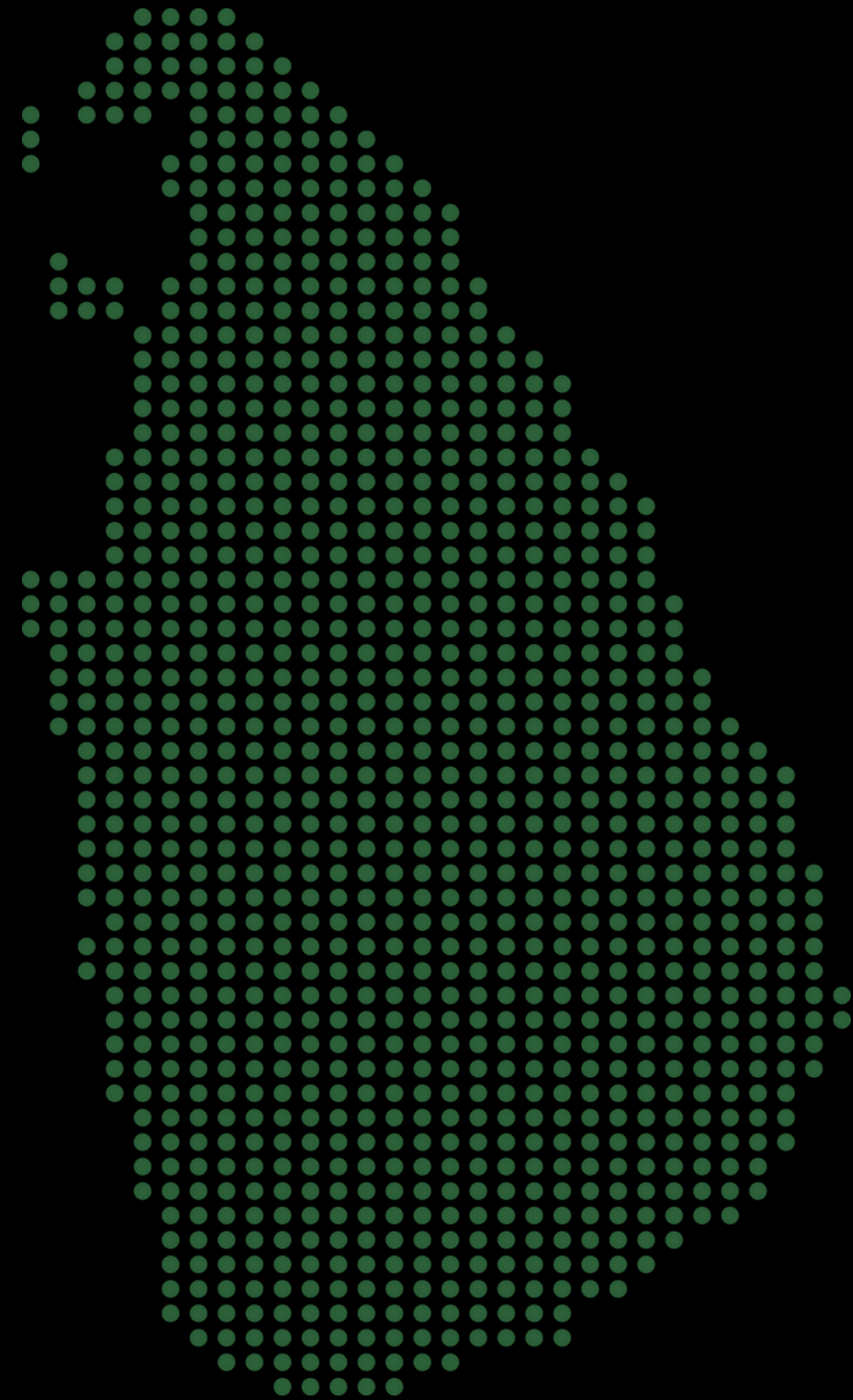


**HARDSKILLS**<sup>™</sup>

# **Sri Lanka's Workforce**

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Strategies on Resilience  
from Innovative  
Employers



# Panelists

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HARDSKILLS hosted a panel discussion moderated by our co-founder Shoba Purushothaman in Colombo with market leaders on **building resilient workforces.**



Sri Lanka's **biggest export earner** is its **talent pool** and in **providing services.**

Hatem Rajabdeen  
Country Director  
Future Fibres



**NIASHA DON CAROLIS**  
Director Operations  
**MAS Kreedaa**



**HATEM RAJABDEEN**  
Country Director  
**Future Fibres**



**IMANI PERERA**  
Head of Learning and  
Development  
**John Keells Group**



**CHAMINDRA PERERA  
DASSANAYAKE**  
CHRO  
**VERGER**

# Why resilience matters

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It's not just about getting through something, it's about looking at it with hindsight, learning from it – and **sustain that learning.**

**Imani Perera**

Head of Learning and Development  
**John Keells Group**

# 3 high-impact skills for challenging times

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- Growth Mindset
- Communication
- Collaboration



# Make resilience your DNA

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The resilience of an employee is **intricately linked** to the resilience of their organisation.

**Niasha Don Carolis**  
Director Operations  
**MAS Kreedaa**

01

## Key Challenge

We underestimate the value of fundamental human skills in building resilience – thus shortchanging our people & organisations.

02

## Can we train resilience?

Discard the notion that resilience can't be trained, or that it only applies to a select few. Start with taking concrete steps like training empathy, communication and collaboration.

03

## Scale it

To see real and permanent change, employees at all levels of the company need to have access to initiatives that help them feel secure in their roles.

# Turning Challenges into Opportunities

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## Retaining Women

During the pandemic, people got a taste for flexibility at work. Women, who often undertake traditional family roles in addition to their work, have understood the benefits of this flexibility. Now, companies are asking them to return to rigid formats – but they know they can thrive as they are.

In order to grow female leaders regardless of role and experience level, invest in them by offering flexibility and opportunities to develop their skillsets.

We have to remember that people have their own life goals, and as organisations we are only one part of that. Once we acknowledge it, we can have a targeted approach in how we retain employees.

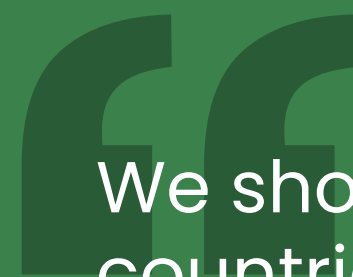
**Niasha Don Carolis**  
Director Operations  
**MAS Kreedaa**

# Turning Challenges into Opportunities

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## Tackling the Talent Drain

The last four years have seen a steady loss of talent to other countries. But management cannot control this aspect; focus instead on building skills in fresh talent to feed the pipeline. Prioritizing skill-building strengthens the employer value proposition and brings long-term benefits for all.



We should be proud that we can provide talent to other countries.

**Hatem Rajabdeen**  
Country Director  
**Future Fibres**

# Turning Challenges into Opportunities

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## Global employers flock to Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka continues to attract foreign companies because of the established talent pool. Key domains include: Engineering, IT services, financial and legal services.

To boost global competitiveness, what's needed is strengthening human skills of influence, thinking critically and being able to collaborate effectively.



“We shouldn't be selfish with our talent. They will come back to the country better equipped & with more experience.”

**Chamindra Perera Dassanayake**  
CHRO  
VERGER

# Future-proofing with open communication & trust

**John Keells Holdings** is an example of a conglomerate that makes training accessible and scalable across all employee levels so they remain relevant.

“There was no rulebook as we dealt with each crisis. So it was important that **conversations about resilience, retention and wellbeing were on everyone's agenda, from boardroom discussions to any kind of corporate setting no matter the industry.** Powerful, open communication and collaboration helped establish frameworks to use in the future.

**Imani Perera**

Head of Learning and Development  
**John Keells Group**





# Avid & Engaged Learners

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## Sri Lanka's talent pool

In our work with Sri Lankan workforces since 2020, we see amazing drive to grow and learn. And no wonder; the 2022 UN report shows they have **highest human development index of any country in South Asia.**

HARDSKILLS' Sri Lankan learners have strong learning agility & embrace learning new skills: 98% of all learners complete training in full, and 80% successfully achieve certification (both stronger than our global averages). This skill-building results in a confidence gain of 55% which strengthens self-belief and resilience!



Building resilience is essential for both individuals and organisations, and **investing in fundamental human skills can help companies cultivate psychological safety, trust and future-proof themselves.**

Scaling these behaviours so it's **engrained in company culture** is essential to its effectiveness & sustainability.

# HARDSKILLS™

Expand the impact of learning at your organisation. Talk to us.

