

NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER

2023



HELP-O
SRI LANKA



EDITORIAL

HELP-O is a Non-governmental Organization (NGO) established in 1992 by a team of professionals with commitment to making Sri Lanka a better and happier place to live in harmony with nature.

HELP-O has the following vision: "Equitable Economic Development, Social Justice, and a Safer Environment for All."

Its mission is "To identify the need of risks faced by Sri Lankan communities and implement effective solutions through proven integrated approaches with the participation of stakeholders". The five strategies HELP-O adopts in achieving its mission include, empowering the marginalized community socially and economically, accepting the importance of community participation and leadership, dedicating to protect the environment through an integrated process, protecting human rights and justice, and ensuring sustainable development.

Mission related programs and projects launched by HELP-O focus on the following spheres:

They are Community empowerment, rehabilitation, relief assistance, and protecting human rights, community participation in local governance, community financing, livelihood development, economic resource mobilization, nurturing biodiversity, mitigating the impact of climate change, pollution prevention, waste management, and optimal utilization of marine resources and optimal utilization of forest products.

Overall, HELP-O is an organization dedicated to bringing about a sustainable positive impact on the environment and the lives of people in Sri Lanka through a series of interdependent activities.



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THE GAPS AND PROBLEMS IDENTIFICATION WORKSHOP AT KARAPITIYA HOSPITAL



The Gaps and Problems Identification Workshop was conducted with the action group of Karapitiya Teaching Hospital under the CACG project which is funded by USAID, CCBO grant on the 05th of September 2023 at Hasara Hotel.

The Gaps and Problems identification workshop was organized for the solid waste management action group of Karapitiya Teaching Hospital and officers of GMC to identify current practices of 3R/SWM and existing gaps/problems (e.g. resources, knowledge, attitudes, and lack of connection with GMC and other stakeholders) of Karapitiya Teaching Hospital. The Gaps and Problems identification workshop was the initial step for the preparation of a solid waste management action group Plan in the selected institutions.



The following gaps and problems were identified from the workshop with the Karapitiya Teaching Hospital.

Unavailability of a waste management unit in the hospital and lack of a waste management plan.

Generation of high amounts of plastic bottles and polythene (e.g. lunch seats).

Lack of waste segregation at the ward level. (Mixing of chemical waste and clinical waste) Lack of awareness and attitudinal problems among staff, patients, relatives, and outsiders (surrounding business community) about waste management in the hospital.

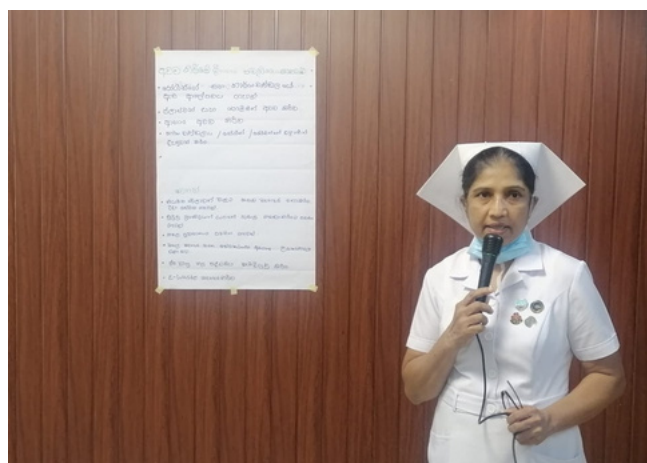
Lack of a covered place to separate and store waste. (Mercury, clinical waste, e-waste, general waste)

Unavailability of a method to dispose of glass waste, electronic waste, and clinical waste.

At the same time, solutions were identified for the prioritized problems as follows:

Establishment of a waste management committee and preparation of a documented waste management plan.

Mandatory screening of persons entering the hospital by security at the entry point.



Introducing glass bottles instead of plastic bottles and introducing alternatives (lunch boxes, banana leaves) Conducted awareness programs for patients and hospital staff.

Labeling of all waste bins to identify the type of waste.

Setting up of a covered facility to segregate and store waste.

Written By - Thakshala Witharanage



IDENTIFICATION OF SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT CHALLENGERS AT GALLE FISHERY HARBOUR



On the 6th of September 2023, a crucial program was held at the Aradhana Hotel in Galle, addressing the pressing issue of waste management at the Galle Fishery Harbor. It was Organized under under the CACG project which is funded by USAID, CCBO grant and is being led by the HELP-O organization.



The event brought together key stakeholders and experts, including Mr. K M S Kumara, Engineer of the Galle Municipal Council; Mr. Chaturanga Adhikaram, Manager of Galle Harbor; Mrs. K S Y Chandani of the Central Environment Authority; Mr. Chatura Welivitiya, Chairman of HELP-O Organization; a Solid Waste Expert from USAID, and Mr. U. G. Ekanayake, officials of Galle Fishery Harbor, officials of Galle Municipal Council, and HELP-O staff members.

The primary focus of the program was to identify and address the various challenges that have been plaguing waste management at the Galle Fishery Harbor. Through group activities and in-depth discussions, several critical issues were pinpointed:

- **Non-Segregation of Waste:** One of the significant issues identified was the lack of proper waste segregation practices, leading to difficulties in effective disposal and recycling.



- **Lack of Awareness:** Many harbor users and workers are not sufficiently aware of the importance of proper waste management, compounding the problem.
- **Accumulation of Food Waste:** The harbor faces challenges in managing food waste generated by the bustling fishery activities, posing hygiene and environmental risks.
- **Waste Storage Problems:** Adequate waste storage facilities and practices were found to be lacking, exacerbating the clutter and potential hazards.
- **Fiber Waste Disposal:** The disposal of fiber waste materials was another concern, highlighting the need for improved disposal methods.

Apart from these major issues, other waste-related challenges were also discussed, making it clear that a comprehensive approach is required to tackle these problems effectively.

To address these issues, a decision was taken to conduct a workshop in the coming week. This workshop will focus on formulating a practical and actionable waste management plan that will not only alleviate the identified problems but also contribute to a cleaner and healthier Galle Fishery Harbor.

This initiative represents a significant step forward in ensuring the sustainable and responsible management of waste in one of Galle's vital economic hubs. By joining forces with USAID's Clean Cities Blue Ocean program and under the leadership of HELP-O, the Galle community is actively taking steps to make its city cleaner and more environmentally friendly.

Stay tuned for updates on this exciting project, as we work together toward a cleaner, greener, and more sustainable future for Galle.

Written By - Lahiru Udumalagala



SRI LANKA'S FIRST HOSPITAL SCIENTIFIC WASTE AUDIT AND CHARACTERIZATION STUDY KARAPITIYA TEACHING HOSPITAL

One of the central discussions during the meeting was the waste audit of Karapitiya Hospital. The purpose of this audit is to streamline waste collection data and improve the hospital's waste management practices. The major hospital positions, including department heads and unit managers, were present, highlighting the importance of this initiative.

During the session, HELP-O staff members presented the basic questionnaire that will serve as the foundation for collecting data related to waste management. The engagement and active participation of hospital staff were notable, as they eagerly contributed ideas and insights to ensure the success of this crucial endeavor.



Dr. Harshanie, Deputy Director of Karapitiya Teaching Hospital, delivered an inspiring speech during the meeting. She emphasized the significance of the waste audit and expressed her deep appreciation for the efforts of HELP-O in spearheading this critical project. Her words of encouragement resonated with the attendees and underscored the hospital's commitment to improving its waste management practices.

Written By - Hansi Sandu Tharakla





AN AWARENESS PROGRAM ON SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT GALLE FISHERY HARBOUR

In a world where the delicate balance of our ecosystems teeters on the edge, it's heartening to see communities come together for a common cause. Such a heartwarming event recently took place at the Fishery Harbor in September, where a dedicated group of individuals and organizations converged to raise awareness about the critical importance of waste segregation and maintaining a clean harbor environment.

The Fishery Harbor, a bustling hub of activity, is a vital resource for fishermen and the community at large. It's a place where the sea's bounty meets the diligent hands of those who make a living from it. To ensure the sustainability of this invaluable resource, the harbor must remain clean and well-maintained.

On a bright September day, an awareness program was organized at the Fishery Harbor premises. This event saw active participation from members of HELP-O, volunteers from Dheeham, and individuals associated with the Harbor itself. Together, they embarked on a mission to educate the fishermen, the very lifeblood of the harbor, about the importance of waste management and keeping the premises clean.

One of the highlights of this awareness program was the distribution of informative leaflets. These leaflets contained valuable insights about the significance of waste segregation, proper disposal methods, and the far-reaching consequences of not adhering to these practices. The fishermen, who rely on the sea for their livelihoods, learned how their actions could directly impact the health of their environment and, consequently, their well-being.





Another significant milestone of this initiative was the installation of an awareness board on the harbor premises. This informative board serves as a constant reminder to all who pass by, displaying crucial information about the waste management process. It outlines the steps necessary for keeping the harbor clean and preserving its ecological integrity.



What makes this initiative truly remarkable is the spirit of community unity that drove it forward. HELP-O, a local organization dedicated to environmental causes, joined forces with Dheeham, a group of passionate volunteers, and the harbor's own dedicated individuals. This collaborative effort showcases the power of collective action when it comes to addressing environmental challenges.



Written By - Hansi Sandu Tharakla

ACTION PLAN DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP AT THE KARAPITIYA TEACHING HOSPITAL



The Action Plan Development workshop was conducted with the Karapitiya Teaching Hospital under the CACG project which is funded by a USAID CCBO grant on the 26th of September 2023 at Hasara Hotel.

The Action Plan Development workshop - Karapitiya Teaching Hospital was conducted under the CACG project which was organized for the Karapitiya Teaching Hospital and officers of GMC to develop an action plan with the identified waste problems under current practices of 3R/SWM of the hospital.

Implementation methods, responsibilities, time frame, and performance indicators were identified under the waste management process of the overall hospital, ward level, and specific premises from the workshop for selected waste problems in the hospital.

The following implementation methods were identified under the selected problems as long-term and short-term solutions.

- Establish Water tanks for water requirements, Conduct awareness sessions for patients and hospital
- staff Enforce rules for solid waste management at the hospital premises. Establish waste storage places for non-degradable waste.
- Issue a diet card for patients Reduce the use of plastic and polythene in the canteen Use the green bags at the hospital premise

Written By - Thakshala Witharanage



DRAFTING SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT ACTION PLAN OF

GALLE FISHERY HARBOUR

HELP-O organized a Solid Waste Management Action Plan Development Program for Galle Fishery Harbor on the 27th of September, 2023. This program was organized under the "Collaborative Action of the Clean City of Galle" project under the funds of USAID, CCBO (Clean Cities- Blue Ocean) Program. In this program, short-term and long-term solutions were identified through group activities. Responsibilities are identified with the stakeholders of the fishery harbor.

Assistant Director of the Fishery Department (Galle), Harbor Master of Galle Commercial Harbor, Area officer of the Coast Guard, Sub-inspector of Environment Division of Galle Harbor Police, Second in Command of Galle Army Camp, Fishery Inspectors and fishery harbor officers participating for this program.

First of all, prioritized SWM problems were presented with the identified short-term solutions and long-term solutions. After that, participants revised SWM issues, and responsibilities were identified. In this session, step by step solution implementation process was drafted. The following points were discussed with the solutions.

- How to implement (Step by Step)
- Who is responsible
- Timeline
- Performance Indicators/ Monitoring

Group Discussion turned out to be very useful in identifying a sustainable solutions and sustainable ways of plan implementation. At the end of the program, the developed Solid Waste Management Action Plan was presented to the audience and the Project team agreed to give a detailed action plan to all participants.

Written By - Lahiru Udumalagala





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NATIONAL

NEWSPAPER

ARTICLES

LOCAL

GOVERNANCE





INTRODUCING E-SABHA APPLICATION TO KARAPITIYA TEACHING HOSPITAL.

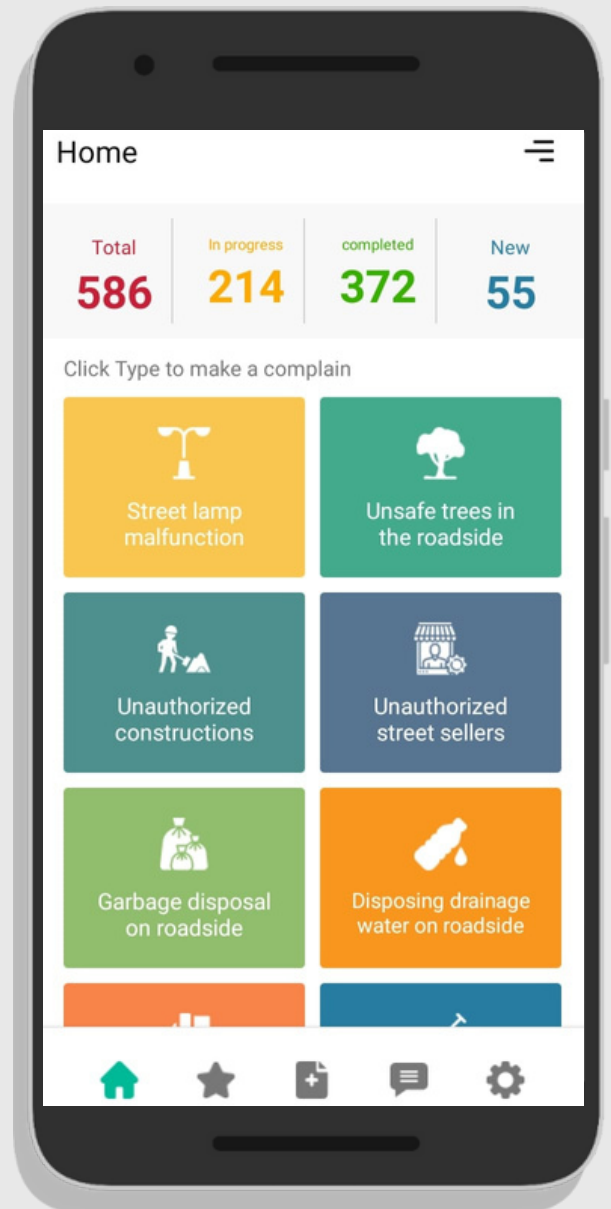
HELP-O did an awareness program about the e-Sabha application on the 8th of September in Karapitiya Teaching Hospital. Ward In-charge officers, Section In-charge offers, and the deputy director of a Karapitiya teaching hospital participated in this program. HELP-O Chairman, Mr.Chathura Welivitiya explained the importance of this mobile application in his speech. He presented the success stories of the e-Sabha Application. After that, Mr. Lahiru Maduranga did a technical demo on the e-sabha complaining process using mobile phones. It was good technical training for the staff on the e-Sabha application. Staff members downloaded the e-sabha application at the same time and solved their technical issues with the support of project staff. Also, awareness leaflets were distributed, and awareness posters were on advertisement boards.

Written By - Lahiru Udumalagala





e - sabha



The e-Sabha mobile app is a Sri Lankan government initiative that allows citizens to send complaints, feedback, and information regarding public day-to-day issues to local government offices in the relevant area. It is a free app that is available for download on the Google Play Store

PLITTER CCTV

Rivers are one of the major pathways of plastic debris into the ocean. These plastics in the rivers may be disposed of through direct dumping into the river flow, catalyzed by the rain and exacerbated by the flooding events.

The estimation and flux monitoring of floating plastic in the river requires stationary cameras for continuous image capturing at locations with recording evidence of floating plastics.

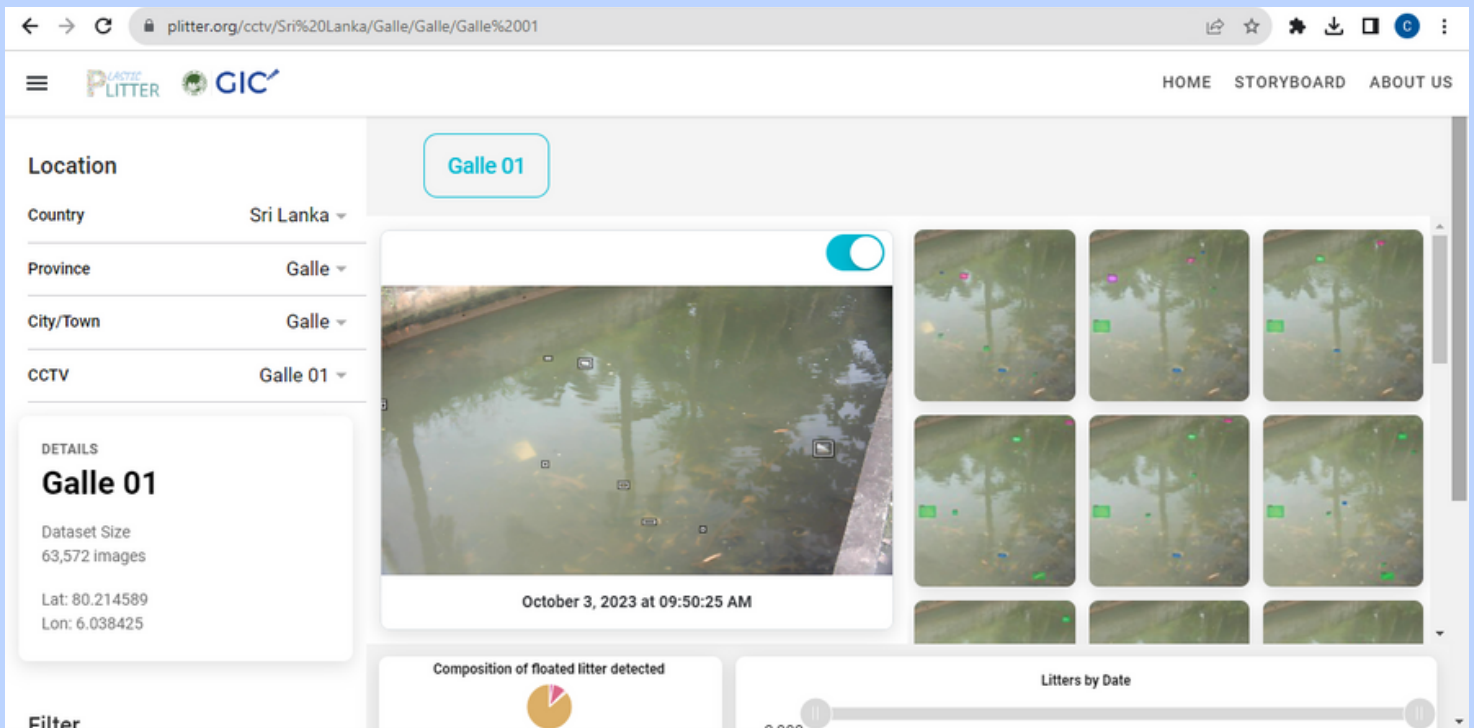
We installed multiple cameras on the Mekong River near the Golden Triangle in Chiang Rai Thailand and our cameras have been in continuous function from November 2021 to till date. The advantage of our cameras is AI-enabled to automatically detect floating plastics and have low cost.

P Litter Plastic Detection Galle So Far [April 22 - September 30]

Plastic - 432707
Plastic Bottles - 13597
Straws - 47408
Trash Bag - 1063
Styrofoam - 6751



We can get a detail analysis through www.plitter.org website.



Volunteers of HELP-O



Erika Valder

My name is Erika Valder and I am a student from the University of Paderborn (Germany). I had the opportunity to work together with the organization HELP-O in Sri Lanka for 6 weeks. During my stay, I focused primarily on the WASH- program. On behalf of this topic, my fellow HELP-O co-workers explained to me the biggest problems that some of the communities face.

During my stay, I talked to many people and shared my experience regarding waste management, sanitary facilities, and the overall waste politics in Germany. It was a wonderful opportunity for me. I learned so many new things and gained an insight into Sri Lankan culture and politics. On my behalf, I tried to get some funding and donations for the projects they currently organized. In addition to this, I helped with several different activities, such as teaching English and German classes in the surrounding area.

Furthermore, I helped with the fish net project and some improvements on the social media accounts from HELP-O. All in all, it was a very valuable and nice experience for me to do this project with HELPO and get an insight into every aspect of the culture.



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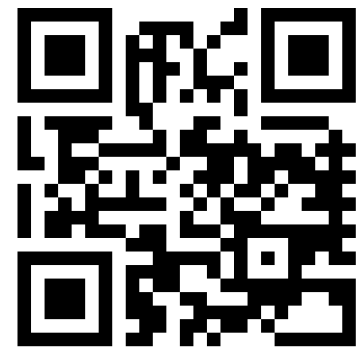
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