



**(Formerly AFLAC International)
Established in February 1995**

A Government Approved Charity
Incorporated as a Limited Liability Company
In Sri Lanka in April 1998

**TWENTY SEVENTH ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

"It is better by far to light a solitary candle than to curse the darkness"

CANDLEAID LANKA
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Founder President
Capt Elmo Jayawardena

Priya Cooray	-	Vice President/Director
Dil Jayawardena	-	Executive Director
Razeen Sally	-	Director
Himali Senanayake	-	Director
Mevan Jayawardena	-	Director
Yasmin Weerasuriya	-	Director
Aruna Fernando	-	Director

The Founder President and all Directors function in a voluntary and honorary capacity.

Bankers:

Hatton National Bank
Moratuwa Branch
143/1 New Galle Road
Moratuwa
Sri Lanka

Nations Trust Bank
Moratuwa Branch
89 New Galle Road
Moratuwa
Sri Lanka

Auditors:

B.R. De Silva & Co.
Chartered Accountants
22/4 Vijaya Kumaranatunga Mawatha
Colombo 5, Sri Lanka

Corporate Secretaries:

Corporate Services Ltd
216 De Saram Place
Colombo 10
Sri Lanka

Regd. Address : CandleAid Lanka, 45 Cornelius Place, Korlawella, Moratuwa, Sri Lanka

Office Address : 21/4 Dharmaratne Avenue, Rawathawatte, Moratuwa, Sri Lanka

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Email : admin@candleaid.org

Website : www.candleaid.org

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

It gives me great pleasure to offer a message for the 28th year annual report of CandleAid. It is a message similar to the ones I wrote before. I need not change the gist as the actions have been almost the same through the years – simply being a link between someone’s generosity and another’s humanitarian need. Our commitment is the same and it is the poor who benefit by the effort we make. We are so happy that we are able to offer some sort of relief to people who come to us seeking help.

The collective kindness of our sponsors is spread across the world. A person who believes in CandleAid, residing in some far-off location helps someone in Sri Lanka that he or she has never seen. CandleAid cannot function without the constant and consistent generosity of our network of supporters worldwide as well as in Sri Lanka. Year after year we profusely thank them for being with CandleAid.

I now bring in the people who are coordinators. We have more than 1000 volunteers working in CandleAid. They spend their money and time and energy helping people without any gain for themselves except a ‘feel good’ feeling by helping people in need. They do CandleAid work without any monetary reward purely sharing their kindness to give life to the organization and its cause.

Words fail me to express adequately how grateful I am to each and every one who is part of CandleAid.

Then I need to thank all the CandleAid core people from the board of directors to the man who comes and cuts the grass in our office green. They all carry the weight of Candleaid on their shoulders. And I am eternally grateful to them.

This message will be the same thing next year too as we operate in the same way at CandleAid year after year. The work carried out during the year under review is highlighted in detail in the pages that follow.

Let us continue walking our path assisting people who live below the poverty line, enabling them to see at least a silver lining in their cloud laden lives.

Thank you.
Blue skies



Capt Elmo Jayawardena
Founder President
CandleAid Lanka

CANDLEAID REPRESENTATIVES

CandleAid is represented in thirteen cities overseas. The primary role of these representatives is to promote the cause of CandleAid in the regions/cities they represent and source donor funds for its humanitarian programmes and projects in Sri Lanka.

Amsterdam

Ms Carla Horn - Janter Gouwweg 22, 1412 DB Naarden, Netherlands

Calgary

Mr & Mrs Kithsiri Perera - 10647 Shillington Crescent SW, Calgary, Alberta T2W 0N8, Canada

California & Other US Cities

Mr Lakshan Fernando - 27110, Fond Du Lac Road, Ranch Palos Verdes, CA 90275, U.S.A.

Eastbourne

Mr. Christopher Perera - 166 Ringwood Road, Eastbourne, East Sussex, BN 22 8UD, U.K.

Frankfurt

Ms Claudia Frey - Normannenweg 18, D63128 Dietzenbach, Germany

Hong Kong

Mr. Jaliya Pilimalawwe - Flat A, Floor 11, Block 5, Caribbean Coast, 2 Kin Tung Road, Tung Chung, NT, Hong Kong

Melbourne

Ms Asha de Silva - 76 Monbrae Circuit, Narrewarren North, Victoria 3804, Australia

Perth

Ms Yolande de Silva - 318 Fish Street, 269 Hardy Road, Cloverdale, WA 6105, Australia

Singapore

Ms Heshani Nesfield - 99 Meyer Road, # 02-01 The Sovereign, Singapore 437920

Sweden

Mr & Mrs Harald Wessman - Sigurdvagen 9A, SE-182 54 Djursholm, Sweden

Sydney

Ms Betty Miranda - 04 Doulton Drive, Cherrybrook NSW 2126, Australia

Toronto

Mr. Godwin Fernandez - 551 Shipka Court, Mississauga, Ontario L5B 3T4, Canada

Vancouver

Capt. Wayne Dannhauer - 2038 Garibaldi Way, Whistler, BC V0N 1B2, Canada

REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES

Middle East - Mr. Menaka Viraj Fernando

North America - Mr. Gerard Wijeyaratne - 927 S. 2nd Street, Philadelphia, PA

INTERNATIONAL COORDINATOR FOR HEALTH (CANCER PROGRAMME) - Ms. Sabine Dias

INTRODUCTION

CandleAid Lanka (formerly AFLAC International) is a non-profit charity that commenced operations on 6 February 1995 with the primary objective of alleviating poverty in Sri Lanka by providing financial assistance in the areas of education, food, shelter, health, and community development.

CandleAid is modelled on the premise that most people are capable of assisting a disadvantaged person in some way or the other. In that context, it functions as the link between someone's basic need and another's generosity.

REGISTRATIONS

CandleAid Lanka was incorporated as a limited liability company in Sri Lanka on 2 April 1998 bearing Registration No. N (A) 671A under the Companies Act No. 17 of 1982.

CandleAid Lanka was also registered on 21 February 2000 as a Non-Governmental Organization, bearing Registration No. FL 03701 under Voluntary Social Service Organizations (Registration & Supervision) Act No. 31 of 1980 as amended by Act No. 8 of 1998 under the Ministry of Social Services in Sri Lanka.

CandleAid Lanka (formerly AFLAC International) was declared as an Approved Charity in Sri Lanka on 12 November 2001 under the Inland Revenue Act No. 38 of 2000.

The Companies Act No. 7 of 2007 required that all existing companies be re-registered and therefore CandleAid was re-registered on 21 January 2009 obtaining new Registration No. GA 201.

OFFICE LOCATION AND STAFFING

The office is located at 21/4 Dharmaratne Avenue, Rawathawatte, Moratuwa and these premises are made available to CandleAid on a rent-free basis.

At the beginning of FY22/23, CandleAid engaged nine employees on its permanent payroll and one on contract basis at a total cost of LKR 427,709 per month (including the statutory EPF and ETF payments). This translates to an average cost of LKR 42,770 per staff member. Also, a special staff allowance of LKR 10,000 was given to all 10 employees monthly since June 2022.

There were no staff resignations during the year. The total number was increased to 11 with the recruitment of another contract employee as the Coordinating Secretary. Currently staff requirements are being assessed to meet the evolving work demands.

The Executive Director functioning in an honorary and voluntary capacity as the de facto Chief Executive Officer, assumes overall executive responsibility for office administration and all operations of CandleAid. This will continue until such time a suitable full time Chief Executive Officer or Chief Operation Officer is engaged by CandleAid.

BANKING ARRANGEMENTS

Donations:

All incoming donor funds are received through the following Sri Lanka Rupee Current Accounts.

- 🏦 Hatton National Bank, Moratuwa Branch - Account No. 022010223682
- 🏦 Nations Trust Bank, Moratuwa Branch - Account No. 014100008377

Donations through Credit Card payments:

CandleAid has established a 'Payment Gateway' at Dialog Axiata PLC to facilitate Donors opting to make payments by credit card. Proceeds are credited to the above-mentioned current account at Nations Trust Bank.

Disbursement of financial assistance to beneficiaries:

CandleAid has also established a relationship with National Development Bank, Moratuwa to make investments with better interest rates for the funds maintained by different sponsors with CandleAid, where the interest has been allocated as the sponsorship payment.

Investment of CandleAid Funds:

Accumulated funds since inception in 1995 are currently invested in Treasury Bills through Acuity Securities Limited, a central bank appointed primary dealer for Treasury Bills and Bonds

Short-term funds required for disbursement within a one-year time frame are invested in the form of Repurchase Agreements (Repos) at Nations Trust bank.

Audited Accounts:

CandleAid has consistently maintained high standards of transparency and accountability in all its operations. The annual accounts are audited by B.R. de Silva & Co., a reputed Firm of Chartered Accountants since inception and displayed in CandleAid's website www.candleaid.org

The detailed Audited Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2023 forms part of this report.

SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS

During the year under review, total receipts mainly in the form of donations aggregated to LKR 106,377,333 compared to LKR 72,562,037 in the previous year. This included donations for the three on-going sponsorship programmes: Education, Health, and Gift-A-Meal, as well as donations/contributions for other projects, administration levy recoveries and interest earned on investments.

Total payments amounted to LKR 88,216,624 compared to LKR 62,789,170 in the previous year. This included disbursements to sponsored beneficiaries in the three sponsorship programmes and other projects, administrative expenses, taxation, and bank charges.

REVIEW OF OPERATIONS

The Board of Directors of CandleAid was compelled to consider the plight of its beneficiaries in the context of Sri Lanka today. Cost of living has risen 46% while income levels have dwindled due to the three years of the pandemic and other relevant causes.

The Sri Lankan Rupee has devalued drastically against all major currencies of the world. To say our low-income families are bleeding is an understatement.

In view of the above, we have taken below increases with effect from 01 July 2022.

Gift a Meal & Cancer – From LKR 2,000 to LKR 3,000

Education (University) – From LKR 2000 to LKR 3,000

Education (Pre-University) – From LKR 1500 to LKR 2,000

A review of CandleAid's operations and a description of on-going projects carried out by the organization during the year under review are as follows.

1.0 EDUCATION PROGRAMME

The student sponsorships, library project, book project and other education related projects come within the purview of the education programme. Total donations received for the education programme during FY22/23 amounted to LKR 30,083,665 compared to LKR 23,431,114 in the previous year.

1.1 Student Sponsorships

This is CandleAid's flagship programme where financial assistance is extended to students from low-income families. Monthly disbursements under this sponsorship programme are credited directly to students' bank accounts.

The cumulative total number of students sponsored under this programme from inception to 31 March 2022 is 4392. This included 975 active sponsorships as on 31 March 2023, of which 342 were university students. Local and foreign sponsors numbered 363, with several individuals and institutions sponsoring multiple students. There were 1461 student coordinators supporting the programme.

Candle Aid received sponsorship donations aggregating to LKR 27,785,815 in 2022/23 (FY 21/22 -18,428,242). Disbursements to students amounted to LKR 23,035,006 in 2022/23 (FY 21/22 - 18,801,196). The excess of donations received over disbursements represent donations received during the financial year and are due for disbursement in the following year.

1.2 Library Project

CandleAid launched this programme in 1998 to supply books and other items required in setting up libraries in schools and community centres, mostly in rural areas. Several individuals and corporate entities have funded these libraries. Such donations have amounted to LKR 252,849.89 during FY22/23.

During the year under review, CandleAid opened 29 libraries at a cost of LKR 2,448,330.76 bringing the total number of libraries since commencement of programme to 253. Out of this 140 have been General libraries, 38 are libraries in the North and East, 21 are Maths laboratories and 54 are English Books Only (EBO) libraries.

1.3 Book Project

Donations for the book project amounted to LKR 1,186,106. This has been an annual event where exercise books and stationery items are distributed to students in Moratuwa and a few other locations. A sum of LKR 1,206,590 was disbursed in FY 22/23 to a total of 943 students. Which covered students from Moratuwa, Panadura, Mathugama, Mannar, Kotapola, Ranna, Kalawewa, Matara, Ippologama, Ambagaswewa, Nuwara Eliya, Medawachchiya, Kurunegala and Hatton.

2.0 HEALTH PROGRAMME

The health programme consists of the Cancer Patient Assistance Programme, R&D Special Fund, Sigiri Trust Fund, and Kidney dialysis assistance programme. There were a few other health related disbursements outside these four segments.

Donations received for the health programme during FY 22/23 amounted to LKR 14,800,742 A sum of LKR 11,385,792 was disbursed during the year under review. The excess of disbursements over receipts represents donations received during the last financial year but disbursed during this year.

Details of the different initiatives are outlined below:

2.1 Cancer Patient Assistance Programme

This programme identifies and assists poor cancer patients to procure at least some of their essential needs through a monthly donation of LKR 3,000. The scale of the programme has expanded progressively over the years, to include 1608 cancer patients since inception.

During FY 22/23, 263 patients received assistance from 92 local and foreign donors. The programme was successfully carried out with the assistance of 255 coordinators.

During FY 22/23, LKR 10,808,569 was received as donations for the Cancer Patient Assistance programme. Disbursements to patients amounted to LKR 9,933,000.

2.2 R & D SPECIAL FUND

Established in 2015, the fund constitutes special donations aggregating to LKR 5,530,478 received from a family closely associated with CandleAid since inception. The donors wished the funds to be utilised to serve the needs of cancer patients and in special cases their immediate family members, over and above the Cancer Patient Assistance Programme.

The total number of people assisted under this special fund as of 31 March 2023 was 204, while the number of new beneficiaries assisted during the period under review was 08. The total donation for the above fund since 2015 amounted to LKR 5,530,478. The total utilization from the R & D Special Fund as of 31 March 2023 is LKR 5,280,792.

2.3 SIGIRI TRUST FUND

CandleAid in partnership with the Sigiri Trust, has established a project to financially assist patients receiving treatment from government medical institutions for lifesaving surgical and medical interventions. All patients are thoroughly screened to authenticate their medical condition, family background and financial status.

Since its inception in July 2018 up to end of March 2023, total donations received to the fund amount to LKR 19,810,658. During the same period financial assistance aggregating to LKR 18,444,145.83 has been disbursed to a total of 118 patients.

During FY 22/23 LKR 6,000,000 was received as a monthly contribution from one of the Trustees. LKR 6,868,203.59 was disbursed to 39 patients suffering various life-threatening ailments from different parts of the country. These patients have undergone lifesaving medical procedures such as bypass surgery and organ transplantation. Some patients were assisted to procure prostheses and assistive equipment to improve the quality of their lives.

While a few patients have succumbed to their illnesses, many others are leading healthier lives having overcome the debilitating effects of serious health issues.

2.4 Kidney Dialysis Assistance Programme

This is a new initiative that was launched in January 2021 to assist chronic kidney disease patients (CKD) needing regular dialysis. Patients are compelled to get dialysed in the private sector hospitals over and above the free quota given by Government hospitals. CandleAid donates the cost of one round of dialysis per month per patient for a period of six months at a cost of LKR7,000 - LKR 9, 000 per session. The feasibility of continuing beyond 6 months for any patient will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis based on several factors.

CandleAid has disbursed LKR 1,134,350 for 33 patients for the F/Y 22/23. A total of 58 patients have been facilitated through the kidney dialysis assistance programme and LKR 2,101,950 has been disbursed among them out of the total donation of LKR 3,615,353 received for the programme.

3.0 FOOD PROGRAMME

3.1 Gift-A-Meal (GAM) Sponsorships

Selected destitute families lacking nutrition are given a monthly basic food supplement valued at LKR3,000. A total of 832 families have been assisted from inception of the programme up to 31 March 2023.

During FY22/23, 199 families received assistance from CandleAid on a monthly basis. There were 96 local and foreign donors, and 153 coordinators supporting the programme.

During FY 22/23 CandleAid received donations totalling LKR 9,387,102 for the Food Programme, and disbursed LKR 7,512,275.

4.0 SPECAIL FOOD FUND

In July 2022 CandleAid launched a special food program where selected families living below the poverty line were given dry rations to the value of LKR 10,000.

During the financial year we have given 1231 families the gift of dry rations that sufficed for many days. All the distributions were handled by volunteer CandleAid coordinators spread across Sri Lanka, who ensured all CandleAid procedures were adhered to, accounting for every rupee spent.

Additionally, CandleAid gave meals to school children, a cooked meal mostly prepared at the school itself. The schools that received meals were from Panadura, Adikarigoda and Minneriya.

During FY 22/23 CandleAid received donations totalling LKR 14,604,771 for the Special Food Programme, and disbursed LKR 13,496,762.

5.0 MOTHER & CHILD PROGRAMME

This is a new initiative launched in March 2021 to assist financially handicapped single parent (mother) families. The pilot project commenced in February 2021 with one family. They receive LKR 5,000 per month to uplift their impoverished lives initially for a period of one year. During this period CandleAid will also look out for ways to empower the mother to generate a livelihood through a homegrown initiative under its Self-Empowerment of Women programme.

Donations of LKR 3,749,366.17 have been received for this programme for the FY 22/23 and 56 families have been enrolled to the system during the FY 22/23 with a total commitment of LKR 3,360,000. A total of 102 families have been assisted from inception of the programme up to 31st March 2023.

6.0 OTHER GENERAL PROJECTS

Broadly grouped together under this category are several small projects that do not warrant special mention except the below two funds, Dr & Mrs William Chan Fund, with considerable amount of donations and disbursements and the R&D Fund which is described more fully in section 2.2.

6.1 DR WILLIAM CHAN & MRS CHAN TSOK FAH FUND

This Fund was established with a view to address the needs of under privileged people in Sri Lanka who do not fall within the scope of CandleAid's sponsored and ongoing programmes. The year under review caused grave financial issues in view of the critical economic downturn and the political instability Sri Lankans faced and continue to face.

The above fund assisted many people from low-income backgrounds to fulfil their crying needs in areas of education, health, food, and other spheres of activity. Namely, financial assistance to patients needing specific medical requirements, students needing financial assistance to meet their expenses such as tuition fees, board, and lodging costs etc. Further, poverty-stricken families with serious unemployment issues and dwindling livelihoods, were assisted for their daily quota of food.

CandleAid has disbursed LKR 828,950 from the WCF up to 31 March 2022 out of LKR 2,065,823 received into the Fund.

During FY 22/23 LKR 418,524 was received as donations while LKR 554,840 was disbursed to beneficiaries.

31 July 2023