result of disability. We conducted expert meetings, training programs, and a hackathon to develop digital solutions to problems faced by PWDs in Nepal. This year, we went the full distance, with a special module on disability in the AfterAccess surveys and qualitative research in Myanmar.

The disability module was first introduced into the AfterAccess surveys in Nepal, in April 2018, followed by Sri Lanka in December 2018. We found during the surveys that there is shame attached to living with disability, especially in the case of disability from birth, and many heads of households were reluctant to – or simply did not – report a PWD to our enumerators. In the case of an accident leading to disability, there is sympathy, and households and families were more open to reporting on these truthfully.

But PWDs were isolated not just because of social stigma – the infrastructure around



them couldn't support their needs. Public transport and buildings were inaccessible to people with physical disabilities, and poor broadband quality meant that video calling was not an option for the hearing impaired even if they had a smartphone.

The survey module used the Washington Group Short Set of Questions on Disability to identify and classify the extent of the disability. Other questions in the module asked about the use of digital tools, level of digital skill, and barriers faced by PWDs. The results revealed extremely low levels of internet awareness and use among the PWD community in comparison to the national population.

Findings from the quantitative study in Nepal were disseminated at a side event to Nepal IGF in November 2018, after which we began qualitative studies. We interviewed 186 PWDs and nine key informants from Provinces 1, 2, 3 and 5 in urban and rural locations between December 2018 and January 2019.

For Isuru Samaratunga, our researcher who led the focus group discussions and KIIs (key informant interviews) in Nepal, the work was an eye opener.

"It was not just a new area of research for me. It also helped broaden my worldview," he says, looking back. "I was given a glimpse into how people overcame the difficulties of living with a disability in mobility, and what it's like to be a blind person from birth."

International Day of Persons with Disabilities fell on December 4th, 2018, while fieldwork was ongoing. Isuru celebrated with the Nepali community in Kathmandu, joining a rally to create awareness.

Fieldwork for the qualitative research in Nepal was completed in January 2019, and following analysis of the data, we went back to the drawing board to find solutions. IT experts and representatives from the disabled communities as well as policy entrepreneurs identified eight key issues emerging from the qualitative research which were amenable to digital solutions. Policy briefs and tech solutions were proposed to selected stakeholders in a series of one-on-one meetings.

In June and July of 2018, we conducted qualitative research in Myanmar. We documented the problems and potential of using digital tools to enhance the lives of PWDs – specifically how mobility, learning, earning and emotional connectivity could be improved through the use of smartphones. The stories we heard – inspiring ones of people who overcome their difficulties, and distressing ones of those who feel they have no hope – we published in the report *Enabling the disabled: The role of ICTs in the lives of persons with disabilities in Myanmar*. We translated the report into braille, and released both editions in Yangon, in August 2018. Disabled persons organizations, legislators, and the tech community came together at the launch, sparking conversation and the creation of new



The “Enabling the Disabled” Myanmar report, published and disseminated in August 2018

networks – catalysis.

Of course, PWDs are not a homogenous community. The barriers to an independent and meaningful life are different for those with hearing disabilities, when compared to those living with visual or mobility-related disabilities and vice versa. The education level and income of the PWD and his/her family has a huge impact too. We need to understand how best to balance the need for specific solutions with the advantages offered by scalability. As always, we look forward to tackling these problems: they are a good and meaningful challenge.

WHY DISABILITY, WHY NOW?

Recollections of how our work on ICTs for independent living of PWDs began and evolved, by Rohan Samarajiva.

I was asked why we were getting into disability issues when we got started. I was asked whether I had any personal reasons.

LIRNEasia started examining the issues around disability and ICTs in April 2011, close to eight years ago. I was in Delhi for some work in March that year and a good friend, Satyen Gupta, insisted that I meet Nirmita Narasimhan – at the Constitution Club if I recall correctly. Before the short conversation ended, I invited her to come to Sri Lanka to give a colloquium and meet our policy influencers. LIRNEasia's first colloquium on the subject was held in April 2011.

At LIRNEasia, we use colloquia to explore ideas. We've had colloquia on tourism, on demography, even on how to track illegal fund transfers. None of these turned into funded research. But Nirmita's one did. There were two reasons.

The first reason was indeed personal. I lived for three years in a rural setting (no electricity, no running water, outside toilets, etc.) in the early 1960s, in what is a now highly-developed area near Sri Lanka's international airport. There was no civilian airport there at that time. My parents used to invite blind students from a nearby residential school for the disabled to stay with us during their vacations. I suppose these were students who had no homes to go to during vacations. One such student, Dulcie, became quite close to our family, and was even given away in marriage from our house. She spoke English and played the piano well.

Another student, Neil, was closer to my age (I would have been seven or eight years old) and less sophisticated. But in those weeks, I learnt from him how to interact with the disabled: generally, keep an eye out for when they may need help, but otherwise treat them just like anyone else. I used to be scared of going to the

outside toilet in the dark, believing polangas (Russel's Vipers) were out there ready to strike. That fear gave me some understanding of the challenges faced by my friend, 24x7.

I also gained an understanding of the heterogeneity of the disabled. Just like with the rest of us, there were tremendous differences between the problems faced by, say, the hearing and sight impaired, and even within each of these groups, including among the people who used to stay with us. The vacation interactions did not occur in isolation. I recall visiting the school for the disabled on many occasions with my parents.

So, it was not a disabled family member who made me want to work on disabilities. It was my parents and their enlightened and inclusive worldview.

The other reason (and the answer to the "why now" question) was that we had been thinking about the potential of the smartphone. In 2010, we had written a proposal on app development which made the cut, but in the end, we did not get the funding because I refused to enter into a forced partnership with another bidder. But the process of developing the proposal had made us think about the potential of the smartphone, which was at that time the new, new thing. Jobs had done his famous demo in 2007. My email declining the forced partnership went out shortly after Nirmita's colloquium. Even bitter experiences have their good side.

So, we got an orientation from Nirmita, read her writings, and thought through the possibilities. I recall putting on Nirmita's headphones during her visit to Colombo and listening to her computer read some text. She could make sense of the mechanical voice at that setting, but I heard just a blur of noise.

Memories of a blind student I had admitted to a PhD program at Ohio State resurfaced. She was bright and committed but I worried about how she would manage the massive amount of reading that was required of a PhD student in a social science program. But these concerns abated once I saw how much technology she had on her side. I was getting a sense of the possibilities.

But smartphone penetration was negligible among our constituents seven-eight years ago. It was not obvious what kinds of intervention we could make, what kinds of research were needed. What was pro-poor about assistive technologies anchored on the smartphone that was only used by the rich? Nothing happened

in my last years as CEO. But then came Myanmar.

We started working in Myanmar in August 2013. I was getting a sense this would be something big, that this country would leapfrog. By the time we wrote the full proposal for research and capacity building in Myanmar in 2014, it was clear this country was going to smartphones directly. Focusing on smartphones was not going to exclude the poor anymore. So, we wrote disabled issues into the proposal along with a budget line for Nirmita.

Thus commenced our real learning and doing. In early 2016 Htaike Htaike Aung, Nirmita and I did the rounds in Yangon, visiting pretty much all the organizations representing the disabled, including the very impressive Myanmar Independent Living Initiative headed by Nay Lin Soe. And all the telecom operators. Nirmita had come with her family, two sighted children and a partially sighted husband. He looked after the kids at the Inya Lake Hotel while she went to work with us. By the time I was ready to call it a day, the emails would start flowing in from Nirmita summarizing the day's discussions and suggesting follow up actions. I would postpone sleep and start editing letters.

And then, Nepal. I thought I had to persuade our country partners to work on disability. They were ahead of us, having already done work in this area. ISOC Nepal, the Center for Law and Technology, and Babu Ram Aryal in particular, were more than happy to partner with us on the next stage of the journey. And other colleagues, particularly Rom Kant Pandey, educated us on how to run effective hackathons.

And so now we come full circle, back to Sri Lanka (and India), with funded research that starts in 2019.

I dedicated our work in Myanmar to my beloved student Haymar Win Tun, who passed away at age 27 in 2012 after showing me the promise of Myanmar. I dedicate our work on assistive technology and supportive policy to my enlightened parents, Ainsley Samarajiva (1924-2012) and Evelyn Samarajiva (1924-).

Rohan Samarajiva, February 2019

Future of Work and Workers

Last year, we were focused primarily on trying to understand the nature and conditions of digital work in the Asia Pacific through qualitative methods. This year, we started examining how the conditions and results of digital work can be improved in the region, and also took the first steps towards quantitative approaches.

What the 2017 research on web-based digital labor platforms in India, Myanmar and Sri Lanka had shown us was that the ability to adapt to new situations and to constantly upskill and reskill is becoming increasingly more important for success in the digital labor markets. More so than traditionally valued subject knowledge or computer skills. In fact, those who compete only on price on digital platforms soon get disintermediated by the next cheap supply of labor.

This was reflected in the World Development Report 2019 statement that “The demand for advanced cognitive skills and socio behavioral skills is increasing, whereas the demand for narrow job-specific skills is waning”. We started realizing that it was now important to start taking this information to the education sector.

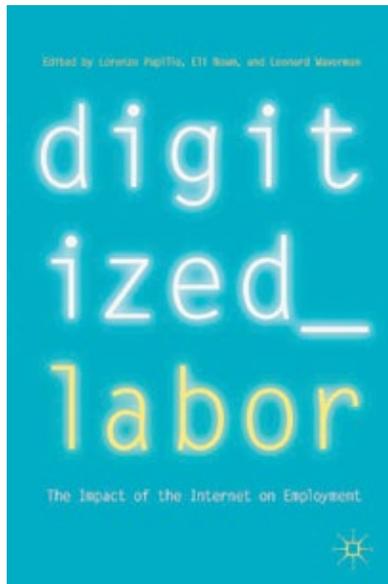
So, when in August 2018, Brookings Senior Fellow for Global Economy and Development, Prof. Esther Care, visited Sri Lanka, we grabbed the opportunity to organize a symposium with her, focusing specifically on the workforce of the future. Key stakeholders from the education sector attended to consult with

Prof. Care on reforms to the existing education system. There was broad agreement among the participants that school curricula in Sri Lanka must urgently be reformed to place greater importance on transversal skills rather than subject knowledge.

We also contributed to the International Labor Organization’s (ILO) report on “Future of Work in Sri Lanka,” released in March 2019. The report drew from our recent (2017) research on platform-mediated work (remote gig work) in Sri Lanka, which was also published by Helani, Laleema and Suthaharan in *Digitized Labor: The impact of the Internet on Employment* edited by Lorenzo Pupillo, Eli Noam and Leonard Waverman and published by Springer in May 2018.

The global conversation on the future of work ranges from the alarmist (everyone will be replaced by a robot) to the unrealistically negative (digital platform work is terrible and offers no job security). We think there is more nuance to the story and agree with many economists who see that our jobs (composed of many tasks) will change because some routine tasks will be automated, and therefore the composition of the job is going to be different.

So, we are trying to replicate and quantify what work and how many jobs will change due to automation/technology. We also think that suggestions to stop platform mediated work because the workers are exploited (with low pay, wage theft, lack of



Cover of “Digitized Labor: The impact of the Internet on Employment”

benefits etc.) is the wrong approach, because in the physical world, many workers in emerging Asian countries are doing precarious work. We have engaged with the Fair Work Foundation and other initiatives that attempt to define how platforms can take a more pro-active role in ensuring better working conditions and rights for platform workers.

Helani also engaged with platform economy and gig work challenges in the Global South as an advisor to the Harnessing and Sharing Economy for Local Development initiative of the Centre for Implementation of Public Policies promoting Equity and Growth (CIPPEC), Argentina and was invited to Ford Foundation workshops on the topic. We will pursue the conversation in the coming year and look forward to helping make the future of work inclusive and meaningful.

Gender

Gender has been an important lens through which we examine all our work throughout the years, though never a central subject of it. We have seen how much even the simplest binary gender forms (men vs. women) impacts marginalization when it comes to digital access. We've seen how difficult it is to "solve" the gender gap in access through policy solutions because low access by women is grounded in the larger social context which marginalizes them in many other ways.

Historical engagement with gender and access was key to being able to design a toolkit for World Bank task team leaders to mainstream gender into their ICT projects in 2018, but we have rarely been seen as gender experts. Nor have we considered ourselves as such.

The big "win" came in September 2018 when the AfterAccess research, conducted in partnership with sister networks DIRSI and RIA, was declared winner of the 2018 EQUALSInTech award in the Research Category in New York.

The EQUALS Global Partnership is a global network working toward bridging the digital gender gap by bring women to tech and tech to women. Founding partners include the United Nations University, the ITU UN Women, the GSM Association



Rector of United Nations University, David Malone, with AfterAccess lead researchers Helani Galpaya (CEO, LIRNEasia), Aileen Aguero and Alison Gillwald at the EQUALSInTech awards 2018, New York. Photo courtesy ITU

and the International Trade Center. The EQUALSInTech Award is the annual flagship event of the partnership, which recognizes "outstanding projects and initiatives around the world that are helping women and girls become EQUALSInTech".

We had doubts when we applied for the award. Neither we nor DIRSI nor RIA are gender-focused organizations. And none of us work directly with women beneficiaries to give them access, opportunities or skills in any way. Our work (collecting and bringing evidence to the policy process) is somewhat remote and far removed from the end beneficiaries.

But the value of the AfterAccess data on the gender gap is without question. Demand-side numbers which are representative of the 23 countries we have studied through AfterAccess are hard (if not impossible!) to come by. Ours is one of the largest and most comprehensive datasets on the gender gap in mobile phone and internet use in the Global South, and demand-side (survey) data such as this

presents a more realistic view of access than supply-side/industry statistics. The research not only measures the gender gap but also examines the nuances of use, barriers, etc., to enable evidence-based policymaking.

So, we applied. AfterAccess was one of 22 finalists in four award categories (Access, Leadership, Skills, Research) selected from over 350 nominees from across the globe.

The recognition given to the work by the global apex body on women and technology was immensely valuable to us in our dissemination. We were able to leverage the win in every South Asian country we engaged in, positioning AfterAccess as a globally recognized project that deserved national attention.

While the AfterAccess research had a simple, binary, view of gender, our qualitative research in Myanmar explored gender as a form of marginalization with a lot more nuance. Identity (as in the way internet users presented themselves) was studied, as well as the digital risks faced by internet users who identified (or presented) at various points in the gender and sexual preference spectrum. Ironically, yet not surprisingly, our research in Myanmar revealed that one of the key tactics used by those with marginalized gender identities was to create a fake/alternate Facebook identity: that of a Bamar (dominant ethnicity), Buddhist (dominant religion), cisgender, heterosexual male. We are exploring such issues in our digital risks research in Sri Lanka and India right now.

It is heartening to see that our efforts (both in collecting the data as well as canvassing on the importance of doing so) are being increasingly acknowledged at various fora. For instance, we were asked to set the context with the data at the Imagine a Feminist Internet: Asia conference held in Negombo in February 2019. This was to provide a representative and quantitative overview of the issues and set context for the qualitative work that was shared and the discussion that followed throughout the event.

In October 2018, Helani was appointed to the Advisory Board of the Feminist Internet Research Network (FIRN). FIRN is a three-and-a-half-year collaborative and multidisciplinary research project led by the Association for Progressive Communications (APC).

Furthermore, in the upcoming IDRC-supported research cycle, where LIRNEasia will focus on inclusive cyber policy for the Global South, the Gender At Work team will work closely with us to identify how we can further gender inclusion through our work, not just through research, but also through our internal work processes.



Helani Galpaya, CEO of LIRNEasia and lead researcher for Asia component of the AfterAccess surveys, at the EQUALS in Tech Awards 2018, New York. Photo courtesy ITU

Inclusive Agriculture

In May 2018, we began work on a project for reconciliation through economic development. Our intention was to facilitate knowledge transfer between farmers from the northern and southern parts of Sri Lanka.

We started with a baseline survey to identify farmers in Jaffna, Kurunegala and Gampaha districts who had the potential to enter the export agriculture value chain, generating new data on gender ratios, good agricultural practice (GAP) registration, training history, technology ownership and use, skills, financial literacy, and other factors. We believe this is the first data set of its kind created in the recent past, especially in the Jaffna district. We then organized field visits for the farmers from the north to the southern areas and vice versa in November and December. For many farmers from Kurunegala and Gampaha, it was their first visit to Jaffna, and for many of the farmers from Jaffna, this was their first visit to Colombo. These visits were centered on farm visits as well as knowledge-sharing workshops where the “home” farmers shared their experience and advise with the visiting group.



Participants at the knowledge-sharing workshops



Stills from the documentary

We also engaged in conversation with the farmers on trade before and after the ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka. We used some of the video we generated at the interviews to produce a documentary video on the possibility of ethnic reconciliation through economic development.

In the coming months we will engage in training programs focused on areas which need improvement, as identified through the research. Following this, we will conduct an endline survey on farmers with the potential to join the export agriculture value chain in Sri Lanka.

Policy and Regulation

Helping define Myanmar's universal service strategy

April 2018, Myanmar

Myanmar's universal service strategy was finalized in April 2018. The results of our nationally representative survey on ICT use and information needs conducted in 2016 were quoted extensively in the draft that was released for comments.

Our data on expenditure on smart devices and data top-ups were used to inform recommendations with regard to household and individual ownership and to determine the affordability of data services respectively. We had found that ownership of mobile phones was lower in rural areas than urban. The strategy document recognized this data by acknowledging the possible need to take special measures towards making services available to marginalized groups. The gender gap in mobile phone ownership (29%), published by LIRNEasia, was quoted in the document, to draw attention to the fact that, again, special measures may need to be taken to close the gap.

Our findings on digital literacy in the country were quoted in detail in the strategy document, and two programmes were proposed, based on the low levels of literacy we recorded – one for ICT training in schools and the other for digital literacy training in alternative learning centres. Special mention was also made of the gender gap, and a recommendation made that certain digital literacy projects will focus on women and girls.

Particularly encouraging to us was the inclusion of PWDs within the USF strategy definition, which we believe is a unique

and progressive step taken by the Ministry of Transport and Communications.

Conceptualizing data for development strategies

We worked in partnership with ICTA to develop a discussion document on a health data protection policy for Sri Lanka. Sriganesh and Ashwini developed thinking on policies that facilitate the responsible use of health data for both individual and public health. Our initial thoughts were shared during the October 2018 Digital Health Week organized by the Sri Lanka Medical Association and reported in the media along with comments from Sri Lanka's Minister of Health.

In October 2018, Sriganesh was appointed as a Research Advisor to Pulse Lab Jakarta, providing research and strategic advice for PLJ's work in the Asia Pacific. We have also continued to engage with the DCS in Sri Lanka, advising on ways for the national statistical system to incorporate big data.

Critiquing methodology for more reliable evidence

We have become increasingly more often associated with methodological rigor.

In March 2018, the ICT Agency (ICTA) of Sri Lanka held a discussion based on its Countrywide Assessment of ICT Access and Usage by Households and Individuals. We reviewed the methodology and proposed solutions to problems of

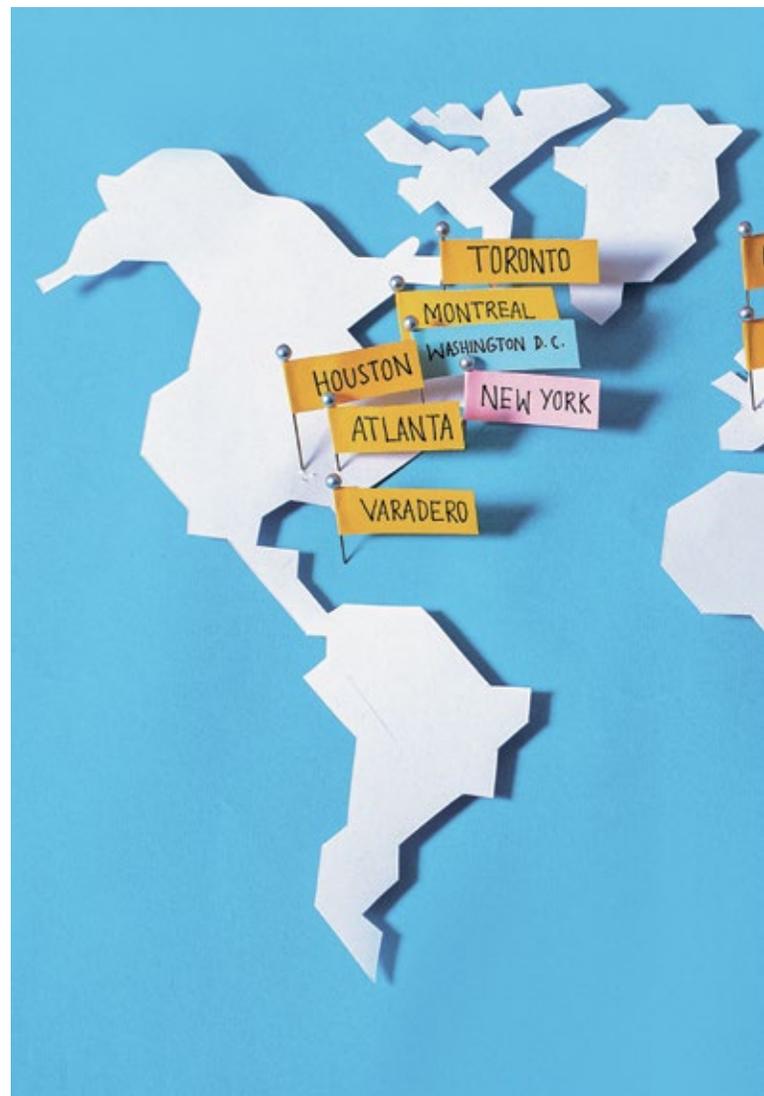
representativity. Some of these solutions were adopted by ICTA before the release of their final report in October 2018.

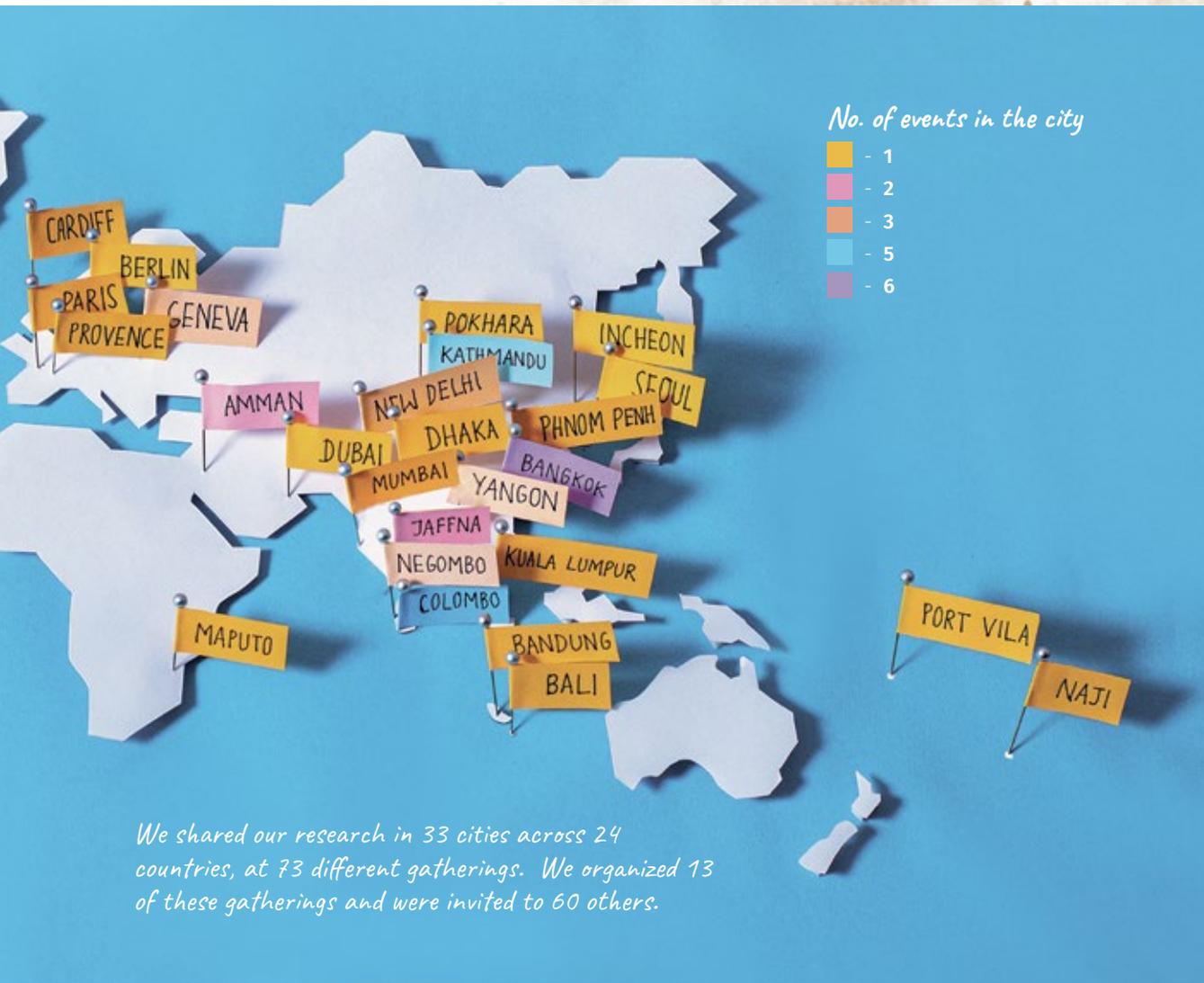
The first interaction helped establish good relations between LIRNEasia and ICTA, leading to later consultations on sample design for their annual national ICT workforce survey. The solutions provided were adopted to their sample design.

We were invited by the GSM Association to review their gender research methodology toolkit. We provided a detailed review and substantive recommendations on tackling quantitative and qualitative research design. The suggestions were not incorporated to the final toolkit, but the content in question was in fact removed from the scope of the published in May 2018, indicating that the review was well received.

In 2017, the World Economic Forum published an article citing the cable.co.uk ranking of countries by fixed broadband price. We looked at the methodology and reached out to cable.co.uk for clarifications. Then we wrote a critique which was also published on the WEF site. Cable.co.uk were receptive to our concerns, and we were encouraged to note that they took our feedback onboard and made changes to their methodology for the 2018 rankings.

Presence



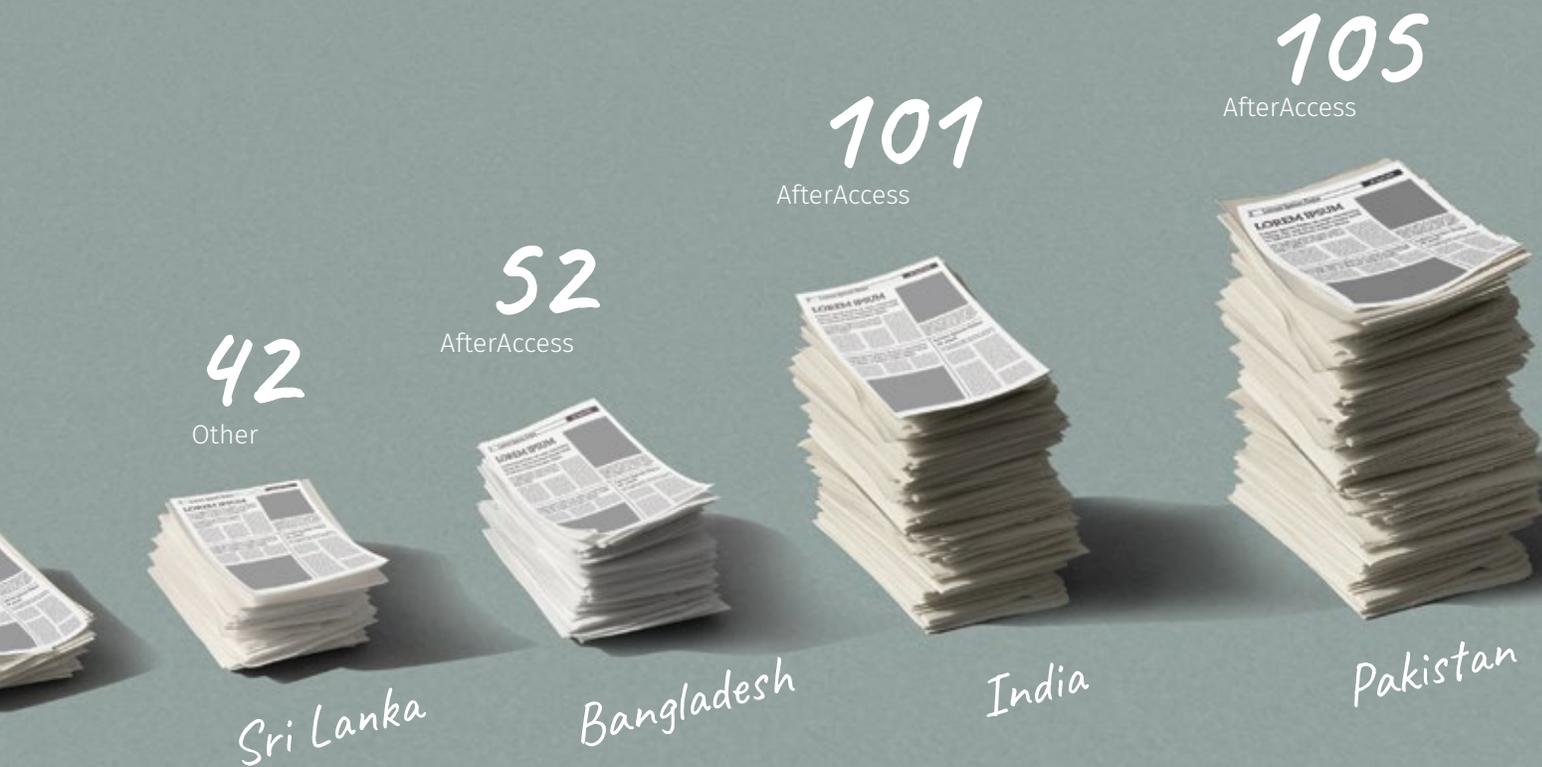


We shared our research in 33 cities across 24 countries, at 73 different gatherings. We organized 13 of these gatherings and were invited to 60 others.

Media Coverage

Media coverage in Asia:





Number of media stories on our research, in each country, and the topics most written about in each country. Clearly, the AfterAccess research has dominated our presence this year

Our media presence was dramatically stronger this year than last, thanks (at least in part) to focused campaigning around the release of the AfterAccess Asia reports. So much stronger, in fact, that we captured more mentions of just “LIRNEasia” this year than mentions of “LIRNEasia” and our senior researchers’ names combined in the 2017/18 financial year.

The most coverage came in November, when we disseminated the country-specific findings from AfterAccess in Pakistan and Cambodia.

Our original plan for Pakistan media engagement was a standard press event. But following data analysis and discussion with our partners in the country, we realized there was trepidation about having a big event highlighting the fact that Pakistan’s sector performance was less stellar than previously thought. So, we opted for a different model. We invited six of the country’s best reputed news publications to visit us in Colombo and discuss the data with the whole team of researchers. Far from making the results less interesting to the media, the format meant that a number of unique stories were published, and that some publications (ex: Business Recorder and Dawn) ran multiple stories based on their own analyses of the data.





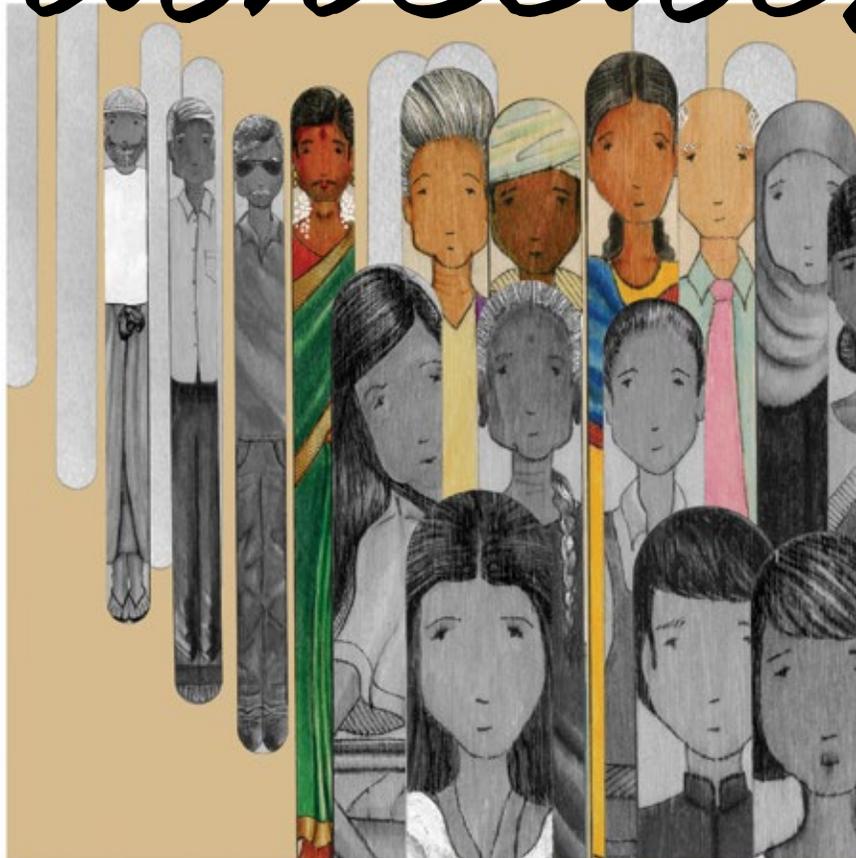
We also had very good coverage of multiple angles of the AfterAccess findings in India, including multiple stories in The Indian Express, The Economic Times, and The Quint. Between Pakistan and India, South Asia remained our region of highest media influence. And happily, our presence in South East Asia seems to have kept up, between stories in Myanmar, Cambodia, the Philippines and Indonesia.

Cambodia was new for us. The release of AfterAccess findings was the first dissemination event we hosted in Phnom Penh. But – mostly by luck it seems – we found a communications team that was invested in the digital arena and they introduced us to a vibrant community of young people in civil society, government, and media who are proactive about creating an open and inclusive internet for Cambodia. We had good coverage of the issues explored in the report, in some of the country's most-read publications including Cambodia Daily, Khmer Times, Phnom Penh Post and Rasmei Kampuchea.

Rohan was awarded the SLT (Sri Lanka Telecom) Zero One Lifetime Achievement Award, and this combined with his more public presence as the Chairman of ICTA meant that LIRNEasia continued to be mentioned in Sri Lankan media as well. Sujata's engagement with education policy and Sriganesh's presence as a board member of Citra Lab also kept us in the country's media.

Sri Lanka has consistently been a country where media engages with us the most – since our office is based in Colombo. But that's changed this year, with AfterAccess bringing more coverage in Pakistan, India, and Bangladesh. We look forward to keeping up the trend with more sustained media engagement in these countries in the future.

Financials



The laggards

The most marginalized in the offline world are among the last to come online, if at all. Those who are marginalized on more than one dimension (e.g. people who are disabled and uneducated; people of diverse sexual orientations, gender identities and expressions who are also poor; women and girls who come from rural homes or ethnic minorities, etc.) are often among the worst-off in this context. When they do come online, unless they have the skills and tools to ensure a safe and secure experience, they are more exposed to the risk of facing online harms (which sometimes lead to harms in the offline world).

(continued on page 101)



Independent Auditor's Report

TO THE SHAREHOLDERS OF LIRNEASIA

Report on the Audit of the Financial Statements

Opinion

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of LIRNEasia ('the Company'), which comprise the statement of financial position as at 31st March 2019 and the statement of comprehensive income, statement of changes in equity and statement of cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements give a true and fair view of the financial position of the Company as at 31st March 2019, and of its financial performance and its cash flow for the year then ended in accordance with Sri Lanka Accounting Standards.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Sri Lanka Auditing Standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements section of our report. We are independent of the company in accordance with the ethical requirements of the Code of Ethics issued by CA Sri Lanka (Code of Ethics) that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code of Ethics. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Responsibilities of Management and Those Charged with Governance for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation of financial statements that give a true and fair view in accordance with Sri Lanka Accounting Standards, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, management is responsible for assessing the Company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the Company or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the Company's financial reporting process.

The significant accounting policies and notes from pages 81-99 form an integral part of these financial statements.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of Financial Statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but it is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with SLAuSs will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

A further description of the auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located at Sri Lanka Accounting and Auditing website at: <http://slaasc.lk/auditing>
This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Report on other legal and regulatory requirements

As required by section 163 (2) of the Companies Act No. 07 of 2007, we have obtained all the information and explanations that were required for the audit and, as far as appears from our examination, proper accounting records have been kept by the Company.

Wijeyeratne & Company

CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

Colombo

07th August 2019

The significant accounting policies and notes from pages 81-99 form an integral part of these financial statements.

**STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE YEAR ENDED
31ST MARCH 2019**

	NOTES	2019 Rs.	2018 Rs.
REVENUE	(3)	33,420,956	36,757,639
OTHER INCOME	(4)	2,225,309	1,807,288
ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES		(29,165,961)	(27,009,645)
FINANCE COSTS	(5)	(1,183,747)	(1,225,888)
PROFIT BEFORE TAX	(6)	5,296,557	10,329,394
INCOME TAX EXPENSE	(7)	(1,200,692)	(1,030,268)
NET PROFIT FOR THE YEAR		4,095,865	9,299,126

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT
31ST MARCH 2019**

	NOTES	2019 Rs.	2018 Rs.
ASSETS			
Non-current assets			
Property, plant and equipment	(8)	1,470,628	1,796,566
Deferred tax asset	(9)	1,227,183	916,407
		2,697,811	2,712,973
Current assets			
Other financial assets	(10)	27,749,681	19,934,267
Trade and other receivables	(11)	4,673,735	5,574,898
Cash and cash equivalents	(13)	62,374,843	86,947,102
		94,798,259	112,456,266
Total assets		97,496,070	115,169,240

The significant accounting policies and notes from pages 81-99 form an integral part of these financial statements.

EQUITY AND LIABILITIES			
Equity			
Retained earnings		18,642,353	14,546,488
Exchange Equalization Reserve		3,000,960	1,341,818
		21,643,313	15,888,305
Non-current liabilities			
Retirement benefit obligation	(12)	9,127,645	7,851,229
Projects	(14)	34,232,194	59,880,154
		43,359,839	67,731,384
Current liabilities			
Trade and other payables	(15)	31,849,361	30,425,083
Bank overdrafts	(13)	166,841	-
Taxation	(16)	476,716	1,124,466
		32,492,918	31,549,550
Total liabilities		75,852,757	99,280,934
Total equity and liabilities		97,496,070	115,169,240

The Board of Directors is responsible for the preparation and presentation of these financial statements.

Signed for and on behalf of The Board by,

Rohan Samarajiva
Director

Lakshaman Bandaranayake
Director

Date: 7th of August 2019

The significant accounting policies and notes from pages 81-99-form an integral part of these financial statements.

**STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY FOR THE YEAR ENDED
31STMARCH 2019**

	Retained earnings	Exchange equalization reserve	Total
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
Balance as at 01 st April 2017	5,247,362	892,503	6,139,865
Profit for the year	9,299,126	-	9,299,126
Movement During the Year	-	449,315	449,315
Balance as at 31st March 2018	14,546,488	1,341,818	15,888,306
Balance as at 01 st April 2018	14,546,488	1,341,818	15,888,306
Profit for the year	4,095,865	-	4,095,865
Movement During the Year	-	1,659,142	
Balance as at 31st March 2019	18,642,353	3,000,960	19,984,171

The significant accounting policies and notes from pages 81-99 form an integral part of these financial statements.

**STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS FOR THE YEAR ENDED
31ST MARCH 2019**

	2019	2018
	Rs.	Rs.
Cash flows from operating activities		
Profit for the year	4,095,865	9,299,126
Adjustments for non-cash income and expenses:		
Depreciation of property, plant and equipment	1,111,358	1,133,546
Interest income	(2,157,809)	(1,807,288)
Disposal profit on PPE	(67,500)	-
Non-cash income tax expenses	(958,526)	968,201
Provision for gratuity	407,907	1,408,607
Exchange Equalization Reserve	2,602,627	461,821
Changes in working capital		
Gratuity paid	(312,500)	-
Decrease / (Increase) in trade and other receivables	901,163	(2,227,378)
Increase in trade and other payables	1,424,277	10,458,687
Net cash generated from operating activities	7,046,862	19,695,322

The significant accounting policies and notes from pages 81-99 form an integral part of these financial statements.

Cash flows from investing activities

Interest received	2,157,809	1,807,288
Movement in fixed deposits	(7,815,414)	(4,927,585)
Acquisition of property, plant and equipment	(547,898)	(900,907)
Net cash absorbed in investing activities	(6,205,503)	(4,021,204)

Cash flows from financing activities

Proceeds received from funds	(25,647,960)	(10,786,531)
Sales proceed on disposal of PPE	67,500	-
Net cash absorbed in financing activities	(25,580,460)	(10,786,531)

Net (decrease) / increase in cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year	86,947,102	82,059,515
(Decrease) / Increase	(24,739,101)	4,887,587
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year	62,208,001	86,947,102

The significant accounting policies and notes from pages 81-99 form an integral part of these financial statements.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS – 31ST MARCH 2019

1. CORPORATE INFORMATION

1.1. Domicile and legal form

LIRNEasia is a Company limited by guarantee incorporated and domiciled in Sri Lanka and the registration number of the Company is GA 41. The registered office and principal place of business of the Company is situated at No.12, Balcombe place, Colombo 08, Sri Lanka.

1.2. Principal activities and nature of operations

The Company is engaged in support economic and other reforms in networked economies that would enable people in Sri Lanka and Asia to better use information and communication technologies (ICTs) and complementary infrastructures, through dialogue, policy and regulatory advice, research, development, consultancy, training and other activities.

2. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

2.1. General

2.1.1. Basis of preparation

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Sri Lanka Accounting Standard for Small and Medium- Sized Entities issued by the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Sri Lanka. These Financial Statements are presented in Sri Lankan Rupees (Rs.) and all financial information presented in Sri Lankan Rupees has been rounded to the nearest rupee.

The Financial Statements were authorized for issue by the Board of Directors on Thursday, 25th of July 2019.

2.1.2. Comparative information

The Accounting Policies are consistently applied by the Company and are consistent with those of the previous year other than those required by the Sri Lanka Accounting

The significant accounting policies and notes from pages 81-99-form an integral part of these financial statements.

Standards for Small and Medium Sized Entities. The previous year's figures and phrases are re-arranged wherever necessary to conform to the current year's presentation.

2.1.3. Going concern

The Directors have made an assessment of the Company's ability to continue as a going concern and they do not intend either to liquidate or to cease trading.

2.1.4. Directors' responsibility for the financial statements

The Board of Directors is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with Sri Lanka Accounting Standards and as per the provisions of the Companies Act No. 07 of 2007. This responsibility includes: designing, implementing and maintaining internal controls relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error; selecting and applying appropriate accounting policies; and making accounting estimates that are reasonable in the circumstances.

2.1.5. Taxation

a) Current taxes

The provision for income tax is based on the elements of income and expenditure as reported in the financial statements and computed in accordance with the provisions of the Inland Revenue Act No. 24 of 2017 and subsequent amendments thereto.

b) Deferred taxation

Deferred tax is recognised on differences between the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities in the financial statements and their corresponding tax bases (known as temporary differences). Deferred tax liabilities are recognised for all temporary differences that are expected to increase taxable profit in the future. Deferred tax assets are recognised for all temporary differences that are expected to reduce taxable profit in the future, and any unused tax losses or unused tax credits. Deferred tax assets are measured at the highest amount that, on the basis of current or estimated future taxable profit, is more likely than not to be recovered. The net carrying amount of deferred tax assets is reviewed at each reporting date and is adjusted to reflect the current assessment of future taxable profits. Any adjustments are recognised in profit or loss. Deferred tax is calculated at the tax rates that are expected to apply to the taxable profit (tax loss) of the periods in which it expects the deferred tax asset to be

realised or the deferred tax liability to be settled, on the basis of tax rates that have been enacted or substantively enacted by the end of the reporting period.

2.1.6. Borrowing costs

All borrowing costs are recognised in profit or loss in the period in which they are incurred.

2.1.7. Events occurring after the reporting date

All material events occurring after the reporting date are considered and where appropriate adjustments to or disclosures are made in the respective notes to the accounts.

2.1.8. Foreign Currency Translation

All foreign exchange transactions are converted to Sri Lankan Rupees, which is the Company's reporting currency at the rates of exchange prevailing at the time the transactions are affected. Monetary assets and liabilities denominated in foreign currencies are translated to Sri Lankan Rupees equivalents at the end of each reporting period using the closing spot foreign exchange rates.

Non-monetary assets and liabilities measured at historical cost are translated using exchange rates that existed when the values were determined. Non-monetary assets and liabilities measured at fair value are translated using the exchange rate that existed when the fair values were determined. The resulting exchange difference is recognised in the profit or loss for the period.

2.2. Assets and basis of their valuation

Assets classified as current assets in the Statement of financial position are cash and those which are expected to be realized in cash during the normal operating cycle of the Company's business or within one year from the reporting date whichever is shorter. Assets other than current assets are those which the Company intends to hold beyond a period of one year from the reporting date.

2.2.1. Property, plant and equipment

Items of property, plant and equipment are measured at cost less accumulated depreciation and any accumulated impairment losses. Depreciation is charged so as

to allocate the cost of assets less their residual values over their estimated useful lives, using the straight-line method. The following annual rates are used for the depreciation of property, plant and equipment:

Computers	Over 03 Years
Furniture and fittings	Over 04 Years
Equipment	Over 04 Years
Vehicle	Over 04 Years

If there is an indication that there has been a significant change in depreciation rate, useful life or residual value of an asset, the depreciation of that asset is revised prospectively to reflect the new expectations.

2.2.2. Investments

All long-term investments are stated at cost less any amount written off to reflect any permanent diminution in value of such investments.

The cost of the investment is the cost of acquisition inclusive of brokerage fees and bank fees.

2.2.3. Trade and other receivables

Most sales are made on the basis of normal credit terms, and the receivables do not bear interest. Where credit is extended beyond normal credit terms, receivables are measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method. At the end of each reporting period, the carrying amounts of trade and other receivables are reviewed to determine whether there is any objective evidence that the amounts are not recoverable. If so, an impairment loss is recognised immediately in profit or loss.

2.2.4. Impairment of assets

At each reporting date, property, plant and equipment and investments are reviewed to determine whether there is any indication that those assets have suffered an impairment loss. If there is an indication of possible impairment, the recoverable amount of any affected asset (or group of related assets) is estimated and compared with its carrying amount. If estimated recoverable amount is lower, the carrying amount is reduced to its estimated recoverable amount, and an impairment loss is recognised immediately in profit or loss. Similarly, at each reporting date, inventories are assessed for impairment by comparing the carrying amount of each item of

inventory (or group of similar items) with its selling price less costs to complete and sell. If an item of inventory (or group of similar items) is impaired, its carrying amount is reduced to selling price less costs to complete and sell, and an impairment loss is recognized immediately in profit or loss. If an impairment loss subsequently reverses, the carrying amount of the asset (or group of related assets) is increased to the revised estimate of its recoverable amount (selling price less costs to complete and sell, in the case of inventories), but not in excess of the amount that would have been determined had no impairment loss been recognised for the asset (group of related assets) in prior years. A reversal of an impairment loss is recognised immediately in profit or loss.

2.2.5. Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents are defined as cash in hand, demand deposits and short-term highly liquid investments, readily convertible to known amounts of cash and subject to insignificant risk of changes in value.

For the purpose of statement of cash flows, cash and cash equivalents consist of cash in hand, deposits in banks net of outstanding bank overdrafts.

Interest paid is classified as operating cash flows, for the purpose of presentation of cash flow statement, reported based on indirect method.

2.3. Liabilities and provisions

Liabilities classified as current liabilities on the statement of financial position are those which fall due for payment on demand or within one year from the reporting date.

Non-current liabilities are those balances that fall due for payment after one year from the reporting date.

All known liabilities have been accounted for in preparing these Financial Statements. Provisions and liabilities are recognized when the Company has a legal or constructive obligation as a result of past events, and it is probable that an outflow of economic benefits will be required to settle the obligation.

2.3.1. Trade and other payables

Trade payables are obligations on the basis of normal credit terms and do not bear interest. Trade payables denominated in a foreign currency are translated into Sri

Lankan Rupees (Rs.) using the exchange rate at the reporting date. Foreign exchange gains or losses are included in other income or other expenses.

2.3.2. Employee benefit

2.3.2.1. Defined benefit plan – Retirement gratuity

If an entity is not able, without undue cost or effort to use the projected unit credit method to measure its obligation and cost under defined benefit plans, the entity is allowed to adopt a simplified method in measuring its defined benefit obligation with respect to current employees.

Full provision has been made on account of retiring gratuity from the first year of service of the employee, in conformity with Section 28.19 of the Sri Lanka Financial Reporting Standards for Small and Medium Sized Enterprises “Employee Benefits” at half (1/2) month’s salary each year of service from the date commencement of service.

However, according to the Payment of Gratuity Act No. 12 of 1983, the liabilities for gratuity to an employee arise only on completion of five years continued service with the Company.

The liability is not externally funded nor actuarially valued.

2.3.2.2. Defined contribution plan

A defined contribution plan is a post-employment benefit plan under which an entity pays fixed contribution in to a separate entity and will have no legal or constructive obligation to pay further amounts. Obligation for contribution to defined contribution plans are recognized as an employee benefit expense in the statements of comprehensive income in the period during which services are rendered by employees.

a) Employees’ Provident Fund

The Company and employee’s contribution 12% and 8% respectively on the salary of each employee to the approved provident fund.

b) Employees’ Trust Fund

The Company contribution 3% of the salary of each employee to the Employees’ Trust Fund.

2.3.3. Bank loans and overdrafts

Interest bearing liabilities are initially recognized at the transaction price including transaction costs, and subsequently measured at amortized cost using the effective interest method. Interest expense is recognised on the basis of the effective interest method and is included in finance costs.

2.3.4. Capital commitments and contingencies

All material capital commitments and contingent liabilities of the Company are disclosed in the respective notes to the accounts.

2.4. Statement of comprehensive income

2.4.1. Revenue recognition

a) Revenue

Revenue is recognised to the extent that it is probable that the economic benefits will flow to the Company, and the revenue and associated costs incurred or to be incurred can be reliably measured. Revenue is measured at the fair value of the consideration received or receivable, net of discounts and sales-related taxes collected on behalf of the government of Sri Lanka.

b) Finance income

Interest income is recognized as it accrues in profit or loss, using the effective interest method.

c) Dividend income

Dividend income from investments is recognized in the period in which the Company's right to receive payment has been established, and is included in "other income".

d) Other income

Other income is recognized on an accrual basis.

2.4.2. Expenditure recognition

a) All expenditure incurred in the running of the business and in maintaining the property, plant and equipment in a state of efficiency has been charged to the

statement of comprehensive income in arriving at the profit for the year.

b) For the purpose of presentation of statement of comprehensive income, the Directors are of the opinion that the function of expenses method presents fairly the elements of the Company's performance, hence such presentation method is adopted.

3. REVENUE

	2019	2018
	Rs.	Rs.
Income received	33,420,956	36,757,639

4. OTHER INCOME

	2019	2018
	Rs.	Rs.
Profit on disposal of PPE	67,500	-
Interest income	2,157,809	1,807,288
	2,225,309	1,807,288

5. FINANCE COSTS

	2019	2018
	Rs.	Rs.
Bank Charges	731,423	647,283
Exchange Loss	452,324	578,605
	1,183,747	1,225,888

6. PROFIT BEFORE TAX

	2019	2018
	Rs.	Rs.
Is stated after charging all expenses including the following:		
Auditor's remuneration	98,166	92,868
Depreciation	1,111,358	1,133,842
Personnel cost include:		
- Defined benefit plan costs - Gratuity	407,907	1,408,607
- Defined contribution plan cost - E.P.F.	820,591	667,422
- Defined contribution plan cost - E.T.F.	205,148	166,848
- Salaries and wages	6,837,524	5,561,924

7. INCOME TAX EXPENSE

Current tax expense	1,404,992	1,183,258
Deferred tax reversal	(204,300)	(152,990)
	1,200,692	1,030,268

(9)

8. PROPERTY, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT

	As at 1 st April 2019	Additions	(Disposals)/ Adjustments	Exchange gain/loss on realization	As at 31 st March 2019
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
Cost					
Freehold assets					
Furniture and fittings	2,139,986	179,213	(2,031,219)	269,576	557,556
Computer	6,268,181	162,485	(4,418,724)	777,834	2,789,776
Equipment	3,864,053	206,200	-	494,213	4,564,466
Vehicles	8,846,916	-	-	1,141,190	9,988,106
	<u>21,119,137</u>	<u>547,898</u>	<u>(6,449,943)</u>	<u>2,682,813</u>	<u>17,899,904</u>
Accumulated depreciation					
Freehold assets					
Furniture and fittings	2,025,303	106,134	(2,031,219)	265,349	365,567
Computer	5,207,710	759,386	(4,418,724)	610,979	2,159,351
Equipment	3,242,642	245,838	-	427,773	3,916,253
Vehicles	8,846,916	-	-	1,141,190	9,988,106
	<u>19,322,570</u>	<u>1,111,358</u>	<u>(6,449,943)</u>	<u>2,445,291</u>	<u>16,429,276</u>
Carrying value	<u><u>1,796,566</u></u>				<u><u>1,470,628</u></u>

9. DEFERRED TAX ASSET

	2019 Rs.	2018 Rs.
Balance at the beginning of the year	916,407	754,884
Reversal for the year	204,300	152,990
Exchange Equalization Reserve	106,476	8,534
Balance at the end of the year	1,227,183	916,407

	2019		2018	
	Temporary difference Rs.	Tax effect on temporary difference Rs.	Temporary difference Rs.	Tax effect on temporary difference Rs.
Deferred tax provision from;				
On property, plant and equipment	362,050	50,687	1,305,466	130,547
On retirement benefit obligation	(9,127,645)	(1,277,870)	(7,851,230)	(785,123)
Balance at the end of the year	(8,765,595)	(1,227,183)	(6,545,764)	(916,407)

10. OTHER FINANCIAL ASSETS

	2019	2018
	Rs.	Rs.
Investments in fixed deposits		
Fixed Deposits	27,749,681	19,934,267
	27,749,681	19,934,267

11. TRADE AND OTHER RECEIVABLES

	2019	2018
	Rs.	Rs.
Prepayments	1,953,950	3,515,157
Interest Receivable	608,950	264,720
Advances	526,515	466,342
Other receivables	1,584,320	1,328,679
	4,673,735	5,574,898

12. RETIREMENT BENEFIT OBLIGATION

	2019	2018
	Rs.	Rs.
Balance at the beginning of the year	7,851,230	6,370,611
Add: Provision for the year	407,907	1,408,607
	8,259,137	7,779,217
Less: Payments made during the year	(312,500)	-
Exchange gain/loss	1,181,008	72,013
Balance at the end of the year	9,127,645	7,851,230

13. CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS

	2019	2018
	Rs.	Rs.
Favorable balances		
Current accounts		
Hatton National Bank A/c No003010507486- LKR	292,972	379,862
National Development Bank A/c No.101000377776- LKR	126,157	149,262
Nations Trust Bank A/c No.002100013507- LKR	-	2,209,954
Savings accounts		
Hatton National Bank A/c No.003910404375- CAD	3,833,863	3,380,110
A/c No.- 003910404384-USD	48,463,715	78,309,857
	-	
National Development Bank A/c No.106500002371- USD	5,488,742	1,161,972
	-	
Petty Cash	35,000	20,000
Cash in safe (in USD)	4,134,394	1,336,085
	62,374,843	86,947,102
Unfavourable balances		
Bank overdrafts		
Nation Trust Bank A/c No.002100013507- LKR	166,841	-
	166,841	-
Cash and cash equivalents for the purpose of statement of cash flows	62,208,002	86,947,102

14. PROJECTS

	2019	2018
	Rs.	Rs.
Vriens& Partners	-	1,910,406
NTT project	(164,047)	-
FORD 2	-	3,130,065
MCC Project	1,866,633	-
Megatrends	(1,444,175)	-
University of Washington	-	402,913
GPSDD	1,405,481	-
IDRC - Agri / BPO	-	(12,490,874)
IDRC - Big Data	-	(8,910,960)
IDRC - Big Data Network	12,986,199	11,480,373
IDRC - Network Economy in Myanmar	-	(4,430,837)
IDRC - Turning Evidence	(26,886)	13,632,201
IDRC - Digital Access Project	(7,951,466)	16,101,372
SIDA after access	145,755	-
CPR in Africa & Asia	(3,163,245)	10,178,318
FORD 3	8,284,766	20,824,227
FORD 4	18,053,241	-
Household Survey on ICT Access	2,413,297	4,315,694
World Bank Project	1,826,643	3,737,257
	34,232,194	59,880,154

15. TRADE AND OTHER PAYABLES

	2019	2018
	Rs.	Rs.
Other creditors		
Other Payables	5,933,202	10,585,532
Direct non related project expenses	4,683,180	4,148,104
	10,616,382	14,733,636
Accruals		
Auditors' remuneration	101,957	94,198
Staff Development Provision	21,131,022	15,597,250
	21,232,979	15,691,448
	31,849,361	30,425,084

16. TAXATION

	2019	2018
	Rs.	Rs.
Balance at the beginning of the year	1,124,466	3,153
Add: Provision for the year		
- Tax on taxable income	1,404,992	1,183,258
	1,404,992	1,183,258
	2,529,458	1,186,411
Less: Payments made during the year		
- Income tax	1,931,910	61,945
- Withholding tax (W.H.T.)	120,832	-
	2,052,741	61,945
Balance at the end of the year	476,716	1,124,466

17. DIRECTORS INTEREST IN CONTRACTS

Prof. Rohan Samarajiva who is a director of the organisation received a sum of Rs. 5,064,458/- from the LIRNEasia as consultancy fees during the year.

18. CAPITAL COMMITMENTS AND CONTINGENCIES

There have been no capital commitments and contingent liabilities as at the reporting date.

19. EVENTS OCCURRING AFTER THE REPORTING DATE

There were no material events occurring after the reporting date 31st March 2019 that require adjustments to or disclosure in the financial statements.

INCOME STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2019

	SCHEDULES	2019 Rs.	2018 Rs.
REVENUE	(i)	33,420,956	36,757,639
ADD:			
OTHER INCOME			
Gain on disposal of PPE		67,500	-
Interest income		2,157,809	1,807,288
		2,225,309	1,807,288
		35,646,264	38,564,927
LESS:			
EXPENSES			
Administration and establishment expenses	(ii)	29,165,961	27,009,645
Finance costs	(iii)	1,183,747	1,225,888
		30,349,708	28,235,532
NET PROFIT FOR THE YEAR		5,296,557	10,329,394

**SCHEDULES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS –
31ST MARCH 2019**

I. REVENUE

	2019	2018
	Rs.	Rs.
Income Received	<u>33,420,956</u>	<u>36,757,639</u>

II. ADMINISTRATION AND ESTABLISHMENT EXPENSES

	2019	2018
	Rs.	Rs.
Auditors' remuneration	98,166	92,868
Consultancy and Research Fees	7,727,068	6,670,870
Courier Charges	105,705	85,843
Training and Educational Expenses	727,198	680,716
Professional Fees	331,468	438,529
Furniture Fittings Hiring and Maintenance Charges	729,926	663,160
Humanitarian Assistance	434,055	-
Printing and Stationery	886,398	796,709
Telephone Charges - Local and International	726,603	615,674
Water	76,208	81,723
Traveling Expenses	327,048	153,507
Staff Welfare	242,786	471,326
Casual Wages	183,341	128,686
Office Maintenance	429,413	678,874
EPF Contribution	820,591	667,422
ETF Contribution	205,148	166,848
Salaries	6,837,524	5,561,924
Gratuity	407,907	1,408,607
Business Development and Improvement Expenses	133,707	352,783
Web Maintenance	364,037	363,052
Medical Bills	6,432	-
Insurance staff	568,810	531,003
Newspaper / Magazine, Advertising	17,734	133,515
Rent	1,008,349	939,059

Electricity	442,407	464,280
Depreciation	1,111,358	1,133,842
Subscription	113,498	36,343
IT Services	111,494	74,408
Vehicle Maintenance	202,415	259,823
Colloquium Expenses	34,143	29,435
Conference & Workshop	-	14,381
Surcharges	604	63,524
Staff/ Strategy Development	3,390,872	3,069,000
Board Meeting	62,199	-
LA Image Building	118,089	181,910
Postage and Delivery	183,260	-
	29,165,961	27,009,645

III. FINANCE COSTS

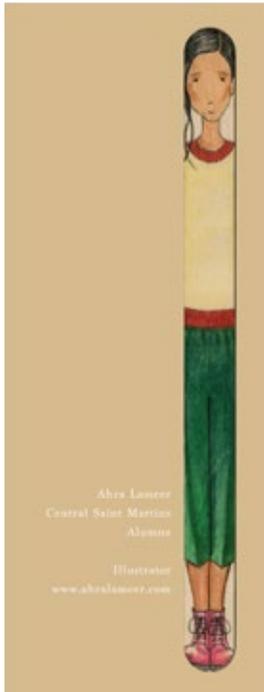
	2019	2018
	Rs.	Rs.
Bank Charges	731,423	647,283
Exchange Loss	452,324	578,605
	1,183,747	1,225,888



Some remain offline

We are now in the age of data, where the digital traces in our consumption of ICTs and ICT-enabled services are coupled with algorithms to make decisions on a personal level (for e.g. whether one gets credit) and at a public level (e.g. transportation planning). How will decisions be made for those who have no digital trace, or for those with minimal digital footprints? And how might the non-representative digitized data used by algorithms perpetuate or amplify biases, prejudices and exclusions?





About the Artist

Ahra Lameer
Illustrator

www.ahralameer.com

Ahra's playful work expands on childhood and its memory, inviting prolonged scrutiny of the link between size and time, elaborating on both childhood and adult stages of life.

The Lollystick concept came to life as a result of her lifelong fascination with the miniature object.

Born in Norfolk, Ahra spent a large part of her growing years in Sri Lanka, before returning to England over a decade ago.

These culturally contrasting atmospheres are apparent in her work as she continues to confront the topic of childhood.

Design and layout by

Leyanvi Miranda



LIRNEasia
Pro-poor. Pro-market.

www.lirneasia.net