

Youth Led Green and Inclusive Businesses Project

Final Report

15th of July 2024

Project Implemented by

Green Movement of Sri Lanka Inc

54C, Vimukthi Mawatha,

Pelawatte, Battaramulla,

Sri Lanka

Contents

List of Tables	3
List of Figures	3
List of Annexures	4
1. Description	5
2. Executive Summary	6
3. Introduction	7
4. Project background	7
4.1 Project objectives.....	7
5. Project components and activities	8
5.1 Components and activities delivered during the reporting period	8
Activity 1: Recruiting 15 young entrepreneurs age between 18 -35 from western province	8
Activity 2: Raising awareness about the initiative using various medium and calling for application.....	9
Activity 3: Appointing diverse selection panel for the evaluation process	10
Activity 4: Shortlisting the applications (30 Application).....	10
Based on evaluation and reflections from the selection panel, 30 applications were shortlisted. In addition to the technical evaluation criteria, the panel considered the district, business registration status, business sector, and age as part of the evaluation process.....	10
Activity 5: Evaluating and finalizing the list of selected young entrepreneurs.....	10
Activity 6. Conducting a baseline survey and GAP analysis	10
Activity 7. Preparing training modules.....	11
Activity 8: Launching event.....	11
Activity 9: In-person workshops	12
Activity 10: Online Sessions	14
Activity 10. Mentoring and Coaching of young entrepreneurs	16
Activity 11. Field visits	17
Activity 12. Pitch Day Event	19
Activity 13: Monitoring visits	21
5.2 Analysis of participants	21
5.3 Challenges faced and how they were overcome	22
6. Relationship with any other organizations involved in implementing the Action	23
7. Next steps	23

List of Tables

Table 1 Online Sessions conducted during the project period	15
Table 2 Appointed mentors for deferent sectors	16
Table 3 Details of Monitoring visit completed.....	21

List of Figures

<i>Figure 1 Trilingual social media posts published.....</i>	<i>8</i>
Figure 2 Post published in partners networks	9
Figure 3 Session on communication and time done by Mr Kokila Jayathissa	11
Figure 4 Interactive session conducted by Mr. Hasanka Padukka.....	11
Figure 5 Presentation on sustainability by Ms. Sithumini Anuradha.....	12
Figure 6 Group photograph	12
Figure 7 First in person session on Business management skills.....	13
Figure 8 Second physical on innovation and product development session.....	13
Figure 9 Group photograph of the first day program	13
Figure 10 Session on Technological proficiency.....	14
Figure 11 Sesson on export Development Board	14
Figure 12 Group photograph of the second full day program.....	14
Figure 13 Field session conducted at Kodigahakanda	17
Figure 14 Field visit to Jetwing Blue.....	17
Figure 15 Field Session at Good Market	18
Figure 16 Field Trip to Green Hut.....	18
Figure 17 Field visit to MRF unit at Moratuwa Municipal council	19
Figure 18 Individual progress presentation at the pitch event.....	19
Figure 19 Pannel discussion at the pitch day.....	20
Figure 20 Pitch day group photograph	20

List of Annexures

Annex 01 Gap analysis report

Annex 02 Training module

Annex 03 Survey. Questioner

Annex 04 Individual photographs of selected young entrepreneurs

Annex 05 Field Monitoring Report

Annex 06 Recommendations from Participants

1. Description

Name of the coordinating organization of the grant contract	The Green Movement of Sri Lanka Inc.
Name and title of the contact person	Hasanka Padukka, Project Manager
Title/theme of the project	Youth Led Green and Inclusive Businesses Project
Start date and end date of the reporting period	Start date: 15th of December 2023 End date: 30th of June 2024
Target region(s)	Western Province
Final beneficiaries and/or target groups (if different) (including numbers of women and men) *	15 youth entrepreneurs from western province, Sri Lanka (8 Male, 7 female)

2. Executive Summary

The Green Movement of Sri Lanka (GMSL) implemented the Youth-Led Green and Inclusive Businesses Project, targeting young entrepreneurs in the Western Province of Sri Lanka and successfully completed its outreach and application phases in December and January. GMSL conducted a launch event to introduce the project, its objectives, desired outcomes, and aims to the selected 18 entrepreneurs. This one-day event was held at Waters Edge Battaramulla on February 12, 2024.

Objective of this project is to foster sustainable and inclusive business practices, achieving significant milestones through strategic communication and robust community engagement. GMSL team leveraged social media, email marketing, and ecosystem partners to maximize the project reach.

After selecting 18 beneficiaries from 68 applicants, GMSL conducted a gap analysis using a baseline questionnaire. GMSL team then developed a proper training module to address the identified knowledge gaps of the selected young entrepreneurs. This training program included at least four physical sessions and six online sessions via Zoom. GMSL also arranged one-on-one mentoring sessions to provide specific guidance for upgrading their businesses.

The program extended beyond theoretical knowledge transfer. GMSL organized several field visits to give the entrepreneurs practical experience from upgraded businesses. Finally, all the entrepreneurs created their own green and inclusive transition plans, which they presented at a pitch event. Selected entrepreneurs received seed funding to encourage their efforts toward achieving higher sustainability.

As a next step, GMSL continued communication with the young entrepreneurs to guide them prepare their sustainability plans. GMSL currently arranging a common marketplace to promote their products, which will be both a physical and virtual platform.

3. Introduction

The project aimed to establish an impactful program designed to empower and nurture 15 young entrepreneurs and small business owners aged between 18 and 35 in the Western Province. The project focuses on facilitating these young entrepreneurs in their transition towards greener and more inclusive businesses. Initially scheduled to be implemented from December 2023 to April 2024, the timeline was amended and extended to July 2024 due to practical considerations, with a particular emphasis on encouraging female participation to address current gender disparities.

After selecting 15 beneficiaries from 68 applicants, GMSL conducted a gap analysis using a baseline questionnaire (Annex 01). Based on the identified knowledge gaps, GMSL team developed a comprehensive training module (Annex 02). The training program included four physical sessions and six online sessions via Zoom. GMSL also arranged one-on-one mentoring sessions to provide specific guidance for upgrading their businesses.

The program was not limited to theoretical knowledge transfer. GMSL organized several field visits to provide practical experience from upgraded businesses. Finally, all the entrepreneurs created their own green and inclusive transition plans and presented them at a pitch event. Selected entrepreneurs received seed funding to support their efforts in transforming their businesses towards higher sustainability.

4. Project background

4.1 Project objectives

The primary goal of this proposed project is to establish an impactful program aimed at empowering and nurturing 15 young entrepreneurs and small business owners aged between 18 and 35 in the Western Province. The project focuses on sustainable development in the following sectors:

- Agro-processing
- Food and beverage
- Tourism
- Retail/Wholesale/Warehousing

The project integrates the Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) agenda into its design and implementation. Specialized workshops have been conducted, emphasizing inclusivity, empathy, and mutual respect. EDI principles were incorporated into all training modules to foster an inclusive environment. Underrepresented groups among participants were identified, and tailored support and mentorship were provided to address their unique entrepreneurial challenges. Communication strategies and marketing materials were thoughtfully developed to resonate with a diverse audience, showcasing the project's commitment to EDI.

5. Project components and activities

5.1 Components and activities delivered during the reporting period

Activity 1: Recruiting 15 young entrepreneurs age between 18 -35 from western province

The trilingual campaign, designed to attract and empower young entrepreneurs, especially women, towards green and inclusive businesses, utilized various channels including social media platforms (Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn) and collaborations with startup ecosystem institutions. The use of targeted hashtags and content highlighting the benefits of sustainable business practices was pivotal in garnering attention.



Figure 1 Trilingual social media posts published

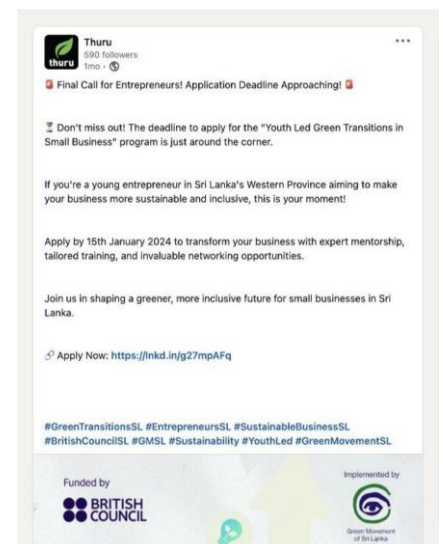
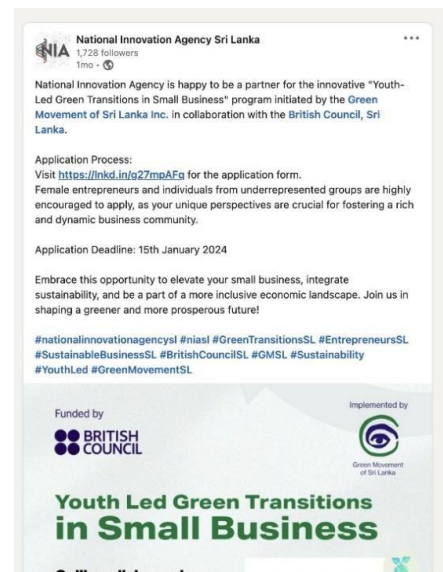


Activity 2: Raising awareness about the initiative using various medium and calling for application

A total of 68 applications were received, demonstrating the effective reach and impact of the program's communication strategy. The selection process, conducted by a panel of program experts, resulted in 18 entrepreneurs being chosen to proceed. This selective approach ensured that the program could dedicate focused support and resources to the most promising and impactful projects.

The invaluable support of ecosystem partners, who shared the program within their networks, significantly extended the outreach efforts. This collaboration not only amplified the program's visibility but also underscored the community's shared commitment to fostering a new era of green entrepreneurship.

Figure 2 Post published in partners networks



Activity 3: Appointing diverse selection panel for the evaluation process

The Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) agenda was integrated into the project by appointing a selection panel comprised of individuals from diverse backgrounds, ensuring an equitable and impartial selection process.

Selection panel members are as follows

Mr. Heminda Jayaweera

Mr. Damitha Samarakoon

Ms. Haily Senevirathne

Ms. Deshani Herath

The expert team prepared a evaluation tool to cover the selection criteria, and assigned marks based on the information provided by the applicants.

Activity 4: Shortlisting the applications (30 Application)

Based on evaluation and reflections from the selection panel, 30 applications were shortlisted. In addition to the technical evaluation criteria, the panel considered the district, business registration status, business sector, and age as part of the evaluation process.

Activity 5: Evaluating and finalizing the list of selected young entrepreneurs

Shortlisted candidates were interviewed and received physical confirmation. Their compatibility with the project was further reviewed. Finally, 18 applicants were selected and recruited for the project.

Activity 6. Conducting a baseline survey and GAP analysis

GMSL conducted a baseline survey and a gap analysis to identify the current status and critical gaps of each entrepreneur and their businesses. A questionnaire for the baseline survey was prepared, and individual discussions were held to complete it. The expert team analyzed the results and identified the gaps to be addressed by the project. The questionnaire is annexed to the report as Annex 03.

Activity 7. Preparing training modules

With the support of an expert team, a customized curriculum has been developed tailored to the specific needs and challenges identified in the baseline survey and gap analysis, with a focus on the components indicated in the grant proposal.

Activity 8: Launching event

The launching event was held at Waters Edge Battaramulla on February 12, 2024, to introduce the project, its objectives, desired outcomes, and aims to the selected 18 entrepreneurs. Mr. Suranjan Kodithuwakku, Chairman of the Green Movement of Sri Lanka, delivered an overview of the program, while Mr. Chameera Wickramasinghe, Program Manager at the British Council, outlined the program's expectations.

During the event, Mr. Hasanka Padukka conducted an activity where he taught all the entrepreneurs how to do an Elevator pitch, followed by each applicant presenting their version to the audience. Mr. Kokila Jayathissa also held an interactive session emphasizing the importance of communication and time management in business. Environmental specialist Ms. Sithumini Anuradha presented a slideshow introducing green concepts to the entrepreneurs. Individual photographs of the selected young entrepreneurs are annexed to the report as Annex 4.



Figure 3 Interactive session conducted by Mr. Hasanka Padukka



Figure 4 Session on communication and time done by Mr Kokila Jayathissa



*Figure 5 Presentation on sustainability
by Ms. Sithumini Anuradha*

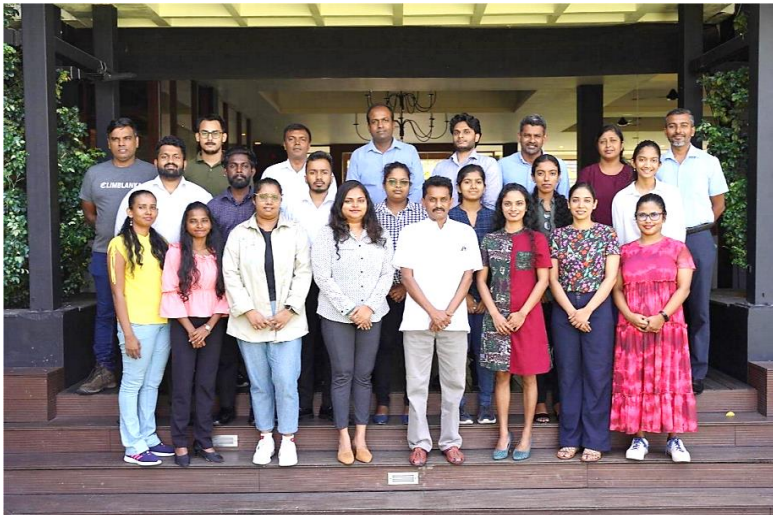


Figure 6 Group photograph

Activity 9: In-person workshops

1st in-person work shop

The first in-person workshop for the 15 selected entrepreneurs from the Western Province was held at Waters Edge Battaramulla on March 5, 2024. The program started at 9 AM and concluded at 4 PM. As per the proposed activities, the workshop consisted of two sessions. The morning session was conducted by Mr. Heminda Jayaweera, a trainer on Design Thinking and Rapid Prototyping for Corporates. In the afternoon, Ms. Vindya Wijesinhe, Senior Innovation Officer at the National Innovation Agency (NIA) Sri Lanka, conducted the session.



Figure 7 First in person session on Business management skills

done by Mr Heminda Jayaweera



Figure 8 Second physical on innovation and product development session

conducted by Ms. Vindya Wijesinghe



Figure 9 Group photograph of the first day program

2nd in-person workshop

The second in-person workshop was held at Waters Edge Battaramulla on March 14, 2024. The program started at 9 AM and concluded at 4 PM, covering two in-person sessions as per the plan.

The morning session was conducted by Mr. Damitha Samarakoon, an Independent Consultant specializing in Energy, Waste Management, and SME development. In the afternoon, there was an interactive session led by Mr. Hasanka Padukka. Following that, the next session was conducted by Ms. Indumini Kodikara, Director of Export Services at the Export Development Board.



Figure 10 Session on Technological proficiency

done by Mr . Damitha Samarakoon



Figure 11 Session on export Development Board

conducted by Ms. Idumini Kodikara



Figure 12 Group photograph of the second full day program

Activity 10: Online Sessions

A total of eight online sessions were conducted, targeting important topics aimed at helping the selected participants improve their green businesses, with experts invited in relevant fields.

Table 1 List of online sessions conducted during the project period

No	Topic	Resource person	Date	Number of Participants
1	Data and Monitoring	Mr. Damitha Samarkoon (Independent Consultant – Energy, Waste Management, and SME development)	9 th April 2024	15
2	Stakeholder engagement	Mr. Damitha Samarkoon (Independent Consultant – Energy, Waste Management, and SME development)	19 th April 2024	14
3	Marketing Process	Dr. Haily Seneviratne (Lecturer, Wayaba University of Sri Lanka)	27 th April 2024	13
4	Intellectual Property	Mr. Revan Weerasinghe	1 st May 2024	12
5	Our responsibilities amidst current Climate Change	Dr. M. P. Kumara (Senior Lecturer, Ocean University of Sri Lanka)	11 th May 2024	11
6	Ethical Leadership	Mr. Navaka Navaratne (GRI Certified Sustainability Professional Corporate Sustainability Consultant for 99X Technology Ltd.)	17 th May 2024	14
7	Disability Employment Practices and Inclusive places for People with disabilities in Sri Lanka.	Mr. Kasunjith Satanarachchi (Disability Inclusion Analyst/ Specialist at UNDP Sri Lanka)	9 th June 2024	12
8	Certification and Compliance Audits	Mr. Amila Prasanna Sumanapala (Lead Auditor for FSC® Forest Management Certification)	11 th June 2024	14

Activity 10. Mentoring and Coaching of young entrepreneurs

All the young entrepreneurs were given the opportunity to discuss their business-related matters individually, gaining a wide range of benefits. Mentors provided individual attention to each business, guiding them towards a greener transition.

Table 2 List of mentors and mentees based on category

#	Category	Name of Mentee	Mentor
1	Food and Beverage	I Thilini Sadeepi	Ms.Haily Senevirathne
2	Tourism	J A Sachith Samuditha Perera	Mr. Damitha Samarakoon
3	Tourism	Movindu Anusahan Tithira Halloluwa	Mr. Damitha Samarakoon
4	Agro-processing	Yasas Udaka Nanayakkara	Mr.Heminda Jayaweera
5	Retail/Wholesale/Warehousing	Devindi Abeydeera Gunaratne	Mr. Nirmal Nonis
6	Retail/Wholesale/Warehousing	Umesha Handapangoda	Mr. Nirmal Nonis
7	Agro-processing	Tharika Keragala Arachchi	Mr.Heminda Jayaweera
8	Retail/Wholesale/Warehousing	Madhushani Rathnasiri	Mr. Nirmal Nonis
9	Food and Beverage	Kasuni Chamudika	Ms.Haily Senevirathne
10	Tourism	Shakya Maryan Perera	Mr. Damitha Samarakoon
11	Food and Beverage	Matarage Ravidu Sadaruwan	Ms.Haily Senevirathne
12	Agro-processing	Dhananjaya Gamage	Heminda
13	Food and Beverage	Shawn senarath	Ms.Haily Senevirathne
14	Agro-processing	G.Ranuka kavinda wickramasingha	Mr.Heminda Jayaweera
15	Retail/Wholesale/Warehousing	Shujeevan Kanapathipillai	Mr. Nirmal Nonis

Activity 11. Field visits

1st Field Visit

The first field visit to Kodigahakanda was held on March 9, 2024. Fifteen selected young entrepreneurs took part in this visit, aimed at providing exposure to Climblanka, one of the businesses. During the visit, participants gained an in-depth understanding of Kodigahakanda's history, learned about Climblanka, and explored key aspects related to the project objectives.



Figure 13 Field session conducted at Kodigahakanda

2nd Field Visit

Project participants visited Jetwing Blue hotel in Negambo on the 28th of March 2024. Key objective was to observe sustainable practices of hotel industry, particularly including solid waste management and wastewater treatment systems.



Figure 14 Field visit to Jetwing Blue



3rd Field Visit

Project participants visited Good Market on March 30, 2024, to observe innovative and sustainable products and marketing practices. They had the opportunity to share lessons learned from vendors at Good Market and received guidance on the process and procedures for registering and marketing their products there.



Figure 15 Field Session at Good Market

4th Field Visit

GMSL coordinated the visit of project participants to The Green Hut on the 30th of March 2024. It was very relevant to team as the Green Hut is a newly opened supermarket that can be accessed and utilized by green entrepreneurs. Participants got an opportunity to explore the shop, understand the concept and the process of operating and managing the Green Hut as an emerging venture.



Figure 16 Field Trip to Green Hut

5th Field Visit

Project participants had the opportunity to be exposed to government waste management practices during their visit to the Material Recovery Facility at Moratuwa Municipal Council on March 30, 2024. Chief Public Health Inspector (PHI) Mr. Yasantha explained the solid waste management system and its functions in detail. Everyone had the chance to observe the facility and gain a clear understanding of the practical implications and challenges of solid waste management.



Figure 17 Field visit to MRF unit at Moratuwa Municipal council



Activity 12. Pitch Day Event

Project participants had the opportunity to present their improved and renovated products, services, and ideas at the pitch day event held on April 29, 2024, at Grand Monarch Hotel, Thalawathugoda. They showcased the plans and approaches used to make their products, services, and ideas greener and more environmentally friendly. An expert panel critically evaluated their ideas and provided



feedback and recommendations during the pitch and panel discussion. A seed fund of 50,000 LKR was provided to 14 selected entrepreneurs to implement their sustainability plans based on the experts' recommendations.

Figure 18 Individual progress presentation at the pitch event



Figure 19 Pannel discussion at the pitch day

Figure 20 Pitch day group photograph



Activity 13: Monitoring visits

Field monitoring visits were conducted to assess the level of adaptation of lessons and best practices, and to observe the process of transitioning towards greener businesses using the knowledge, skills, and inputs gained from the project. The following field monitoring visits were conducted, and the relevant reports are attached as Annex 5.

Table 3 Details of Monitoring visit completed

Date		Time	Entrepreneur's name	Registered name of business	Activity
1	12 th June 2024	11.40 a.m.	Umesha Handapangoda	Hushele - Infinisha (Pvt) Ltd	Monitor the progress of the businesses and evaluate the new green transitions they have implemented since participating in the Youth-Led Green Transition Project. We provided tailored advice to help further improve their sustainable practices and overall business growth.
2	12 th June 2024	12.30 p.m.	Movindu Halloluwa	Ceylon Big 5	
3	12 th June 2024	1.30 p.m.	Shakya Perera	Lala Studio (Pvt) Ltd	
4	25 th June 2024	9.35 a.m.	Dhananjaya Gamage	Black Bamboo Plants Nursery	
5	25 th June 2024	10.17 a.m.	Sachith Samuditha	Climblanka	
6	25 th June 2024	11.00 a.m.	Ravidu Sadaruwan	Mihithala Products	
7	25 th June 2024	12.24 p.m.	Kasuni Chamudika	Sustain U	
8	25 th June 2024	2.15 p.m.	Devindi Abeydeera	Mishra	

5.2 Analysis of participants

Event name	Youth entrepreneurs			Total participants		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Project launch event	8	8	16	12	14	26
1 st In person workshop	8	6	14	11	10	21
2 nd In person workshop	6	6	12	11	8	19
Pitch Day	5	8	13	13	9	22
1 st Field Visit	5	3	8	10	7	17
2 nd Field Visit	4	4	8	6	6	12
3 rd Field Visit	4	3	7	7	6	13
4 th Field Visit	4	3	7	7	6	13
5 th Field Visit	4	3	7	7	6	13

5.3 Challenges faced and how they were overcome

A huge demand was observed for the program and as a result selection process become more complex. To overcome complexities, the process was streamlined with proper evaluation criteria and scoring system. A team of consultant assigned to screen the candidates, evaluate each application and select right candidates.

Selected applicants are from multidisciplinary background with wide range of knowledge, skills and understanding. Designing training modules and decide on delivery methods to make it relevant to all participants was challenging. A systematic need assessment was used to evaluate their level of knowledge, skills and understanding while systematically assessing their needs and expectations.

It was not practical to gather all relevant information through application, while there was a need for verification and gaining in-depth understanding on certain aspects of the applicants. To respond this need, one to one discussions were scheduled with shortlisted candidates to select 18 applicants initially and finalize 15 participants out of them.

Routine and specific communication was challenging and GMSL team created a common WhatsApp group for project related general communications, while specific messages were communicated individually to minimize issues and complications.

6. Relationship with any other organizations involved in implementing the Action

The following ecosystem partners made significant contributions by supporting various aspects of the project. They shared technical knowledge with the young entrepreneurs by sending resource persons for workshops, facilitated networking with relevant agencies, and provided guidance to obtain clearances and approvals, among other forms of support.

- Sri Lanka Export Development Board
- National Innovation Agency in Sri Lanka
- Earth Dreams International
- Thuru
- Zero Trash

7. Next steps

Even after the project officially concluded, GMSL continued to maintain communication with the young entrepreneurs and collaborated with them to develop sustainability plans. Presently, GMSL is arranging a common marketplace for them to promote their products, which will be both a physical and virtual platform.

The British Council may wish to publicise the results of Actions. Do you have any objection to this report being published on the British Council website? If so, please state your objections here.

Name of the contact person for the Action:

Hasanka Padukka

Signature:


Location: 54C, Vimukthi Mawatha, Pelawattha, Battaramulla.

Date report sent: 15.07.2024

