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## CLEAN CITIES, BLUE OCEAN

### SRI LANKA

#### KEY FACTS

Sri Lanka is the **5th** largest global contributor to ocean plastic pollution

**640,000** metric tons plastic leak into the ocean each year from Sri Lanka

#### THE CHALLENGE

Globally, **Sri Lanka is the fifth-largest source of ocean plastics pollution**, behind only China, Indonesia, Vietnam, and the Philippines. As an island nation, Sri Lanka faces unique challenges in managing its waste. Its land area is roughly the size of the U.S. State of Georgia, at approximately 25,000 square miles, but with double the population, which reached 21.67 million in 2018 and continues to steadily increase. The country's capital of Colombo generates 10% of the nation's total waste, although its residents represent only ~2.5% of the national population and live within 1% of the country's total land area. Sri Lanka's waste management systems have struggled to keep pace as urban populations have grown, yet system funding, organization, and local government resources have remained static.

With these systemic challenges, as well as varied waste management practices across the country, Sri Lanka is struggling to keep plastic and other wastes out of its marine and other natural environments, as well as maintain healthy and clean cities. Across the country, it is estimated that only 20% of households have access to public waste collection services, while 47% burn their waste, 23% dispose of it in their communities or natural environments, and about 8% practice backyard composting for organic waste. In Colombo, only 75% of waste generated is estimated to be collected. To reduce its environmental leakage for healthier cities and seas, Sri Lanka must shift to a more robust waste collection, recycling, and disposal system with **strengthened local government capacities and resources, enhanced infrastructure and collection systems, greater public participation and awareness, and enhanced markets for recycled and reusable products.**

#### OUR APPROACH

To address these challenges, USAID's Clean Cities, Blue Ocean (CCBO) program offers **state-of-the-art international technical expertise and sustainable, locally-led solutions through its local grants program**. CCBO seeks to develop, test, and implement new models that promote reducing, reusing and recycling (3R) practices and enhance solid waste management (SWM); facilitate partnerships and investment around key needs, such as infrastructure; and strengthen local systems to build Vietnam's resiliency and self-reliance. Where possible, CCBO seeks to learn from and expand on the success of proven initiatives by local government, non-governmental organizations, and the USAID Municipal Waste and Recycling Program.

CCBO's four guiding objectives are to:

- **Promote 3R practices and strengthen local and regional markets** for recycled plastics;
- **Build social and behavior change** for 3R's and sustainable SWM;
- **Increase capacity and effective governance** for SWM and recycling systems; and
- **Facilitate public-private partnerships** and multi-stakeholder alliances to bolster the program's impact, scalability, and sustainability.

Informal waste collectors (IWCs), of which a large portion are women, play a significant role in SWM in Sri Lanka. Through waste collection and sorting, they divert waste away from landfills and contribute to communities' local economies, public health and safety, and environments. Despite their critical roles, they are commonly underrepresented, face poor working conditions and social stigmas, and women working in the sector earn far less than their male counterparts. Across its approach and activities, CCBO works to support and enhance the livelihoods of IWCs, as well as advance women's economic empowerment as part of the Women's Global Development and Prosperity (W-GDP) Initiative by improving social and economic conditions that impede women's ability to work successfully in SWM and recycling jobs.

## ENGAGEMENT SITES

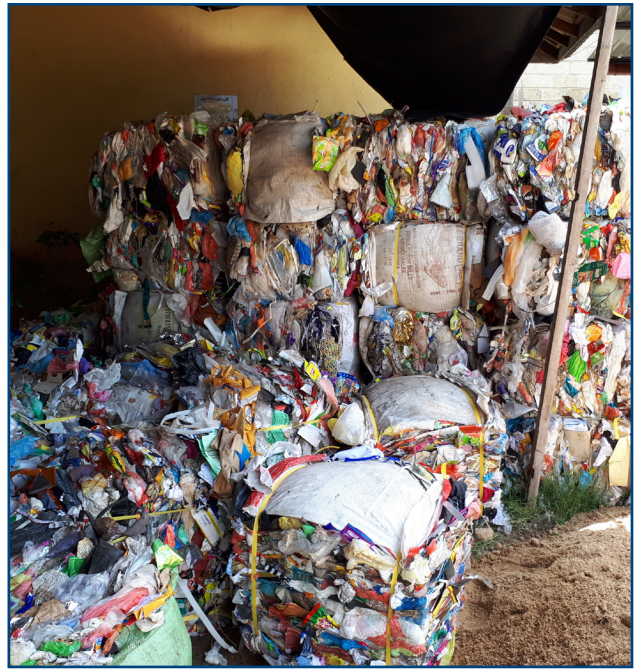
In Sri Lanka, CCBO is piloting solutions to stop the flow of plastic pollution to the waters within and surrounding the country through work in:

- **Colombo Metropolitan Area** - Sri Lanka's capital and largest city by population. The metropolitan area is the country's financial center and a popular tourist destination.
- **Galle** - Located on Sri Lanka's southwest coast and the country's southern capital. Currently, Galle's administration is working toward establishing the city as a healthy coastal city, branded as "Green City – Green Galle."
- **Jaffna District** - Home to the northern province's coastal capital city and many commercial institutions, industrial operations, hotels, and government institutions. Following the Sri Lankan Civil War, Jaffna was one of the first districts in the region to develop industrial areas and is connected to a reliable rail system to enable items to be manufactured here and transported throughout the country.

## ACTIVITIES

In Sri Lanka, CCBO will design and implement holistic strategies that address each step in the waste value chain—from production to its end use—prioritizing the most inclusive, economically viable, and environmentally sustainable solutions. In the first year of the project, CCBO will:

- Conduct critical **site-level research** to understand engagement sites' specific challenges in SWM and enforcement, behavior change, and barriers to private sector investment;
- **Award grants** to local partners to begin implementing effective, locally-led solutions to achieve program objectives; and
- Provide **additional technical assistance and capacity building** support using international and local program staff.



CCBO will work to strengthen Sri Lanka's waste management systems, which have struggled to keep pace as urban populations have grown. Credit: USAID Municipal Waste Recycling Program

## ABOUT CLEAN CITIES, BLUE OCEAN

USAID's Clean Cities, Blue Ocean is a five-year global program (2019-2024) to combat ocean plastic pollution. CCBO is the Agency's flagship program on ocean plastic pollution, working at the global level and in specific, rapidly urbanizing focal countries to target ocean plastics directly at their source. The program is implemented by Tetra Tech, in partnership with a consortium of organizations that include the International City/County Management Association (ICMA), The Manoff Group, and Ocean Conservancy. Other partners include national and local government, members of the private sector, non-governmental organizations, and local women's and youth organizations.

### Sources:

Jambeck, J.R., Andrady, A., Geyer, R., Narayan, R., Perryman, M., Siegler, T., Wilcox, C., Lavender Law, K., Plastic Waste Inputs from Land into the Ocean, Science, 2015.

United Nations Food and Agriculture Association, Food Waste Management in City Region Food System Policy Brief, 2018.



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