

## Panel of Experts - Health

### **Prof. Saroj Jayasinghe - Theme Lead**



#### **Emeritus Professor of Medicine, University of Colombo**

Professor Saroj Jayasinghe is a practicing consultant physician in Sri Lanka and former Chair Professor of Medicine at the University of Colombo. He is an Emeritus Professor of Medicine at the same institution and has served as one of the longest-standing consultant physicians at the

National Hospital of Sri Lanka until his retirement in 2021. Prof. Jayasinghe holds numerous qualifications, including MBBS (Hons), MD (Colombo), MD (Bristol), and PhD (Colombo). He is a Fellow of the

Ceylon College of Physicians, the Royal College of Physicians (London), and the National Academy of Sciences of Sri Lanka (NASSL).

Prof. Jayasinghe has published extensively in clinical medicine, medical education, and medical humanities. His recent research focuses on complexity science and systems thinking applied to urban health, pandemics, and clinical medicine. He chairs the Research Arm of Sri Lanka's National Science Foundation, fostering transdisciplinary research, and has initiated significant collaborations to advance science advice to governments. He is a fellow of the International Science Council.

As a pioneer in medical curriculum reforms, he introduced medical humanities to education and leads a regional WHO initiative integrating humanities into health professional training.

### **Dr Palitha Abeykoon**



#### **Advisor to the World Health Organization & the Ministry of Health, Sri Lanka**

Dr Palitha Abeykoon is a distinguished medical professional and advisor to the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Ministry of Health in Sri Lanka and is a Member of the WHO-WB Global Pandemic Monitoring Board. He received his medical degree from the University of Ceylon, Peradeniya and completed postgraduate studies at the University of Southern California and the Harvard School of Public Health, where he was a Takemi Fellow.

Dr Abeykoon was the WHO Regional Advisor in Human Resources for Health and later the Director of Health Systems for South-East Asia. He was also the WHO Representative to India. He has been recognized globally, serving on various high-level committees and has received the Dr Fred Katz Award, and the Lifetime Achievement Awards from the Asia Pacific Academic Consortium of Public Health, the World Organization of Family Doctors (WONCA) and the University of Peradeniya. He is also a Fellow of the International Science Council.



### **Prof. Amala de Silva**

**Senior Professor, Department of Economics,  
University of Colombo**

Professor Amala de Silva is a Senior Professor in the Department of Economics, University of Colombo with 38 years of service. Her Masters and DPhil are from the University of Sussex, UK. During her sabbatical, she was a Rockefeller Global Health Leadership Mid-Career Fellow at WHO, Geneva in 1999/2000. She has undertaken many Health Economics research projects, with the Ministry of Health, WHO, World Bank Country Office, UNDP and JAICA. In 2023, she was made an Honorary Fellow of the College of Medical Administrators of Sri Lanka. Her other areas of research interest are gender, migration, equity, and poverty.



### **Prof. Chandani Liyanage**

**Professor of Medical Sociology,  
Department of Sociology, University of Colombo**

Professor Chandani Liyanage is a Professor of Medical Sociology, Department of Sociology, Faculty of Arts, University of Colombo. She obtained her doctoral degree from the University of Delhi (2007). Prof. Liyanage was a recipient of Fulbright Advanced Research & Lecturing Award (2011). She has been a Visiting Faculty at University of Ljubljana, Slovenia (2013). She works on medical systems, ethnomedicine, Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs), disability, contemporary social issues, and social policies. She has published in journals of repute and number of book chapters covering issues related to disability, social epidemiology of CKDu, community-centered approach for prevention of NCDs, traditional medicine and primary healthcare, non-western knowledge systems, and utilization of traditional healing practices in contemporary Sri Lanka and currently, involved in an ethnographic study on 'Empowering Cutaneous Leishmaniasis patients in the North Central Province in collaboration with the Rajarata University of Sri Lanka, University of Kent and Keele University, UK.



## **Dr Ravi Rannan-Eliya**

### **Executive Director, Institute for Health Policy, Sri Lanka**

Dr Ravi Rannan-Eliya is the Executive Director of the Institute for Health Policy, Sri Lanka. He trained as a physician and in political science at Cambridge, before specializing in public health and earning a doctoral degree in health economics at Harvard. He has worked as a researcher and analyst throughout the Asia-Pacific region and elsewhere, with a focus on health equity, health systems and financing, and the emerging challenges of ageing and NCDs. His recent work includes, managing the Sri Lanka Health and Ageing

Study, which is tracking the health experience of the Sri Lankan population and conducting the only regular national public opinion poll.