

# Federation of Media Employees Strategic Intervention Plan 2024- 2025

## Sri Lankan Journalism: Towards Rights with Responsibilities



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## FMETU General Secretary’s Message

The professional journalist is a professional who mediates to speak about other people’s problems and intervenes regularly to bring out solutions for their issues. The journalist is addressed and identified by special honorary names such as ‘Watch dog’ and ‘Fourth Citizen’ of the society.

The majority of the journalists who are engaged and employed in the industry of journalism are not entitled to most of rights enjoyed by members of other professions. Journalists are a group of professionals who are not at least entitled to the ‘Right to Organize’ which is an accepted norm by the cultured world as part of human rights. You have thoroughly understood that the owners and heads of media institutions are not most often not prepared to present or authorize professional entitlement.

This strategic plan has been designed to formally organize mainstream Colombo based journalists and media workers and also those within the whole range of 25 districts from the print and electronic media. The regional journalists are treated and acknowledged as the back bone of the media industry of Sri Lanka. We are committed to bringing together all journalists and media workers to work collectively, in unity under one flag.

As a media personal you represent some organization already. Our strategic plan focuses on you purely, with a true mind of a journalist. We do not to look at the media industry by the angle of politicians, black marketers, vigorous social destroyers etc.

FMETU also wishes to shift your focus to the rights of a journalist, driven by the rights of the people. WE strive to prepare and activate journalists as leaders of an industry entering a new era of a ‘Public service focused media’, which is the modern trend in the media world, outside the traditional trade union model.

## Background of FMETU

Federation of Media Workers Trade Union (FMETU) herein after referred to as FMETU or Union in this document is a collective body of employee unions of media organizations /institutes represented by journalists and media workers of Sri Lanka.

The current membership of FMETU comprises the following:

#	Member Unions
1.	Lake House Employees Union
2.	Sri Lanka Broadcasters Union
3.	Tamil Speaking Women Journalists Association
4.	Sri Lanka Rupavahini Program Producers Union
5.	National Union of Journalists – NUJ
6.	Independent Television Networks Union
7.	NUJ Polonnaruwa District branch
8.	NUJ Matara District branch
9.	NUJ Matale District branch
10.	NUJ Badulla District branch
11.	NUJ Kandy District branch
12.	NUJ Nuwera Eliya District branch
13.	NUJ Ratnapura District Journalists branch
14.	NUJ Kegalle District Journalists branch
15.	NUJ Galle District Journalists branch
16.	NUJ Hambantota District Journalists branch
17.	NUJ Moneragala District Journalists branch
18.	NUJ Kurunegala District Journalists branch
19.	NUJ Puttalam District Journalists branch
20.	NUJ Anuradhapura District Journalists branch
21.	NUJ Trincomalee District Journalists branch
22.	NUJ Batticaloa District Journalists branch
23.	NUJ Ampara District Journalists branch
24.	NUJ Jaffna District Journalists branch
25.	NUJ Vavuniya District Journalists branch
26.	NUJ Mannar District Journalists branch
27.	NUJ Kilinochchi District Journalists branch
28.	NUJ Mulathiwu District Journalists branch
29.	NUJ Kalutara District Journalists branch
30.	NUJ Gampaha District Journalists branch
31.	NUJ Colombo District Journalists branch

The FMETU was established in the year 2000 and registered with the Registrar of Trade Unions as an affiliation of trade unions of journalists and the media workers within the Media Industry in Sri Lanka. It is the main trade union that represents and appears to safeguard the rights of journalists and media employees in general and always takes the lead to solve any issue of its memberships

and protect their profession . FMETU is the first Sri Lankan media organization which obtained the full membership of the International Federation of Journalists, in the year 2000.

It was established in order to achieve followings;

- To mobilize and organize all employees attached to electronic and print media institutions and regional journalists' associations in Sri Lanka, under one federation
- To scrutinize, protect and improve the rights, benefits and entitlements of members.
- To uplift the economic status of members.
- To provide following benefits for members
  - Support against intimidation and harassment faced by members due to union actions or professional struggles to secure relief and employment rights
  - Provide legal assistance and advice for their employment related issues when required.
- To **strengthen formal relationships in** between the federation and other related groups and amongst members of the federation
- To represent members in professional disputes
- To intervene in matters of national importance affecting the media community.

## Purpose and process adopted for this- Strategic Intervention Plan (SIP)

### ▪ Purpose:

The Purpose of this strategic intervention plan (SIP) is to provide a guiding document for the management of FMETU with specific interventions to be implemented during the next 02 years: 2024 - 2025, with the intention of strengthening FMETU as an organization to reach its next level of development by expanding its services to its' membership .

### ▪ Process:

1. Consultation with FMETU members : It was a prime prerequisite to consult members of the FMETU in developing this SIP to embed their views, ideas to buy-in this plan .
2. One-day workshop was conducted at the Rainbow Institute premises in Colombo. 20 members of FMETU, representing a cross section of provinces and media. (List of participants is attached)

The one-day workshop was segmented to four Sessions;

Session 01 - Addressing issues, challenges and preparing structures for the new period

Session 02 – identifying categories journalists and media workers (including women journalist, state media sector, provincial and young journalists) and design intervention to mobilize

Session 02 - Update/ improve the FMETU website and start an online news bulletin

Session 03 – identifying training (journalists to fit into the digital economy)

3. The workshop was facilitated with adult friendly learning by engaging in exercises to get inputs from the members on an individual basis and then get validated as groups to build group consensus for the brainstormed ideas.

FMETU members were extremely enthusiastic and successfully identified key strategic interventions (SIs) to be implemented.

## Vision and Mission of FMETU

**Vision:** To be the Journalist’s ancestral home (haven) of Sri Lanka; It is accurately described in the Sinhala language as “Jana Madyawedinge Mahagedera” and in Tamil as “Oodagangalin Pughalidam”

**Mission:**

To build a strong independent media industry in Sri Lanka, by producing an independent group of employees with strong organizing ability within a secured profession within the media industry.

‘Organizing all the Journalists and media employees in the country under one flag, towards an ethical media practice, while ensuring professionalism, employee rights and welfare.

## Prioritized Strategic Interventions- SIs

1	Building and strengthening national and international Relations for FMETU	To improve the relationship with international journalist’s networks, International Federation of Journalists and other networks.
2	Identify and building national and International networks	
3	Uplifting the professional status of Journalists.	To facilitate the union members to work together towards professional improvement of members and non-member journalists and media workers in the industry.
4	Intervening on cases of gender-based violence/harassment against journalists (especially on women journalists)	To establish a Gender policy and a mechanism to respond to gender-based violence/harassment against journalists
5	Intervening for policy matters related to media	To establish a functioning campaign mechanism implemented throughout the 03-year period on selected priority issues related to professional journalism in Sri Lanka
6	Intervening on labor and rights related issues/cases of journalists and Media workers	To intervene on labor related matters of members and non-member journalists and media workers in Sri Lanka.
7	Ensuring the welfare of Journalists and Media workers	To establish a welfare mechanism for members.
8	Institutional Development of FMETU	To establish an organizational development mechanism for FMETU

## SWOT analysis of the FMETU

### Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats analysis of the FMETU

<p><b>Strengths:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• International Relations/Relationship with IFJ.</li> <li>• Experience in working on media projects with international partners, IFJ, Internews, Institute of War and Peace Reporting and International Research and Exchange (IREX)</li> <li>• Experience and skills of member journalists</li> <li>• Existing national and regional network of journalists</li> <li>• Reputation of the Trade union movement in the country</li> <li>• Reputation of FMETU</li> </ul>	<p><b>Weaknesses:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of Financial resources</li> <li>• Lack of employee privileges and labour rights of journalists</li> <li>• Lack of job security of mainstream and provincial journalists</li> <li>• Inadequate welfare facilities for Members/Journalists</li> <li>• Absences of proper mechanism to address gender -based violence against journalists</li> <li>• Lack of commitment of members in making the membership payment</li> <li>• No Proper Fundraising mechanism in place</li> <li>• Journalists membership is scattered throughout Sri Lanka</li> </ul>
<p><b>Opportunities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Union's recognition in the country</li> <li>• International support both technical and financial</li> <li>• Linkages with stakeholders including other media organizations and trade unions</li> <li>• Linkages with stakeholders of members</li> <li>• International training and exposures</li> <li>• Wide spread of membership in all districts of Sri Lanka.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Threats:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Influence and interference for vested interests of Media owners</li> <li>• Influence and interference of Politicians</li> <li>• Government employees functioning as journalists</li> <li>• Safety and Security of Journalists</li> <li>• Difficulties in obtaining Press Identification Card for freelance/local Journalists</li> </ul>

## Strategic Intervention Plan with time line

Activities	Expected result	Objectives	Indicators	Means of Verification	Frequency of measurement
<b>Strengthening network</b>	To improve and strengthen the relationship with international journalist's networks, International Federation of Journalists and other networks.	1.1 Union has a mechanism established for the improvement of international relations including relationship with International Federation of Journalists.	1.1.1 An International relations Coordinator is appointed by the executive board	1.1.1. Appointment letter of International Coordinator	1.1.1. Annually
			1.1.2 Four media announcements released internationally per year and increased in case of any relevant incident	1.1.2 Copies of announcements	1.1.2. Quarterly
			1.1.3 Union executive board is updated monthly by the International Coordinator on the status of managing international relations.	1.1.3 Copy of monthly update	1.1.3. Quarterly
			1.1.4 The international Coordinator is equipped with a Laptop Computer with internet access	1.2.1 Handing over letter of the Laptop and Internet facility	1.2.1. First quarter
<b>Training and Capacity Development</b>	To enable the union to work the professional Improvement of member and non-member journalists	2.1 Union has a journalist's professional development plan updated annually	2.1.1 Annual professional development plan for journalists is prepared.	2.1.1 Copy of professional development plan	2.1.1 First quarter
		2.2 Union caters to at least 120 journalists with training or any other national or international capacity building opportunity	2.2.1.120 Journalists are benefitted annually by the union or by the opportunities created by the union	2.2.1 Training reports/Photo evidence	2.2.1 Annually



		2.3 Union caters to atleast 120 young journalists with training in investigative journalism, social and digital media, ethics, rights and responsibilities , English and Communication. Focus on women journalists.	2.3.1 120 Journalists are benefitted annually by the union or by the opportunities created by the union	23.1 Training reports/Photo evidence	2.2.2 Annually
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<b>Gender Policy</b>	To establish a Gender policy and a mechanism strengthen and empower women journalists to respond for gender based violence/harassment against journalists	3.1 Gender Policy is prepared and in place for the union	3.1.1 Gender Policy is approved by the Executive Board and distributed among members	3.1.1 Copy of approved gender policy	3.1.1 First quarter
		3.2 Union has a 'standard operating Procedure' in responding or intervening for any Gender based violence/harassment incident against member or non-member journalists	3.2.1 Standard Operating Procedure (SoP) FOR Gender based violence/harassment is approved by the Executive Committee and in place	3.2.1 Copy of approved SoP	3.2.1 First quarter
		3.3 A GBV complain mechanism with a dedicated focal person is established	3.3.1 A focal person for GBV in behalf of the organization is appointed 3.3.2 A contact telephone number is shared among journalists 3.3.3 GBV case response files are maintained throughout the year	3.3.1 Appointment letter/committee decision of appointing a focal person 3.3.2 Email evidence of a sharing of Contact Number 3.3.3 Copies of front pages of the files	3.3.1 First quarter 3.3.2 First quarter 3.3.3 Annually

			in a confidential manner.		
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<b>Journalists Rights</b>	To establish a functioning campaign mechanism implemented focusing policy changes throughout the 03 year period on selected priority matters related to journalism in the country	4.1 Union has a policy developed focusing related and timely important goals	4.1.1 Policy is prepared and updated annually	4.1.1 Approved advocacy policy	4.1.1 Annually
		4.2 Union implements at least 04 major activities per annum focusing a timely important issues of the country related to journalists	4.2.1 Four major advocacy activities are completed per annum	4.2.1 Reports of advocacy activities with photos/screen shots	4.2.1 Annually
		4.3 Union intervention to obtain the Press Identity card for journalists who do not have an identification from a media company/institute, including international press cards	4.3.1 identify members who need local/ international press cards	4.3.1 press cards are disseminated	4.3.1 Annually

<b>Intervention on labour issues</b>	To intervene on labour issues of the member and non-member journalists	5.1 Union is functioning with a response mechanism on labour issues against journalists to be working on complaint basis	5.1.1 a dedicated focal person for labour matters is appointed by the union	5.1.1 Appointment letter of the focal person/copy of decision on recruitment	5.1.1 First quarter
			5.1.2 an addendum is made for the constitution in order to add the Standard Operating Procedure (SoP) for case response	5.1.2 Copy of the addendum	5.1.2 First quarter
			5.1.3 at least one event is organized by union per annum in increasing the	5.1.3 Event report	5.1.3 Annually

			labour rights of journalists		
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<b>Welfare policy</b>	To establish a welfare mechanism for member journalists and campaign to gain social security rights	6.1 A welfare fund is developed and managed with support of members and well wishers	6.1.1 welfare limits, subjects and welfare policy is approved by the Annual General Meeting	6.1.1 Copy of approved policy	6.1.1 First quarter
			6.1.2 Union support for least 12 members per annum	6.1.2 brief reports on the support approved by chairperson	6.1.2 First quarter
		6.2 A fund raising system is in place for the union	6.2.1 Fund raising committee is appointed	6.2.1 Minutes of fund raising committee meeting	6.2.1 First quarter
			6.2.2.Fund raising plan for the union is developed	6.2.2 Copy of approved fund raising plan including Donation page such as patreon or paypal	6.2.2.First quarter
			6.2..3 at least one activity is implemented per annum on improving the fund	6.2.3 Activity completion report	6.2.3 annually

<b>Website development</b>	Monetize the webpage as an additional income source for members	7.1 Union has a separate web site to be used as a news page that is monetized	7.1.1 establish a committee (advisory team) to oversee the quality assurance	7.1.1 Minutes of committee meeting	7.1.1first quarter
			7.1.2 appoint an editorial committee	7.1.2 Minutes of committee meeting	7.1.2 first quarter
			7.1.3 recruit a dedicated team (web developer and video editor)	7.1.3 recruitment letter	7.1.3 first quarter
			7.1.4 establish guidelines policies and best practices	7.1.4 report	7.1.4 first quarter
			7.1.5 start the website and related social media pages	7.1.5 website and social media pages are launched	7.1.5 second quarter

## Monitoring and Evaluation plan

Activities	Expected result	Objectives	Sub Activities	2024				2025				
				Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
<b>Strengthening network</b>	To improve and strengthen the relationship with international journalist's networks, International Federation of Journalists and other networks.	1.1 Union has a mechanism established for the improvement of international relations including relationship with International Federation of Journalists.	State, provincial, women, youth etc.									
			Starting discussions in relationship building with stakeholders and start a monthly dialogue mechanism with them									
			Creating a database of stakeholders and commencing discussions									
			Appoint representatives and facilitate discussions									
<b>Training and Capacity Development</b>	To enable the union to work the professional Improvement of	2.1 Union has a journalist's professional development plan updated annually	Develop a training plan									



		Focus on women journalists.	digital media, ethics, rights and responsibilities, English and Communication. Focus on women journalists.															
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<b>Gender Policy</b>	To establish a Gender policy and a mechanism strengthen and empower women journalists to respond for gender based violence/harassment against journalists	3.1 Gender Policy is prepared and in place for the union	Draft the gender policy and approve																	
		3.2 Union has a 'standard operating Procedure' in responding or intervening for any Gender based violence/harassment incident against member or non-member journalists	Develop the gender SoP																	
		3.3 A GBV complain mechanism with a dedicated focal person is established	Appoint a focal point																	
			Disseminate the focal points contact details																	
			GBV case response file maintained																	

<b>Journalists Rights</b>	To establish a functioning campaign mechanism implemented focusing policy	4.1 Union has a policy developed focusing related and timely important goals	Develop a policy internally through discussions with															
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	changes throughout the 03 year period on selected priority matters related to journalism in the country		member representatives									
		4.2 Union implements at least 04 major activities per annum focusing a timely important issues of the country related to journalists	Plan and organize a campaign focusing on the above rights									
		4.3 Union intervention to obtain the Press Identity card for journalists who do not have an identification from a media company/institute, including international press cards	Support members to obtain the International Press Card									
<b>Intervention on labour issues</b>	To intervene on labour issues of the member and non-member journalists	5.1 Union is functioning with a response mechanism on labour issues against journalists to be working on complaint basis	Focal point is appointed									
			Standard Operating Procedure (SoP) for case response designed									
			events pertaining to labour rights are organized									
<b>Welfare policy</b>	To establish a welfare mechanism for member journalists and	6.1 A welfare fund is developed and managed with support of	Welfare policy is created									

	campaign to gain social security roghts	members and well wishers	members who need supported to be identified and reports maintained												
			6.2 A fund raising system is in place for the union	fund raising committee appointed											
		fund raising plan designed													
		fund raising activities planned													
<b>Website development</b>	Monetize the webpage as an additional income source for members	7.1 Union has a separate web site to be used as a news page that is monetized	Advisory committee is appointed												
			Editorial committee appointed												
			Dedicated team recruited												
			Policies and guidelines identified												
			website and social media pages launched												



## Detailed Annual Budget 2024

Activities	Expected result	Objectives	Sub Activities	Budget (1 year)	Stakeholders	Responsibilities
<b>Strengthening network</b>	To improve and strengthen the relationship with international journalist's networks, International Federation of Journalists and other networks.	1.1 Union has a mechanism established for the improvement of international relations including relationship with International Federation of Journalists.	State, provincial, women, youth etc.			
			Starting discussions in relationship building with stakeholders and start a monthly dialogue mechanism with them			
			Creating a database of stakeholders and commencing discussions			
			Appoint representatives and facilitate discussions	300,000.00	Representatives from membership	EXCO
<b>Training and Capacity Development</b>	To enable the union to work the professional Improvement of member and non-member journalists	2.1 Union has a journalist's professional development plan updated annually	Develop a training plan			
		2.2 Union caters to at least 120 journalists with training or any other national or international capacity	Conduct at least national 04 trainings targeting 120 journalists on important subjects such as	2,000,000.00	Representatives from membership	EXCO

		building opportunity	professional responsibility and ethics, Investigative Journalism, anti corruption, media and democracy, gender sensitivity, data journalism, public service journalism, social media, national languages and English etc.			
		2.3 Union caters to at least 120 young journalists with training in investigative journalism, social and digital media, ethics, rights and responsibilities, English and Communication. Focus on women journalists.	Conduct a island wide training for young journalists (targeting 120) in investigative journalism, social and digital media, ethics, rights and responsibilities, English and Communication. Focus on women journalists.	2,000,000.00	Representatives from membership	EXCO
<b>Gender Policy</b>	To establish a Gender policy and a mechanism strengthen and empower women	3.1 Gender Policy is prepared and in place for the union	Draft the gender policy and approve	100,000.00	Representatives from membership, gender	EXCO

	journalists to respond for gender based violence/harassment against journalists				and policy experts	
		3.2 Union has a 'standard operating Procedure' in responding or intervening for any Gender based violence/harassment incident against member or non-member journalists	Develop the gender SoP		Represent atives from membersh ip, gender and policy experts	EXCO
		3.3 A GBV complain mechanism with a dedicated focal person is established	Appoint a focal point			
			Disseminate the focal points contact details			
GBV case response file maintained						

<b>Journalists Rights</b>	To establish a functioning campaign mechanism implemented focusing policy changes throughout the 03 year period on selected priority matters related to journalism in the country	4.1 Union has a policy developed focusing related and timely important goals	Develop a policy internally through discussions with member representativ es	100,000.00	Represent atives from membersh ip, and policy experts	EXCO
		4.2 Union implements at least 04 major activities per annum focusing a timely important issues of the	Plan and organize a campaign focusing on the above rights	1,000,000.00	Represent atives from membersh ip, and policy experts	EXCO

		country related to journalists				
		4.3 Union intervention to obtain the Press Identity card for journalists who do not have an identification from a media company/institute, including international press cards	Support members to obtain the International Press Card			
<b>Intervention on labour issues</b>	To intervene on labour issues of the member and non-member journalists	5.1 Union is functioning with a response mechanism on labour issues against journalists to be working on complaint basis	Focal point is appointed			
			Standard Operating Procedure (SoP) for case response designed			
			events pertaining to labour rights are organized	500,000.00	Representatives from membership	EXCO
<b>Welfare policy</b>	To establish a welfare mechanism for member journalists and campaign to gain social security rights	6.1 A welfare fund is developed and managed with support of members and well wishers	Welfare policy is created	100,000.00	Representatives from membership, and policy experts	EXCO
			members who need supported to be identified			

		6.2 A fund raising system is in place for the union	and reports maintained			
			fund raising committee appointed			
			fund raising plan designed			
			fund raising activities planned	500,000.00	Representatives from membership	EXCO
<b>Website development</b>	Monetize the webpage as an additional income source for members	7.1 Union has a separate web site to be used as a news page that is monetized	Advisory committee is appointed			
			Editorial committee appointed			
			Dedicated team recruited			
			Policies and guidelines identified			
			website and social media pages launched	100,000.00	Representatives from membership, and committee members	EXCO

## Limitation/Challenges

- Policy level changes are necessary
- Need professional third-party support to implement and facilitate implementation process for at least 6 months to one year
- Mobilization and training support /for skills upgrading of the members and fund-raising opportunities is essential
- Maintaining cohesion among the members needs additional support
- Challenges in gathering participants for the planning meeting as they are scattered all over the country
- Challenges in paying the membership fee due to poor income

## Summary

- Collaborative bargaining power is an urgent need
- Strengthening network is needed and the various categories of journalists and media workers should work together
- Training needs – mojo, social media, new technology, investigative journalism
- Income stability- standard rates to be increased, base salaries, added income generating methods such as through donations and other related work.
- In order to do most of the above, the FMETU website should be monetized and a news page should be added.