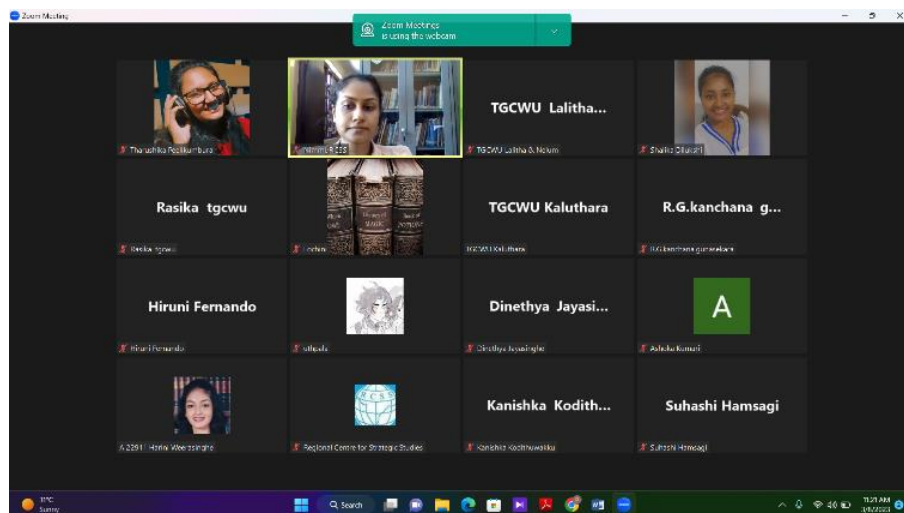


Five Thematic Sharing and Advocacy Online Events

International Women's Day Program 2023 via Zoom

An International Women's Day Program was organized by the RCSS on March 08th from 10 am – 12 pm. Participants of the five advocacy meetings, members of the Asia Foundation, and their partners were invited. There were twenty-six participants in this event. The Resource Persons were Dr. Pavithra Jayawardena, Senior Lecturer/Department of International Relations and Coordinator, Postgraduate Diploma in Gender and Women's Studies, Faculty of Graduate Studies, University of Colombo, Ms. Harini Weerasinghe, Research Intern/RCSS, Ms. Kanishka Kodithuwakku, Research Intern/RCSS, and Ms. Nimmi Jayathilake, Program Officer/RCSS. Ms. Kanishka Kodithuwakku presented the history and significance of International Women's Day. Ms. Harini Weerasinghe presented on Women's Rights and achieving gender equality from a law perspective, Ms. Nimmi Jayathilake presented on the theme of International Women's Day 2023, #EmbracingEquity and the difference between equity and equality. Finally, Dr. Pavithra Jayawardena provided overall insight into the significance of the role played by women in society, why is it necessary to have a better focus on gender inequality issues, and how women should work towards elevating the spirit of other women. During the open discussion, the participants voiced the various challenges faced by women due to gender discrimination.



Podcast by Mrs. Rupika Wickramasinghe

Mrs. Rupika Wickramasinghe is one of the participants in the “Advocacy Meeting on SDG 05 and 08 for Women in SMEs”. She is the founder of “Nimasha Mushroom”, a mushroom cultivating and selling business. She also trains other women on starting mushroom cultivation and selling them. She speaks of her success story and how she helps other women to earn an income for 20+ years. The link below is a podcast of her inspiring story.

<https://podcasters.spotify.com/pod/show/po32/episodes/Podcast-by-Mrs--Rupika-Wickramasinghe-e20ot3o>

Podcast by Ms. Harini Weerasinghe

As it stands, the Sri Lankan Constitution guarantees the right to equality before the law and equal protection of the law of all persons (Article 12). Notably therefore the Constitution does not prohibit discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation or gender identity and/or expression and the aforesaid legal notion has been reflected in other strands of Sri Lanka, notably in the spheres of penal legislation, property rights etc. However, in terms of the law’s practical application, Sri Lanka still faces a number of challenges in terms of practical application albeit fanned by cultural stereotypes and institutions that reinforce and support patriarchy. Listen more on this topic from Ms. Harini Weerasinghe. The link to access the podcast is mentioned below.

<https://spotifyanchor-web.app.link/e/pCDLnGKhbyb>

Podcast by Ms. Nimmi Jayathilake

In this podcast, Ms. Nimmi Jayathilake discusses the five advocacy meetings, their significance for women, and why these meetings were based on SDGs. The podcast begins by describing the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, their significance, and the contribution of the United Nations in Sri Lanka toward realizing these goals. Next, the podcast explains the five advocacy meetings for women in higher education, health, governance, and small and medium enterprises, why the advocacy meetings were held for women in the above-mentioned sectors, and their outcomes. Further, the podcast discusses why the advocacy meetings were based on SDGs 03, 05, 08, and 16. The link to access the podcast is mentioned below.

<https://spotifyanchor-web.app.link/e/pO7B8NKhbyb>

Podcast by Ms. Kanishka Kodithuwakku

Ms. Kanishka Kodithuwakku speaks on the same aspects, i.e., SDGs, their significance, and the five advocacy meetings in Sinhala for comprehension by the monolingual speakers in Sinhala. The link to access the podcast is mentioned below.

<https://spotifyanchor-web.app.link/e/I5dCRIKhbyb>