

PRESS RELEASE

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CENTRAL BANK OF SRI LANKA

Issued By Regional Development Department

Date 04.03.2021

Launching of the First-ever National Financial Inclusion Strategy of Sri Lanka

It is with great pleasure that the Central Bank of Sri Lanka announces the launch of the first-ever National Financial Inclusion Strategy (NFIS) of Sri Lanka on March 4, 2021. The launch was symbolized by presenting the NFIS strategy to Hon. Mahinda Rajapaksa, Prime Minister of Sri Lanka and Minister of Finance by Deshamanya Professor W D Lakshman, Governor of the Central Bank. The launch was graced by the presence of Hon. Ajith Nivard Cabral, State Minister of Money & Capital Market and State Enterprise Reforms, His Excellency David Holly, Australian High Commissioner to Sri Lanka and Maldives, and Ms. Amena Arif, International Finance Corporation (IFC) Country Head for Sri Lanka and Maldives.

With an aspiring vision of “*Better Quality Inclusion for Better Lives*”, the NFIS strives towards a financially inclusive Sri Lanka where all individuals and enterprises in Sri Lanka are well-informed and have fair, and equitable access to a range of high-quality, appropriate, secure, and affordable financial products and services that they can use to contribute to economic growth and improve their living standards.

The development of the NFIS was a multi-stakeholder effort led by the Central Bank which encompassed the expertise of various public and private sector institutions across the economy. The NFIS is strategically designed to align all isolated efforts of financial inclusion taken by various entities in the economy into a single direction, having noted the potential higher yield of these efforts. For this invaluable journey, the technical and financial assistance for the NFIS development project was provided by the IFC under the “IFC-DFAT Women in Work Project”, funded by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) of the Australian Government.

As a part of the NFIS, a time-bound Action Plan which sets up delegated actions for each stakeholder has been introduced. The monitoring and evaluation of the NFIS Action Plan and providing appropriate policy guidance will be carried out by the national level Management Entities of the NFIS and the Regional Development Department of the Central Bank with the support of the NFIS Secretariat.

With the launch of the NFIS, Sri Lanka joins more than 60 countries around the world who have taken similar initiatives to improve financial inclusion landscapes to reach sustainable and inclusive economic growth.

In line with the NFIS Launch, a Panel Discussion on the NFIS was held today from 2.30 p.m to 3.30 p.m with the participation of Hon. Ajith Nivard Cabral, State Minister of Money & Capital Market and State Enterprise Reforms, Deshamanya Professor W D Lakshman, Governor of the Central Bank, Mr. J P R Karunaratne, Assistant Governor of the Central Bank, Mr. Channa De Silva, General Manager/CEO, LankaClear, Mrs. Samadanie Kiriwandeniya, Managing Director, SANASA International (Pvt) Ltd, Mr. M Ramamoorthy, Director General (Planning), State Ministry of Samurdhi, Household Economy, Micro Finance, Self-Employment, Business Development and Underutilized State Resources Development, as Panelists. The session was moderated by Senior Professor H.D. Karunaratna, Chair Professor of Business Economics, Faculty of Management and Finance, University of Colombo.

The NFIS is available for general public at the Central Bank Official Website www.cbsl.gov.lk .



From Left to Right – Mr. B L J S Balasooriya, Director Regional Development Department of the Central Bank, Mr. K M M Siriwardena, Deputy Governor of the Central Bank, His Excellency David Holly, Australian High Commissioner to the Sri Lanka and Maldives, Deshamanya Professor W D Lakshman, Governor of the Central Bank, Hon. Mahinda Rajapaksa, Prime Minister of Sri Lanka and Minister of Finance and Planning, Hon. Ajith Nivard Cabral, State Minister of Money & Capital Market and State Enterprise Reforms and Ms. Amena Arif, IFC Country Head for Sri Lanka and Maldives