

SDJF Newsletter

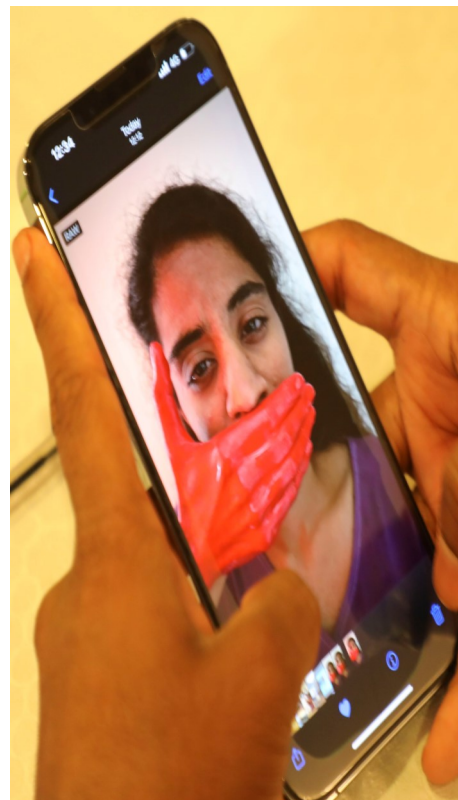
This International Women’s Day Let’s #BreakTheBias 🌸

By Ayodhya Krishani Amarajeewa

International Women's Day (IWD), March 8th, is a global day celebrating the social, economic, cultural, and political achievements of women. The day also marks a call to action for accelerating women's equality. IWD has occurred for well over a century, with the first gathering in 1911 supported by over a million people. IWD is truly global for what it campaigns for which is the equality of all genders and equality of women.

The society has many gender biases and stereotypes. Women were the first to voice against these stereotypes and biases and reclaim the space. Women are still considered little less, meaning too weak or too sensitive for some roles in the society. In this tech age, employment opportunities for men and women are similar and having women employees are considered a smart choice for women outsmart men in performance. However, there is also issues related to inequitable pay and unequal treatment of women due to the mere fact they are women. So far, no country has achieved gender equality, while the fact that 2.7 billion women are kept from accessing the same choice of jobs as men demonstrate the legal restrictions hampering women from achieving equality in society. Sri Lanka is a case in point which shows although 52% of women constitute the entire population only 5.3% are represented in the parliament (UNDP.org).

Therefore, the IWD web platform have seven key missions to bring about and sustain change in technology, workplaces, health and sports sectors in terms of elevating respect and equality for women. The seven missions of IWD platform are: (i) To elevate and advance gender parity in technology and celebrate the women forging innovation; (ii) To forge inclusive work cultures where women's careers thrive and their achievements are celebrated; (iii) To elevate women forging change via technology and sustainability in communities, workplaces and beyond; (iv) To celebrate the work of women creatives and elevate visibility for commercial projects and commissions; (v) To shine a spotlight on activity uplifting and inspiring women to pursue goals without bias or barrier; (vi) To assist women to be in a position of power to make informed decisions about their health; and (vii) To celebrate women athletes and applaud when equality is achieved in pay, sponsorship and visibility (www.internationalwomensday.com/).



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

This International Women’s Day,
Let’s #BreakTheBias cont2

Making University students Respon-
sible Media Citizens 2

SDJF & InSPIRE Webinar on World
Data Privacy Day 3

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- Inter-University Competition for InSPIRE Students
- Inter-district Exchange Programme

Making University students Responsible Media citizens

Continued from page 1

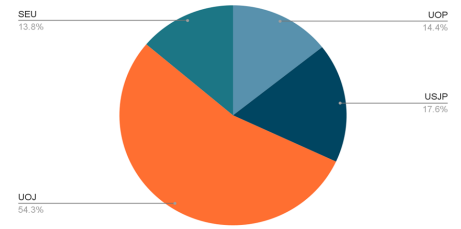
On this Women's Day, SDJF will organize an online campaign to break the bias and challenge the stereotypes of women in the Sri Lankan society. Incubator Spaces for Promoting Information Rights and Freedom of Expression (InSPIRE) project of SDJF, realized this international Women's Day is an opportunity to advocate for women's equality. This campaign will happen to create wider awareness on gender stereotypes. InSPIRE will create an awareness campaign using students' media products as an asset to campaign for #BreakTheBias. Furthermore, SDJF will organize a student forum, during which university students discuss the topic #BreakTheBias and women's equality which helps sustainability tomorrow. This will happen on the 14th March, with representatives from all four universities Jaffna, Peradeniya, Sri Jayewardenepura and South-eastern, talking about the campaign theme and women rights in general and in the context of Sri Lanka.

SDJF is committed in promoting gender equality, gender mainstreaming and fight against gender stereotyping in Sri Lanka for the last 13 years through various activities.

In this context, we can truly celebrate a world and a time where difference is valued and celebrated. Collectively we can all #BreakTheBias.

Sri Lanka Development Journalist Forum (SDJF) conducted Practical Training Workshops on 10 different media categories from the students from the University of Sri Jayewardenepura (USJP), University of Jaffna (UOJ), Southeastern University (SEU) and University of Peradeniya (UOP). In total 187 students were benefited from the trainings. So far, these trainings have been conducted in Jaffna, Kandy, Ampara and Colombo.

The thematic areas of practical training workshops were multimedia articles and blogs, cartoon/doodle animation, mobile photography, DSLR photography, short films and mobile video stories. At the end of the workshops, students have developed media products under the guidance



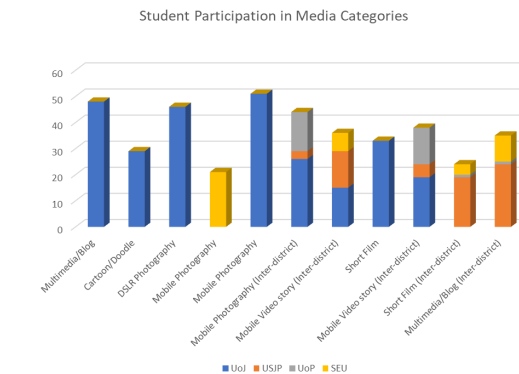
Student participation in Practical training workshops based on their University



created mobile stories that reflected topics such as ethnic harmony, inter-cultural dialogue, gender equality, etc.

The most innovative workshop, Cartoon and Doodle animation was full of enthusiasm and creativity as students tried to be artistic and at the same time socially responsible. They created doodle art that reflected topic such as social media and its impact in society, gender bias and gender inequality, child rights and prevention of child abuse, etc.

The trainers mentored and guided students to address social issues through their artistic work whether it is through DSLR photography, mobile photography, doodle animation or video stories. In this way, SDJF is making sure university students are in the making of becoming ethical journalists and responsible media citizens who will be assets to the country in the future.



and mentorship of the trainers. During the short film workshop conducted in Jaffna alone, the students were able to [produce eight short films](#) with great depth and meaning. The students created [blogs and multimedia articles on various regional issues](#) in their respective communities, produced [cartoon/doodle art](#) and



Webinar on World Data Privacy Day on 28th January 2022

SDJF organized a virtual webinar on the 28th January, 2022 campaigning for the World Data Privacy Day. The webinar was organized by SDJF to promote the importance of data privacy in the cyber space. The InSPIRE project team gathered university students to participate on the webinar so they can learn new tactics in securing their personal data on the cyberspace while learning new threats to their personal data.

More than 50 students participated in the webinar conducted by the Guest Speaker, Ms. Hasna Rafeek who is a Cyber Security Professional with more than four years of experience in IT Governance, Risk and Compliance (IT GRC), data privacy and information security.

This webinar was conducted in partnership with Association of Cybersecurity Professionals, Sri Lanka.



World Data Privacy Day— Data Protection and Privacy

Promoting multiculturalism and inter-ethnic Dialogue through Inter-district Exchange

SDJF organized four inter-district workshops in Kandy and Colombo. In the exchange,, SDJF facilitated few formal activities to promote pluralism, diversity and inter-ethnic and inter-cultural experience. Those included, grouping the students into mix groups, banner art competition, field trip, group work and practical training during the workshop sessions. The informal activities included interaction during lunch and tea breaks and other opportunities to communicate as and when time and space permitted. The grouping of students was done with the idea in mind how they are to achieve creative projects for the Inter-University competition, if they are to work collaboratively on a project representing two different universities. This process was a very important inter-cultural experience. This was the first time that most of the students from different universities got to know each other. “This is a great experience. We learned new languages and learned about each other’s culture. Having new friends from other universities made us feel how it is to share with people with different perspective on life,” said Keshani Jayaweera, 3rd year, Mass Communication (Special) student from the university of Sri Jayewardenepura.



The banner art competition provided the students a unique experience. They had to put into test how they can come to an agreement on a certain social issue and how to reflect that in the banner in the form of an art collectively. When inquired about their learning process, they said it was a true cultural experience and it made them realize how important to learn each other’s language. They had to read expressions of others to communicate better as not knowing each other’s language was a barrier sometimes. In this way, they have come to terms with understanding communication is something beyond language. shared their personal stories, became emotional and expressed freely about the problems they have faced. While Muslim girls shared how restrictions in their community affect them, the Sinhala girls also showed camaraderie and support by sharing some of the similar instances where male dominance can be seen in their respective communities.



While banner art making was a learning experience, there were other activities such as the field trip and teambuilding activity done by using threads. The field trip definitely was the highlight of informal interactions among the students which strengthened their camaraderie . They truly enjoyed and the inter-cultural dialogue was strengthened by the teambuilding activity and field trip.