

# **Orange Friends**

## **Community Service**



Submitted by  
Rtr. Ahmadh Booso (President)  
from the  
Rotaract Club of Colombo Fort  
Sponsored By  
Rotary Club of Colombo Fort  
Held on  
April 05th, 2025  
at the  
Colombo Fort Railway Station

### **Secondary Avenues**

- Environmental Service

## Description

Orange Friends is a signature community initiative by the Rotaract Club of Colombo Fort designed to recognise and support the often overlooked urban street workers in Colombo. These individuals work tirelessly in challenging conditions to keep the city clean, yet they receive little acknowledgement or assistance.

In July–August 2024, the club engaged with ten such workers near the Colombo Floating Market in Colombo Fort and provided them with essential food packs to support a month's needs. The project raised double its initial funding target within three weeks, allowing the club to offer additional financial support through monthly stipends.

Alongside this, a city-wide **“Do Not Litter”** campaign was launched together with our Orange Friends to raise public awareness about waste disposal and promote respect for these workers, encouraging citizens to take shared responsibility for a cleaner, more compassionate Colombo.

## Objectives

- To provide essential support and nourishment to urban street workers.
- - To raise awareness and appreciation for their service to the city.
- - To encourage behavioural change in public waste disposal practices.
- - To promote inclusivity and dignity in how we refer to and treat sanitation workers.

## Goals

### SDG Goals

- 1 - No Poverty
  - 1.1 Eradicate extreme poverty.
- 1 - No Poverty
  - 1.2 Reduce poverty by at least 50%
- 1 - No Poverty
  - 1.3 Implement social protection systems.
- 1 - No Poverty
  - 1.5 Build resilience to environmental, economic and social distances.
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- 3 - Good Health and Well-being
  - 3.4 Reduce mortality from non-communicable diseases and promote mental health.
- 3 - Good Health and Well-being
  - 3.8 Achieve universal health coverage.
- 3 - Good Health and Well-being
  - 3.9 Reduce illness and death from hazardous chemicals and pollution.
- 11 - Sustainable Cities and Communities
  - 11.3 Inclusive and sustainable urbanization.
- 11 - Sustainable Cities and Communities
  - 11.5 Reduce the adverse effects of natural disasters.
- 11 - Sustainable Cities and Communities
  - 11.6 Reduce the environmental impact of cities.
- 11 - Sustainable Cities and Communities
  - 11.7 Provide access to safe and inclusive green and public spaces.
- 12 - Responsible Consumption and Production
  - 12.2 Sustainable management and use of natural resources.
- 12 - Responsible Consumption and Production
  - 12.5 Sustainable reduce waste generation.
- 12 - Responsible Consumption and Production
  - 12.8 Promote universal understanding of sustainable lifestyles.

#### Rotary Area of Focus

- Water and Sanitation
- Supporting the Environment
- Economic and Community Development

#### Other focus Areas

- Urban dignity and inclusion Volunteer-driven impact Public behavioural change

### Project Chair

Name	Volunteer Hours
Ahmadh Booso	187 Hours (Appox.)

### Project Committee

Name	Volunteer Hours	Committee Role
Yazeed Ahamed	147 Hours (Appox.)	Project Secretary
Mahdi Namiz	87 Hours (Appox.)	Video Content Editor
Miqdaad Mufeel	98 Hours (Appox.)	Project Coordinator
Amnah Booso	63 Hours (Appox.)	Admin Support
Sabrin Cader	61 Hours (Appox.)	Admin Support

Manusha Wickramaratne	67 Hours (Appox.)	Visual Content Editor
Kaumini Mapa	98 Hours (Appox.)	Admin Support
	Total Hours	808 Hours

## Club Participation

Club Name	Count
Rotaract Club of Colombo Fort	17

## Other Organization Participation

Organization Name	Organization Type	Count
Rotary Club of Colombo Fort	rotary	4

## District Steering Committee Participation

Name	Designation
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# Budget

## Income

Description		Amount
Anonymous Donations		228000 LKR
	Total Income	228000 LKR

## Expenses

Description		Amount
Dry Ration		-156000 LKR
New Year Stipend		-72000 LKR
	Total Expense	228000 LKR
	Total	0 LKR

# **Project Planning**

Planning for the Orange Friends 2024 project began in early July 2024, with a renewed commitment from the Rotaract Club of Colombo Fort to continue its third consecutive edition of the initiative. The goal was not only to support urban street workers but also to change the community's perspective about waste disposal and respect for public service workers.

## **1. Needs Assessment and Beneficiary Identification**

The planning team began with a field visit to the Colombo Floating Market and surrounding areas to engage directly with urban street workers. Ten individuals were identified based on vulnerability, consistency in their roles, and personal financial circumstances. Each was interviewed to gain insight into their daily struggles, working conditions, and family responsibilities.

## **2. Project Name Redesign**

Recognising the need for more respectful language, the project transitioned from its original name, "Orange People" to "Orange Friends." The new name was selected to create a narrative of dignity, respect, and solidarity, aligning with the club's values and global inclusivity standards.

## **3. Fundraising and Budget Planning**

A clear financial plan was created to fund food distribution, monthly stipends, and campaign materials. A fundraising campaign was launched in mid-July via digital platforms and personal donor outreach. Thanks to a well-executed campaign, the project raised double the intended amount within three weeks.

Excess funds were allocated to provide monthly stipends to the ten workers during October and November 2024.

## **4. Procurement and Logistics**

Once the funds were secured, the team coordinated the procurement of dry rations and essential food items from verified vendors. Each pack was designed to sustain one worker for an entire month. Logistics included:

- Sourcing reusable packaging to align with sustainability goals
- Coordinating transport and distribution logistics
- Ensuring timely delivery of food packs by mid-August

## **5. Community Engagement**

Club members were encouraged to engage with each worker personally, ensuring the act of giving was grounded in empathy and understanding. Conversations were recorded (with consent) to be used later for storytelling purposes in the awareness campaign.

## **6. “Do Not Litter” Campaign Planning**

The second phase of the project was conceptualised as a city-wide public awareness initiative to tackle the root cause of the workers’ hardship—irresponsible littering. This involved:

- Designing posters and videos featuring real workers and their stories
- Planning community outreach via social media and on-ground campaigns
- Engaging schools, local vendors, and residents in the campaign through pledges

## **Public Relations Plan**

The public relations strategy for Orange Friends was multifaceted, designed to drive fundraising, increase awareness, and build empathy for the street workers’ cause.

### **1. Campaign Goals**

- Humanise the lives of urban street workers
- Encourage public empathy and civic responsibility
- Promote donations and long-term partnerships
- Launch a behavioural change movement around littering

### **2. Social Media Strategy**

Platform: Content Focus

Instagram: Real stories, transformation reels, fundraiser graphics, before/after visuals

Facebook: Long-form storytelling, testimonial quotes, volunteer experiences

LinkedIn: Impact reporting, professional endorsement of the campaign, and corporate engagement

WhatsApp: Regular updates to donors and volunteers, quick campaign alerts, internal follow-up

- Stories and short videos were used to maximise emotional engagement.
- Scheduled posting began two weeks before distribution and continued throughout the stipend months.

### **3. Email Campaigns**

- Targeted emails were sent to previous donors, Rotaract networks, media houses, and civic leaders. Each email was tailored with:
  - A compelling subject line (e.g., “Meet the Real Heroes of Colombo Streets”)
  - High-impact visuals and stories

- Direct call-to-action buttons (Donate, Share, Volunteer)

#### 4. Partnerships and Media

- Blog article published titled “O is for Orange and Opportunity”
- Local influencers and content creators were contacted to amplify the message
- A feature was pitched to local print and digital outlets for post-project coverage

#### 5. Online Registrations & Campaign Tracking

- Donations and volunteer interest were tracked via Google Forms and Sheets
- Metrics such as reach, engagement, and donation conversion rates were reviewed weekly

### PR links

<https://www.instagram.com/p/C9g4jtOil1M/?igsh=MW4wbHlyZjh0anM3Nw==>

<https://www.instagram.com/p/C9l0413l0T8/?igsh=MTd6bmtym1ocWU3bQ==>

<https://www.instagram.com/p/C9oZRm9IkJK/?igsh=MTlpb211ZmEwZzRobA=>

<https://www.instagram.com/reel/C-CZkpDoqEB/?igsh=MTNrZXh0NTV5N2RpbQ==>

<https://www.instagram.com/reel/C-SnKzXIRMJ/?igsh=N2psNGp5cDZhNDQ2>

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<https://www.facebook.com/share/v/1FU8nNysR4/>

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<https://www.facebook.com/reel/859641172769735?mibextid=9drbnH&s=yWDuG2&fs=e>

<https://www.facebook.com/share/v/16TBD0Ay6q/>

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## Beneficiaries

- CMC Street workers
- Local residents
- Passengers and commuters
- NGOs and donor organisations

## Partners

- Colombo Municipal Council

## **Outcomes**

### **Short-Term Impact**

- Immediate Relief for Urban Workers: Ten street workers identified from the Colombo Floating Market area received monthly food packs, directly supporting their basic nutritional needs and providing short-term financial relief during a difficult economic period.
- Humanising Urban Street Workers: Through interviews and engagement, the project gave a platform to the voices and stories of Colombo's street cleaners, allowing the public to better understand the struggles behind the orange vests. It created an emotional connection between citizens and the invisible workforce that keeps their city clean.
- Effective Fundraising and Community Involvement: The club raised double its financial target within three weeks, reflecting the power of a well-planned digital campaign and community-driven storytelling. This allowed for added benefits such as monthly stipends beyond the original scope of the project.
- Initiation of a Behaviour Change Campaign: Planning and design for the "Do Not Litter" awareness campaign was launched, paving the way for long-term behavioral change in waste management and public cleanliness.

### **Long-Term Impact**

- Changing Public Attitudes Toward Labour Dignity: The transition from "Orange People" to "Orange Friends" set the tone for reframing societal attitudes towards sanitation workers. The long-term vision is to normalise respect, inclusion, and dignity for these roles in Sri Lankan urban society.
- A Scalable Community Model: Orange Friends has now developed into a repeatable framework that future Rotaract clubs—or even municipal bodies—can adopt, improving the lives of underserved public workers through recognition and direct support.
- Strengthening Club Identity and Social Impact: The project has reinforced the Rotaract Club of Colombo Fort's leadership in empathetic, inclusive community service. It positioned the club as not only a service provider but also a changemaker addressing both symptoms and root causes.
- Sustainability through Civic Engagement: The upcoming "Do Not Litter" campaign aims to embed civic responsibility in Colombo's daily life by educating citizens about public sanitation and proper waste disposal practices.

## **Areas of Improvements**

### **Expanded Beneficiary Pool:**

While the project successfully impacted 10 workers, future editions should consider scaling up through additional funding or partnerships to include more workers from different zones across Colombo.

**Deeper Municipal Collaboration:**

Stronger engagement with municipal authorities could provide access to more accurate data, resources, and long-term support mechanisms for the beneficiaries.

**Year-Round Visibility:**

Although the project received strong engagement during its peak, sustained social media presence and monthly updates could keep the campaign visible throughout the year.

**Metrics for Impact Evaluation:**

Introducing a formal method of collecting feedback from the beneficiaries and the public could provide valuable insights for measuring both emotional and social impact.

**Follow-Up and Alumni Engagement:**

Creating a database of beneficiaries and engaging them in future awareness campaigns (e.g., as ambassadors or voices for the city) could enhance the personal and societal impact of the project.

Gallery





