

SECOND EDITION  
SEPTEMBER 2025



# PROJECT 360°

“BLUEPRINT TO BREAKTHROUGH  
STRATEGIES FOR  
PROJECT EXCELLENCE”

PROJECT MANAGEMENT CIRCLE  
DEPARTMENT OF OPERATIONS & LOGISTICS  
NSBM GREEN UNIVERSITY









ADMINISTRATION  
B3



# Blueprint to Breakthrough Strategies for Project Excellence



From Construction to IT to CSR, project management connects ideas with impact. Project 360° reflects a 360-degree perspective where knowledge meets practice, innovation meets responsibility, and leadership creates value for society.





The theme of our magazine, Project 360°, represents a holistic perspective of project management a complete circle that encompasses every stage, discipline, and impact of projects. The concept of 360° reflects the idea that effective project management requires not only technical skills but also vision, adaptability, and responsibility in creating meaningful outcomes.

In this edition, we explore project management across diverse industries:

Construction - where project management plays a vital role in ensuring safety, sustainability, and timely delivery of large-scale developments.

Information Technology (IT) - where agile practices, innovation, and technological integration redefine how modern projects are executed.

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) - where projects go beyond profit to create positive social and environmental change, reflecting the importance of responsible leadership.

Through thought-provoking articles, real-world case studies, and creative contributions, Project 360° aims to bridge academic knowledge with industry practices, helping our readers gain insights into how project management drives progress across multiple sectors.

By highlighting construction, IT, and CSR, this magazine emphasizes that project management is not confined to a single field; it is a universal discipline that empowers individuals and organizations to achieve goals, overcome challenges, and deliver value to society.

With a 360-degree view, we invite our readers to step into the world of possibilities that project management opens leading with knowledge, collaboration, and purpose.





## 1. Construction



## 2. Information Technology



## 3. Corporate Social Responsibility



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# DEAN FACULTY OF BUSINESS

## **Ms. Thilini De Silva**

It gives me great pride and pleasure to introduce the second edition of Project 360°, the flagship magazine of the Project Management Circle, Faculty of Business, NSBM Green University. Building on the success of our inaugural edition, this publication continues to reflect our unwavering commitment to nurturing innovative thinking, professional excellence, and industry relevance in the field of Project Management.

The second edition of Project 360° once again brings together insightful in-depth articles, thought-provoking perspectives, and interviews with industry leaders who share their practical experiences and future outlooks. This blend of academic rigour and industry wisdom ensures that our readers are exposed to both the theoretical foundations and the real-world applications of Project Management.

What makes Project 360° truly remarkable is the spirit of collaboration behind it. Students, academics, and professionals have worked hand-in-hand to create content that not only educates but also inspires. Their dedication highlights the growing synergy between academia and industry, a synergy that is vital for producing future-ready graduates who can thrive in dynamic business environments.

I extend my warmest congratulations to everyone involved in this publication. May Project 360° continue to evolve as a platform that sparks dialogue, drives innovation, and shapes the next generation of project management leaders.





# HEAD

## DEPARTMENT OF OPERATIONS AND LOGISTICS

**Mr. Shaja Musthaffa**

It is with great pride and honor that I welcome you to the second edition of Project 360° Magazine, presented by the Project Management Circle of the Department of Operations and Logistics.

This edition, themed 'Blueprint to Breakthrough,' highlights the importance of thoughtful planning as the foundation for success. It emphasizes how a well-crafted blueprint rooted in knowledge and preparation can guide us toward breakthroughs, where dedication, creativity, and collaboration bring plans to successful completion.

The magazine continues our commitment to providing students with real-world exposure beyond the classroom. Building on the success of our inaugural edition, it explores the evolving dimensions of project management, offering readers fresh insights and perspectives.

I am immensely proud of our student writers for their dedication and hard work in bringing this edition to life. Their contributions make Project 360° Magazine a valuable resource for students, academics, and industry professionals alike.

I invite you to immerse yourself in this publication and discover new pathways from blueprint to breakthrough in the dynamic world of project management.





# LECTURER IN CHARGE

## PROJECT MANAGEMENT CIRCLE

### **Mr. Praveen Ranaweera**

It is with great pride that I present the second edition of Project 360°, the official magazine of the Project Management Circle at NSBM Green University. This publication exemplifies the commitment and professionalism of our undergraduates, who have demonstrated remarkable dedication in compiling a collection of thought-provoking articles, industry insights, and creative contributions.

The Project Management Circle has consistently strived to create a platform that not only nurtures academic excellence but also encourages the application of theoretical knowledge to real-world contexts. Project 360° is a reflection of this vision, serving as a valuable medium through which students can engage with contemporary industry practices while enhancing their own knowledge and skills.

The success of this magazine is the result of collective effort, careful planning, and the enthusiasm of our undergraduates, whose contributions have been instrumental in bringing this edition to life.

I extend my sincere appreciation to all those who contributed their time and effort towards this publication and commend the editorial team for their outstanding work. I look forward to witnessing the continued progress of the Project Management Circle as it achieves greater milestones in the future.





# LECTURER IN CHARGE

## PROJECT MANAGEMENT CIRCLE

### **Ms. Sithumini Jayasekara**

The journey of the Project Management Circle takes another proud step forward with the release of the second edition of Project 360°, our official magazine. This edition is more than a collection of articles - it is a reflection of the creativity, teamwork, and commitment of our members who have brought together diverse ideas, industry insights, and innovative perspectives.

Project 360° embodies the spirit of collaboration and continuous learning, providing a platform for aspiring project managers to share their voices, explore trends, and connect academic knowledge with industry practice. It stands as a testament to what can be achieved when passion and perseverance come together.

This milestone would not have been possible without the contributions of our members, mentors, industry experts, and the supportive university community. With optimism, we look forward to seeing Project 360° grow as a source of inspiration and excellence in project management.





# **PRESIDENT**

## **PROJECT MANAGEMENT CIRCLE**

### **Hashitha S. Jayathissa**

As the President of the Project Management Circle of the Faculty of Business, under the Department of Operations and Logistics, it is with pride and honor that we present the second edition of Project 360°, the official magazine of our circle, published by the Project Management Board of 2025.

Our driving vision has been “Ready to Build, Ready to Conquer.” This reflects our determination to shape leaders equipped with creativity, resilience, and essential project management skills to meet the challenges of tomorrow.

This year's theme, “Blueprint to Breakthrough-Strategies for Project Excellence,” captures the essence of project management: transforming a concept into a realized outcome. Through this edition, we emphasize how planning, structured methodologies, and perseverance can turn vision into reality. Every dream is achievable when guided with clarity and dedication.

Project management continues to evolve as a discipline, driving innovation and efficiency across industries. With each edition of Project 360°, we aim to contribute knowledge and inspiration to future project managers, empowering them to transform ideas into impactful results.

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to the Editorial Team for their tireless commitment. What began as a blueprint has now taken shape as a creation of excellence. Looking forward, I am confident that Project 360° will continue to grow as a legacy of knowledge and inspiration.





# THE EDITORIAL TEAM

## PROJECT 360°

BLUEPRINT TO BREAKTHROUGH





# EDITOR IN CHIEF

## PROJECT 360° 2<sup>ND</sup> EDITION

### Dilini Senarath

It is a privilege to introduce the second edition of Project 360° Magazine. This publication marks another step forward in our journey of learning and discovery, offering a platform where ideas, experiences, and knowledge in project management are shared and celebrated.

For us as students, this magazine is more than a collection of articles-it is a reflection of collaboration, creativity, and the willingness to explore new perspectives. It shows how much we can achieve when we work together with passion, commitment, and a shared vision for growth.

I am deeply grateful to everyone who contributed their time, effort, and insight to make this edition possible. My hope is that Project 360° will continue to inspire readers to think differently, embrace challenges with confidence, and pursue excellence in both academic and professional life, while also encouraging continuous learning and innovation.







# **PROJECT 360°**

BLUEPRINT TO BREAKTHROUGH

## **EDITOR IN CHIEF**

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Hasini Isiwari  
Amali Sewwandika





In the Project Management Circle  
We don't follow paths, We carve them  
Ready to build - Ready to conquer.







## **The Project Management Circle – NSBM Green University**

The Project Management Circle at NSBM Green University is a student led organization dedicated to fostering the academic and professional development of its members. As a vital part of the Department of Operations and Logistics, the Circle has consistently distinguished itself through proactive and innovative initiatives.

Since its inception, the Project Management Circle has undertaken numerous enriching endeavors. It has organized invaluable field visits and engaged in community service projects, providing students with hands-on experience and a deeper understanding of real-world project management principles. The Circle also actively bridges the gap between academia and industry through workshops and guest lectures, ensuring its members are prepared for professional challenges.

Guided by its driving vision, “In the Project Management Circle, we don’t follow paths, we carve them — ready to build, ready to conquer,” the Circle continues to inspire excellence, resilience, and leadership among its members.

For the year 2025, the Circle is guided by Mr. Praveen Ranaweera and Ms. Sithumini Jayasekara as Lecturers in Charge, with the student leadership comprising President Hashitha S. Jayathissa, Vice President Tharaka Hengoda, Treasurer Hasindu Sayuranga, Secretary Dilini Senarath, and Assistant Secretary Lihini Hirushika. Beyond projects and events, the ultimate vision of the Project Management Circle is to nurture socially responsible individuals who will shape the future workforce leaders who embody responsibility, innovation, and purpose.





# Project Management Institute®

## PMI - Lighting the way for the project profession since 1969

**P**roject Management Institute (PMI), is the leading authority in project management, dedicated to guiding the way to project success. Since 1969, PMI has shone a light on the power of project management and the people behind the projects. Learn more about our history and founders. Since the beginning, PMI has been committed to bringing people together—and on relentlessly defining, guiding and evolving the project management profession. After months of conversations between Jim Snyder and his colleagues, a dinner in Philadelphia resulted in the decision that a new organization should be formed to provide a means for project managers to associate, share information and discuss common problems. This led to the first formal meeting at Georgia Institute of Technology in Atlanta, Georgia, USA, on 3 October 1969. From this meeting came the birth of Project Management Institute. Shortly thereafter, articles of incorporation were filed in Pennsylvania, signed by five persons, who are officially recognized as the founders of PMI - James Snyder, Eric Jenett, Gordon Davis, E.A. "Ned" Engman and Susan C. Gallagher.

It may be that the most lasting legacy of Apollo was human: an improved understanding of how to plan, coordinate and monitor the myriad technical activities that were the building blocks of Apollo. While Apollo was making project history, PMI was starting to build the foundations of project management. The first PMI leaders volunteered their time because they believed in the need to share project planning and scheduling practices. In fact, the organization was almost named The American Planning and Scheduling Society. But the founders realized it was bigger than that—it was about project management. PMI was founded and held its first Seminars & Symposium, “Advanced Project Management Concepts,” in Atlanta, Georgia, USA. The First PMI chapter started in Houston, TX. PMI quickly became global, holding another Seminars & Symposium event in Toronto, Ontario, Canada. PMI also hired its first part-time employee, and leased office space. PMI continued building its strong volunteer core, chartering 24 new chapters in the United States and establishing its first non-North American footholds in West Germany and South Africa.

For more than 50 years, our legacy has been rooted in advancing the project management industry. But with immense change comes the need for recommitment. In early 2024, we launched our PMI:Next strategy to move forward into the future, together. We also defined our brand purpose: we maximize project success to elevate our world.



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What hasn't changed is the need for career-long learning. To help project professionals navigate this generation's most disruptive technology—Generative AI—we launched PMIxAI initiative. With the right skills, learning opportunities, and resources, AI can enhance project professional's work, not replace them.

Today, the Project Management Institute (PMI) is the global authority in project management, committed to advancing the project management profession. PMI is widely acknowledged as the foremost professional organization for the project, program, and portfolio management profession, boasting a membership base of over 4 million professionals worldwide. PMI has been advocating for project professionals worldwide since its establishment. Project Management enables individuals to communicate effectively across various industries, geographical locations, and project management types, such as projects, programs, or portfolios.

The PMI Sri Lanka Chapter has served as the official representative of the Project Management Institute USA in Sri Lanka since 2003. PMI Sri Lanka Chapter was formed and a public launch was successfully executed at JAIC Hilton in September 2004. The impressive number of members and the positive response from them enabled the PMI Colombo chapter to achieve charter status in January 2005. Our main objective is to promote the sustainable development of Sri Lanka by strengthening the professionals to manage and administer projects, programs, or portfolios about best practices, standards, and professional development. PMICSL promotes project management as a key profession to increase awareness about the importance of project management in organizational success in public and private sector organizations. Nearly 6,712 people work as project management professionals in Sri Lanka right now.

Project Professionals are the people working behind the scenes to bring brilliant projects—like sustainability initiatives and open-world video games—to life. They have the skills, knowledge, and experience to ensure a project achieves its goals.

And while project management is a larger-than-life profession, the skill set it requires is more accessible than you'd think. In fact, if you've ever created a schedule, planned a party, or led a group project, you've already tapped into your project management potential. 25 million project leaders are needed to meet global demands by 2030. Once you gain experience and you're ready to advance your career, we offer globally recognized certifications like the Project Management Professional (PMP)® to help you do it. Certifications like the PMP equip you with everything you need to manage complex projects and launch the next stage of your career. As undergraduates and fresh graduates, you can do the entry level certification - Certified Associate in Project Management (CAPM)® and no experience required. CAPM Show the world that you possess the foundational knowledge and skills that project teams demand. The CAPM proves that you're ready to take on a wide range of projects—with ways of working that include predictive project management, agile principles and business analysis. For more information visit [www.pmi.org](http://www.pmi.org) or the local chapter website [www.pmicolombo.org](http://www.pmicolombo.org)

PMI Sri Lanka Chapter has been hosting the Annual Project Management Conference since 2010 and this year the **8<sup>th</sup> National Project Management Conference** will be held under the theme of “**Digital Minds, Human Leadership: AI as a Catalyst for Project Excellence**”. This year 2025, National Project Management Conference scheduled to be held on 24<sup>th</sup> October 2024 at Kingsbury Hotel Colombo, Sri Lanka. As AI continues to transform industries and project ecosystems, project leaders face a critical imperative: to orchestrate the synergy between intelligent technologies and human-centered leadership. This theme explores how AI is enhancing decision-making, optimizing resources, and increasing project success—while emphasizing the enduring need for emotional intelligence, ethical judgment, and collaborative leadership. It's about redefining excellence—not by replacing the human touch, but by amplifying it with digital intelligence.

**Project Management Institute**





# PROJECT 360°

BLUEPRINT TO BREAKTHROUGH





# LEAD, ADAPT, INSPIRE

## **Ms. Sanjeewani Munasinghe**

**Project Manager at Sysco LABS**

**MSc in Project Management**

**BSc (Hons) | PMP | PMI-ACP |**

### ***Q1. Could you share a brief overview of your career journey, and how you progressed to your current leadership path?***

I studied Computer Science, but I soon realized I was more interested in people management and planning than coding. I started as a Business Analyst, which gave me exposure to projects and teams. That experience helped me discover my passion for project management, so I pursued certifications to build my knowledge. With both experience and qualifications, I moved into project management and eventually worked with international brands and teams. Over time, this naturally opened the door to leadership roles, where I've learned that knowledge and experience must always go hand in hand.

### ***Q2. What do you see as the most significant trends shaping the future of project management?***

I see two big shifts. The first is the rise of AI and data-driven decision-making, which are transforming how we plan, track, and optimize projects. The second is the need for strategic leadership. Project managers can no longer just focus on tasks—they need to guide teams through rapid technological changes and use AI to deliver value. These two trends are reshaping the way we work and lead.

### ***Q3. What are the key challenges that project management faces today with the economic situation in Sri Lanka?***

One major challenge is talent retention and bridging the skills gap. It has been difficult to find and keep skilled professionals in Sri Lanka over the past few years. Another is the economic uncertainty, which often forces unexpected changes in strategy. This can directly affect project timelines, policies, and even coordination with overseas clients.

### ***Q4. How do you think technology and AI are transforming project management practice?***

AI is changing project management in many ways. It supports predictive analytics for risk management, automates routine tasks, and creates dashboards that give clear visibility to teams and stakeholders. By reducing manual tracking, it frees me to focus more on strategic thinking, people management, and creating real value.

### ***Q5. In your opinion, what critical skills should aspire project managers focus on for leadership?***

Adaptability and communication are the most important. The world is changing quickly, so being able to manage uncertainty is vital. At the same time, strong



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communication builds trust and teamwork. Alongside these, I would emphasize risk management and leadership qualities. The future is less about executing tasks and more about strategic thinking, guiding people, and building strong human connections. **Q6. *How important is it for academic institutions to align their culture with industry requirements?***

I believe it's crucial. Many graduates in Sri Lanka have strong theoretical knowledge but struggle with practical application when they enter the workforce. This often forces them to start from scratch. That's why we need curricula that link with industry, practical exposure, and involvement of industry leaders in academic programs. Real-world experience and partnerships with companies prepare students better for the workplace. The good news is that many IT firms are already willing to mentor undergraduates, so we just need to build stronger connections. Q2. What do you see as the most significant trends shaping the future of project management?

**Q7. *What professional certifications and qualifications would you recommend for graduates entering the field?***

I recommend pursuing both academic qualifications and professional certifications. Two valuable options are the CAPM certification by PMI and the Certified Scrum Master (CSM) certification. Beyond that, I encourage graduates to choose certifications that fit their career path. What matters most is continuous learning and professional development.

**Q8. *How can students and young professionals gain practical experience in project management while at university?***

I always encourage students to take every opportunity for hands-on experience. Join clubs, committees, and volunteer for events, even if you're not an official member. These roles teach leadership, delegation, and team-

work. Internships, working with startups, and joining international programs also give practical exposure. Knowledge and experience must go together, so the more you explore while studying, the stronger your foundation will be.

**Q9. *Where do you see the field of project management heading in the next 5 to 10 years?***

Project management will become more strategic, and technology driven. Manual tasks will be handled by AI, automation, and predictive analytics, which will improve decision-making, risk assessment, and timeline management. This will allow project managers to focus on delivering value, guiding strategy, and creating meaningful outcomes rather than just completing tasks.

**Q10. *What message would you like to share with students and young professionals who aspire to leadership roles in project management?***

My message is to keep learning and stay adaptable. Don't be afraid to step out of your comfort zone and embrace change. Leadership is not about taking credit—it's about taking responsibility and inspiring others. Communication, openness to learning, and adaptability are the keys to growing as a leader and thriving in project management.





CONSTRUCTION



# CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS: ONE STEP AHEAD WITH SUSTAINABILITY, RISK MANAGEMENT, AND TECHNOLOGY



The construction industry lies at the heart of infrastructure development and urban growth across the world. Yet, with growing environmental concerns, rising material costs, and the rapid evolution of technology, construction is no longer just about putting up buildings. Modern projects must now balance three key pillars: sustainability, effective risk management, and technological innovation. These elements are shaping the future of construction, both globally and here in Sri Lanka.

## Sustainable Construction Practices

Sustainability has become one of the strongest drivers of change in the building industry. Today, construction is measured not only by its scale or design but also by its impact on the environment, society, and economy. Sustainable methods aim to reduce harm to nature while promoting resource efficiency and healthier living environments for occupants.

One major area is the use of **green building materials**. Traditional resources such as concrete and steel contribute heavily to carbon emissions through extraction, processing, and transportation.



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Alternatives like bamboo, recycled steel, reclaimed wood, and low-VOC paints offer eco-friendly solutions without compromising strength or quality. For instance, bamboo's fast growth makes it a renewable substitute for timber, while fly ash, a by-product of coal, is increasingly used as a cement replacement to reduce waste and emissions.

Energy efficiency is another core principle. Buildings are among the world's largest energy consumers, primarily through heating, cooling, and lighting. High-quality insulation, advanced glazing systems, passive solar design, and natural ventilation can drastically reduce energy use. Coupled with solar panels, geothermal heat pumps, and efficient HVAC systems, these designs lower carbon footprints while creating more comfortable and productive spaces.

Certification standards like LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) have further pushed sustainable practices into the mainstream. A LEED-certified project demonstrates commitment to eco-friendly design and brings additional benefits such as higher property value and market recognition.

Locally, some Sri Lankan institutions also adopt Green Sri Lanka guidelines introduced by the Green Building Council of Sri Lanka to align with national sustainability efforts.

No construction project is free from risk. Delays, cost overruns, safety concerns, and compliance issues are constant challenges. Proper risk management ensures

that investments are protected, timelines are met, and the safety of workers and stakeholders is maintained.

A practical example can be seen in an eco-friendly campus project at a Sri Lankan university. The building was constructed with locally sourced materials to minimize transport emissions, powered partly by solar energy, and equipped with rainwater harvesting and greywater recycling systems. Awarded a LEED Silver certification, it stands as proof that sustainability can be successfully embedded in local construction practices.

### **Managing Risks in Construction Projects**

No construction project is free from risk. Delays, cost overruns, safety concerns, and compliance issues are constant challenges. Proper risk management ensures that investments are protected, timelines are met, and the safety of workers and stakeholders is maintained.







Delays remain the most frequent obstacle, often caused by unexpected site conditions, adverse weather, sourced materials to minimize transport emissions, powered partly by solar energy, and equipped with rainwater harvesting and greywater recycling systems. Awarded a LEED Silver certification, it stands as proof that sustainability can be successfully embedded in local construction practices.

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Delays remain the most frequent obstacle, often caused by unexpected site conditions, adverse weather, but also erode stakeholder trust. To minimize them, project

managers increasingly rely on Gantt charts, CPM, and PERT tools, while adopting agile management approaches to remain flexible and responsive. Early warning systems that involve contractors, suppliers, and clients in active communication help identify problems before they escalate.

Budget overruns are another recurring challenge. They may arise from poor cost estimates, inflation, or project scope expansion. Strong cost control practices, including continuous monitoring and contingency planning, are essential. Value engineering helps reduce expenses by identifying cost-effective alternatives without lowering quality

Contractual mechanisms also matter fixed-price models push contractors to be efficient, while cost-plus contracts demand careful oversight.



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Construction sites are inherently hazardous, with risks of falls, accidents involving machinery, and exposure to harmful substances. Ensuring safety is both a legal and ethical responsibility. Comprehensive hazard identification, worker training, distribution of protective equipment, and adherence to OSHA or equivalent local safety standards are critical. Daily safety briefings, regular inspections, and transparent reporting systems create a safety-first culture. With technology such as wearable sensors and drones, safety management has advanced further, enabling real-time monitoring and quicker responses to risks.

### **Technology in Modern Construction Projects**

Technological innovation has revolutionized the construction sector, making projects more efficient, accurate, and cost-effective. Tools such as Building Information Modelling (BIM), drones, and the Internet of Things (IoT) are no longer luxuries, they are fast becoming industry standards.

BIM is a digital representation of a building's physical and operational characteristics. It provides a collaborative 3D model where architects, engineers, contractors, and clients can work together seamlessly. BIM detects design clashes in advance, reducing expensive rework, while 4D and 5D extensions allow for precise scheduling and cost estimation.

Drones have also transformed construction practices. They provide real-time aerial views for surveying, inspections, and progress tracking. By accessing hard-to-reach areas safely, drones improve accuracy, en-

hance compliance with safety standards, and cut down the time spent on manual inspections.

Meanwhile, IoT technology is embedding intelligence into construction sites. Sensors placed in materials, machinery, and even workers' gear collect data on performance, safety, and environmental conditions. For example, IoT can track concrete curing, predict equipment breakdowns, or alert supervisors to unsafe air quality. Wearable devices monitor worker fatigue and exposure levels, reducing risks while improving productivity.

A recent Sri Lankan commercial project illustrates the value of these tools. By adopting BIM for design collaboration, drones for site monitoring, and IoT sensors for predictive maintenance, the project not only reduced costs by 15 percent but also finished two months ahead of schedule. Such outcomes highlight how technology is reshaping construction into a more innovative and efficient industry.

### **Conclusion**

Construction Projects today is far more than the assembly of bricks and mortar. It is about creating structures that are sustainable, safe, and technologically advanced. Sustainable practices reduce environmental impact while ensuring healthier living spaces. Risk management safeguards investments, timetables, and lives. Technology brings precision, efficiency for Sri Lanka and beyond, the future of construction projects will depend on how well these three pillars are embraced.





Success will come from collaboration among architects, engineers, contractors, and clients, supported by continuous learning and adaptation. As the industry evolves, sustainability, risk awareness, and technology will not only define how buildings are constructed but also how societies grow and thrive.



**Nipeka Agaree Weerasooriya**

**23.2 Batch**

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# BEYOND THE PLAN: DRIVING REAL PROJECT IMPACT THROUGH FLEXIBILITY, COLLABORATION, AND PURPOSE



A well-designed project plan might appear perfect project milestones all having targets, spending is within budget, and timelines are defined. Yet, so many well-planned projects do not actually achieve any real impact.

## Why is this happening?

Planning alone is not enough. Many teams focus only on “what” and “when,” but forget to ask “why” and “how.” Planning is just the first step. Projects involve more than checklists and charts—they deal with real issues like improving lives or transforming a business.

How a project is carried out affects its flexibility and results. That’s why a project manager is not just an organizer but someone who enables goals and outcomes.

Today, project management is about setting clear expectations—it’s no longer optional.

## What It Means to Go Beyond Planning

Planning is an undeniably important part of any project and, when done with due diligence,

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appropriately sets us up with structure, direction, and a sense of control; however, as we all know, real-world projects rarely unfold in a straight line. In theory, a perfect plan means nothing if it doesn't lead to actual outcomes. This is why it is important to understand that going beyond planning is about the application of the plan and not simply about the plan being perfect.

However, you can't engage in great work alone. It is reliant upon stakeholders that are involved, the ability to communicate, quick decision-making, and a team that is willing to modify their plans when the plan does not work out as intended.

In environments of fast change, being flexible is better than being stiff. Sometimes, the plan developed months earlier may not even be the best plan now. Teams that perform better are the teams that can change gears without losing sight of the ultimate outcome.

Most importantly, projects are determined to be of value by the value added they provide over and above action completion. Was there an improvement in life as a result of the project? Was the problem that the project was intended to mitigate addressed? Success is constituted in these questions.

## **Matters More Than the Plan**

### **1.Kigali Green City: An Innovative Approach to Sustainable Urban Development**

Rwanda is one of the first places in the world, in the heart of Africa, to be designing a green, climate-smart city.



What distinguishes the implementation of this project is its transitional character. In order to ensure the The Kigali Green City project is more than a design proposal, it is a commitment to social equity, affordable housing, and sustainability. Every element - from transportation alternatives to solar-enabled housing, is considered for its implications for people and the environment.

design was appropriate for local contexts as well as meeting global standards, designers have followed the process model of close collaboration with the community, other partnering agencies from the Global North and South, and environmental specialists . In contrast to many contemporary urban developments that prioritize aesthetics or prestige, the Kigali model springs from a commitment to purpose, affordability, and inclusivity.

In contrast to many contemporary urban developments that prioritize aesthetics or prestige, the Kigali model springs from a commitment to purpose, affordability, and inclusivity.



The project is still in development, but, even at this early stage, it offers the possibility of a new standard for project impact in the Global South. It shows that substantial change can happen when implementation is considered after the planning is completed

### **Important Factors Affecting Actual Project Impact**

01). Instead of working for people, work with them.

People are part of successful projects from the beginning. The sooner that community or a significant voice is heard, the higher the hurdle rate (greater chance of success) and the less resistance encountered.

02). Have a Flexible Leadership Style

Great leaders keep the project on track, but they do have the ability to change direction. They maintain conviction about the project, but they do not stay married to the project as initially planned if they choose to change direction. They put their focus on the destination- not the path.

03). Think Beyond Completion

A project is not complete until it has benefited or improved, such as jobs, clean streets, strengthened community. The real benefits come from the projects it creates, not from the project itself.

04). Communicate Clearly, and Communicate Often

People gain trust from open communication. Open communication before the crisis, fix problems before critical



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status, and keeping everybody informed are types of preventive engagement.

o5). Build to Last

If you build a project only for the short term, then it is hardest hit by any short-term trends. If you don't think beyond the action of opening a project: establishing a sustained connection, using sustainable materials, or training staff, then you are building a short-term solution that will have less impact in the long run.

o6). Keep Learning & Adapting to the Agenda

No team starts with all the answers. Better results come through checking in, testing ideas, and adjusting as you go.

urban growth. The projects that listen, learn, and develop in such an environment are what really matter.



**L.J.A.S. Liyanage**

**23.2 Batch**

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**(Project Management) (Special)**

### **The Importance of This Mentality Today**

Planning alone is not enough in today's rapidly changing world. Projects that look beyond strict deadlines and fixed goals are the ones that create lasting impact. These projects focus on people, progress, and significance.

While planning provides a framework, it's not the structure that determines success, but rather the understanding and acceptance of governance, learning, collaboration, meaningful stakeholder engagement, flexibility, and a strong commitment to success regardless of whether the project has a defined end-point (outputs).

Governments and organizations are facing several difficult challenges today, including social inequality, digital transformation, climate change, and rapid



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# NEOFORMAT



# ROLE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) IN TRANSFORMING PROJECT



**T**raditional project management methods are struggling to keep up with today's complexity. According to PMI only 73.8% of projects meet performance goals, while 11.4% of investment is lost due to poor project outcomes. These figures have shown little improvement over the years, despite heavy investments in methodologies and training.

This is where Artificial Intelligence (AI) is changing the game. Far from being just a passing trend, AI is transforming how projects are planned, managed, and delivered. PMI's latest data shows that project professionals expect the share of projects using AI to increase from 23% today to 37% within the next three years . This shift marks the rise of "Project Intelligence," a new era where AI enhances, not replaces, the role of project managers, enabling them to achieve results once thought impossible.

The transformation is already in motion. Leading organizations have reported up to a 40% increase in project success when AI tools are effectively integrated into their workflows .

With AI-driven predictive analysis, project managers can plan with greater accuracy, set realistic expectations, and reduce the risks of cost and schedule overruns.

These improvements mark a significant leap in project delivery, creating competitive advantages that go far beyond incremental gains.

## How AI is Transforming Project Management

### Automation of Routine

One of the most visible benefits of AI in project management is its ability to take over repetitive, time consuming tasks. Modern AI tools can automatically update project schedules with real-time data, generate status reports from multiple sources.

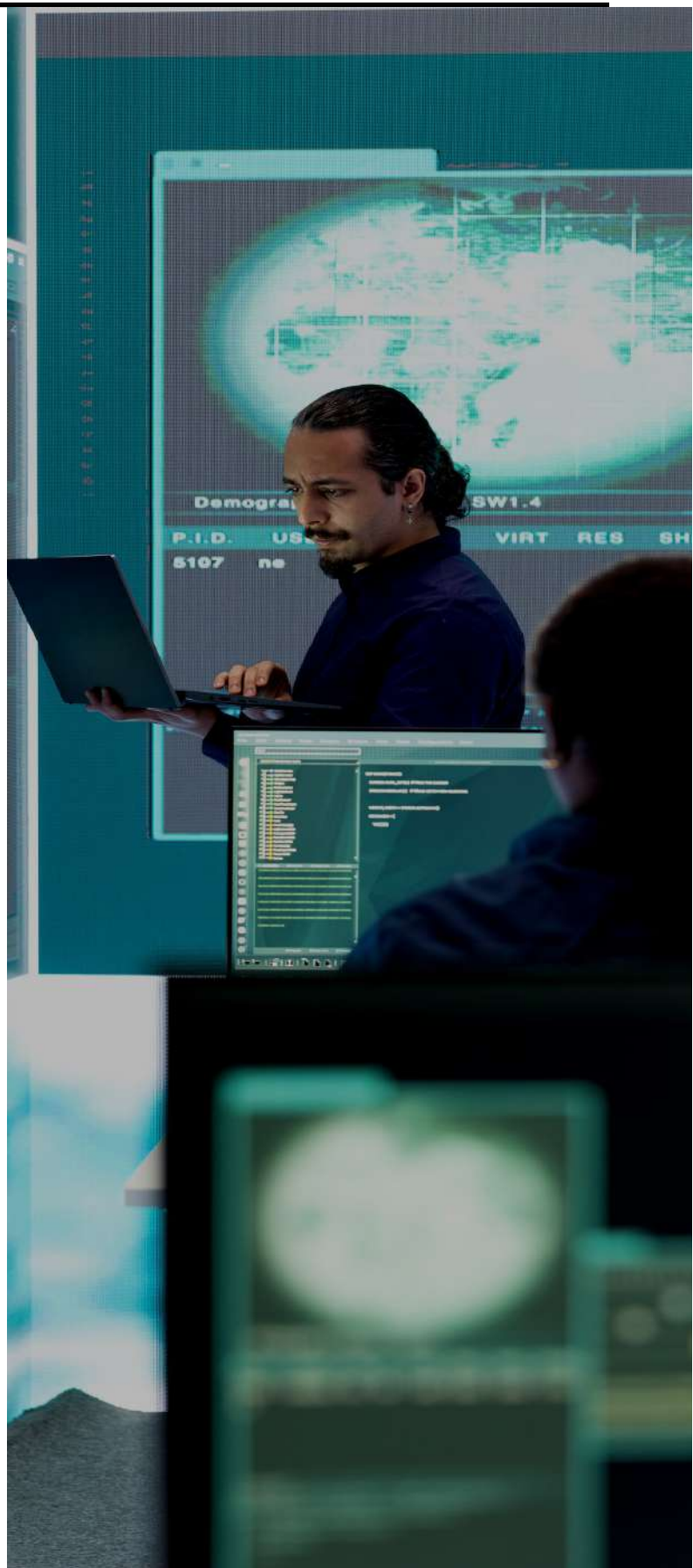
For example, Microsoft Project now uses AI to recommend schedule adjustments based on historical trends and resource availability, while Smartsheet's intelligent automation can trigger actions, send notifications, and update stakeholders without manual input.

These tools do more than save time, they empower project managers to focus on their real strengths: strategic planning, building strong relationships, and creative problem-solving. Instead of getting stuck in spreadsheets and status meetings, managers can engage more with teams, stakeholders, and customers.

This shift helps them spot opportunities, anticipate changes, and drive projects toward delivering real business value, not just completing tasks.

### Predictive Analytics and Forecasting: The Crystal Ball Effect

One of the most groundbreaking applications of AI in project management is its ability to predict future





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outcomes with remarkable accuracy.

Using machine learning, AI can analyse large volumes of historical project data such as completion times, resource usage patterns, risk factors, and team performance trends.

Data-driven forecasting uses efficient resource allocation based on historical utilization data overall portfolio value like a conductor guiding an entire orchestra rather than a musician playing alone.

### **Advanced Risk Management: Early Warning Systems for Project Success**

Traditional risk management depends on periodic reviews. AI-powered risk management works continuously, tracking hundreds of indicators at once and spotting emerging risks before they become serious .

These AI systems can spot team conflicts, track project progress trends, and monitor external factors that could affect success . Tools like Predict360 use natural language processing to review project documents, emails, and meeting notes, uncovering risks that traditional metrics might miss, essentially reading between the lines of project communications.

Modern AI tools, such as Microsoft's Project Copilot, can examine data from past projects to identify potential obstacles—like service capacity constraints, downtime risks, or data transfer delays, helping teams set realistic timelines and maintain stakeholder confidence.

### **Enhanced decision-making: From Gut Feelings to Data-Driven Insights**

Traditional project management relies heavily on experience and intuition, valuable, yet often insufficient for today's complex project environments. AI enhances decision-making by offering detailed scenario analyses, risk-adjusted recommendations, and real-time optimization insights, transforming uncertainty into informed and confident action. .

Advanced AI can quickly test many different project scenarios, showing how changes in resources, scope, or timelines might affect outcomes. This helps project managers make faster, smarter decisions, even when unexpected challenges arise.

Atlassian's Jira Align uses AI to review project portfolios and suggest the best ways to allocate resources .By considering team skills, project dependencies, and strategic priorities, it helps make decisions that maximize

### **Challenges and Considerations**

#### **Data Quality and Integration: The Foundation of Challenge**

AI's effectiveness depends on the quality of data it uses. Poor data doesn't just limit its usefulness, it can give project managers inaccurate predictions, turning a helpful tool into a risky guide. and it's often unclear how they reach their conclusions, creating a "black box" problem that can reduce trust and accountability Privacy is also a



when AI accesses sensitive data about team performance or strategic plans. Algorithmic bias is another risk: if past projects contain biases, AI may repeat or even amplify them, embedding unfairness into project management decisions .

### **Upskilling Project Managers: Preparing For The AI-Augmented Future**

AI integration doesn't replace skilled project managers but changes the skills they need. As one expert put it, "People who use AI will replace those who do not."

Data literacy is now essential, including understanding statistics, reading data visualizations, and interpreting AI insights critically. Project managers must know when to trust AI recommendations and when to question them. New skills, like AI prompt engineering effectively communicating with AI systems are becoming just as Important as traditional communication abilities .

### **The Evolving Role of the Project Manager**

AI is transforming project managers from task-focused executors into strategic leaders, enabling them to focus on value creation rather than routine monitoring strategic managers now analyze business context, market trends, and align projects with organizational priorities, shifting from mechanics to visionaries The future emphasizes .



Human-AI collaboration, where humans contribute creativity, judgment, and relationship management, while AI provides data analysis, pattern recognition, and continuous monitoring. Effective collaboration relies on clear responsibilities, communication, and ongoing refinement.

### **Conclusion: Embracing An AI-Powered Future**

The AI revolution is more than a technological upgrade; it is reshaping how projects are planned, executed, and delivered. Organizations that integrate AI effectively. Realizing AI's full potential requires thoughtful change management, addressing ethical challenges, and developing organizational skills for long-term success. Project managers who thrive will view AI as a collaborative partner, enhancing human strengths like creativity, empathy, strategic thinking, and ethical judgment.

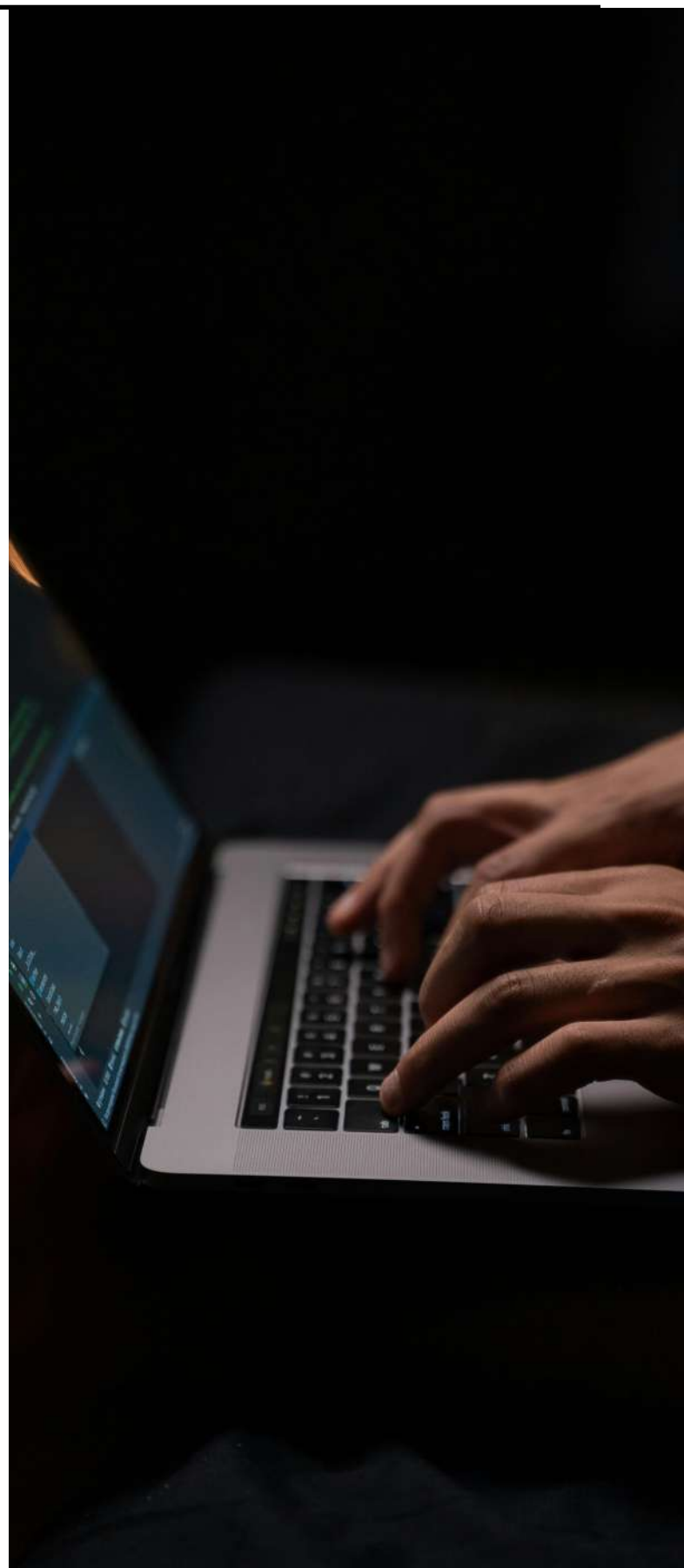
The transformation is already underway. Companies ignoring AI risk falling behind, while those embracing it thoughtfully will lead a new era where human and artificial intelligence combine to achieve previously impossible results.



**P. Tharushi Amanda Fernando**

**24.1 Batch**

**Bachelor of Business: Management and  
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A conceptual image showing a globe of the Earth being held up by a large crowd of people. The hands are reaching up from the bottom, supporting the globe. The background is a soft-focus bokeh of green and yellow light, suggesting an outdoor setting with trees and sunlight. The text 'CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY' is overlaid in white, bold, serif capital letters across the center of the globe.

# CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

# CSR PROJECTS AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



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owadays, when it comes to businesses, their financial gains are not the only factor that is taken into consideration when evaluating them. They reflect on the amount they devote to their employees, check the health of the planet, and give back to their communities. This is called CSR or Corporate Social Responsibility. It even means that businesses are willing to be accountable for the consequences of their actions for people and the planet. The United Nations has launched a global initiative called the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for a better future for all people and all inhabitants of planet Earth. There are 17 goals, including No poverty, A healthy planet, Quality education, Gender equality, and Peace. Collectively, CSR and the SDGs illustrate how enterprises can aid in fostering an improved world for everybody.

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) is more than the bottom line. CSR also involves knowledge and thoughtfulness regarding the positive impacts of your organization and its activities on your people, your community, and the environment you operate within. The determination of whether your organization engages in environmental responsibility will require



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you to consider questions around the waste you generate, the energy that is consumed in your operations, recycling, and the utilization of natural resources. The question as to whether your organization is socially responsible and treats its employees with fairness and equity is dependent on providing a healthy, safe, and secure working environment. As simply part of your economic responsibility, you should conduct yourself with integrity and transparency and in a way that diminishes corruption. Another ethical responsibility is to treat your customers, employees, and suppliers without prejudice and with dignity.

In 2015, the United countries formally approved the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) after extensive consultations and debates with over 100 countries' governments, companies, and ordinary citizens. We came up with a list of seventeen goals to achieve by 2030 that would make the world a better and more sustainable place. Everyone should be able to afford a good education, safe drinking water, proper sanitation, affordable and clean energy, a decent job, a growing economy, innovative infrastructure, less Inequality, sustainable cities and communities, responsible consumption and production, action to combat climate change, marine and terrestrial life, peace, justice, and strong institutions to reach the goals. All these goals are recognized universally. These objectives address almost every problem that mankind is now facing.

The SDGs and CSR Projects go hand in hand. The SDGs provide a worldwide framework for evaluating progress, while CSR projects offers businesses an opportunity to

behave ethically.

Goal 1: No Poverty is supported, for instance, when businesses provide employment training to the jobless. Goal 3: Providing health insurance or a community medical camp helps support Good Health and Well-Being. Gender Equality is Goal 5: of the Sustainable Development Agenda, and companies contribute towards achieving Goal 5, by providing fair and equitable pay to women and an equal opportunity for women to take leadership roles. SDG 7: Affordable and Clean Energy: Investment in solar energy and wind energy. Companies that invest in recyclable materials, reuse materials or reduce waste are striving towards achieving Sustainable Development Goal 12: Responsible Consumption and Production. Acting to plant trees, reduce carbon emissions or promote environmentally friendly technology progresses. Sustainable Development Goal 13: Climate Action. These examples illustrate how a corporate social responsibility program can create real change in the world .



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These examples illustrate how a corporate social responsibility program can create real change in the world .industry. When businesses integrate their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) project activities with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), several a disadvantages may be realized. To begin, it contributes to the establishment of a favorable brand image. Consumers are becoming more conscious of matters that include the environment and society, and they tend to choose companies that demonstrate a sense of responsibility. Second, it motivates employees. Individuals experience pride working for an organization that invests in making a difference to society, subsequently building loyalty and productivity.

Third, good environmental practices usually lead to reduced waste and savings in the long term, making them economically productive as well. Overall, by linking CSR (corporate social responsibility) companies can be a part of a global effort to address key challenges such as climate change, food insecurity, and inequality. In the real

world, we can see how CSR projects and SDGs fit together. Overall, by linking CSR (corporate social responsibility) companies can be a part of a global effort to address key challenges such as climate change, food insecurity, and inequality.

In the real world, we can see how CSR and SDGs fit together. Sustainability is an important part of Unilever's business plan. It is one of the biggest companies that makes market goods. In its products, it has cut down on the use of dangerous chemicals. It has also worked to t each people in poor countries about good health and cut down on carbon emissions from all its activities. The effort directly helps achieve SDG 3 (health), SDG 12 (responsible expenditure), and SDG 13 (climate action).

Tesla is another example since they concentrates on creating electric automobiles and discovering methods to utilize clean energy. It wants to utilize fewer fossil fuels, which helps meet SDG 7 on clean energy and SDG 13 on acting on climate change.

Coca-Cola has worked on projects to save water after being attacked for using a lot of it. Giving back to communities as much water as it uses to make its goods is now its goal. This is in line with SDG 6 on clean water and sanitation. It's possible for small businesses to help.

A small shop that gives extra food to homes for the homeless is doing good deeds and helping to reach SDG 2 on ending hunger. This shows that CSR isn't just for big businesses; small businesses can also make a difference.

However, companies also face problems when they try to do CSR projects and follow the SDGs.





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The cost is a common issue. Some CSR measures, like converting them to renewable energy or being better at dealing with rubbish, may be quite expensive. These types of initiatives are sometimes too big for small firms to handle. People don't know about it, which is another difficulty. This is when businesses lie about being eco-friendly to acquire more consumers without really doing anything. Lastly, companies have trouble finding the right mix between making money and being responsible. This is especially true when short-term financial goals clash with long-term goals for sustainability.

Governments around the world are increasingly establishing regulations for CSR, and these will become increasingly stringent. By 2030, many businesses are expected to provide evidence of their efforts towards the SDGs. Like many other stakeholders, there are expectations placed on businesses to provide evidence of their contributions to the SDGs much before 2030. Without the foundational changes, confidence from the rest of the stakeholders, and the ability to operate on a sustainable competitive advantage is greatly diminished. Businesses that focus on CSR projects and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are likely to succeed.

Finally, two crucial concepts that will impact the future of business and society are the Sustainable Development Goals and Corporate Social Responsibility. Accounting for a company's actions in relation to society and the environment is the essence of corporate social responsibility (CSR).

One approach for the world to advance is via the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). When taken together, they demonstrate that businesses may be profitable and socially responsible.

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) may appear daunting, both SDGs and CSR are greatly supported. Governments around the world are instituting more rules and regulations on CSR, and these will increasingly tighten. There will, therefore, be an increased expectation placed on businesses to justify their practices. Along with the increased awareness placed on sustainability, advances in technology are making the need for sustainability easier to satisfy. By the year 2030, a number of businesses will most likely be expected to provide evidence of their efforts toward the SDGs. Alternatively, businesses with non-existent and superficial CSR practices risk losing reputation and competitive advantage. CSR initiatives may be more aligned with the attainment of more sustainable business models, since businesses are more easily able to track and report on sustainability initiatives.



**B.A.T. Shayamindi**  
**23.2 Batch**  
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# SRI LANKA'S CSR PROJECTS JOURNEY TOWARDS ACHIEVING SDGS



**P**rofit by itself is insufficient in today's business environment. Customers, governments, and communities expect businesses to be accountable for their effects on the environment and society. This is where the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the UN and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) come together to form a potential alliance for a sustainable future.

## **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**

Three things need to be balanced:

- 01). Economic growth entails generating revenue and jobs.
- 02). Social progress includes lowering poverty and enhancing education and health.
- 03). Protecting the environment includes preserving the climate, forests, oceans, and nature.

The 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set forth by the UN include eradicating hunger, guaranteeing quality education, lowering inequality, and preserving marine and terrestrial life. By 2030, these goals serve as a road map for nations and businesses to create a better future.

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## Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

Businesses that act to benefit society and the environment are said to be practicing corporate social responsibility, or CSR. Businesses invest in initiatives that enhance sustainability, health, and education rather than just making money, initiatives have a greater and longer-lasting effect when they are connected to the SDGs.

As a university student, I frequently consider the role that businesses play in society. Nowadays, it's evident that businesses are expected to do much more than just chase profits. Through Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), numerous businesses in Sri Lanka have taken the initiative to help communities and safeguard the environment. When I look at these projects, I see genuine attempts to connect with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) rather than just corporate action.

### CSR Initiatives in Sri Lanka

The SDGs are supported by several inspiring CSR initiatives in Sri Lanka. Here are a few basic examples

#### 01). Digital Access

Education is the most relatable topic for students like me. I have witnessed the establishment of IT labs, math labs, and even coding clubs nationwide by Commercial Bank's CSR Trust. That, in my opinion, is investing in our future rather than merely practicing "charity." More young Sri Lankans will be prepared for a knowledge-based economy now that thousands of schoolchildren have access to digital tools and e-learning platforms.

#### 02). Environmental Protection

Environmental projects always inspire me because they feel close to our lives. The preservation of Sri Lanka's coastlines, forests, and biodiversity is essential to our future. I have hope that our natural beauty can be preserved because of organizations like Commercial Bank that are restoring mangroves and coral.

Youth Beach Cleanups done by the Project Management circle of NSBM Green University is one of the recent examples.

It demonstrates how group efforts can save local communities and marine life when I witness volunteers and students getting up early to gather trash such as fishing nets and plastic bottles from locations like Mount Lavinia or Negombo.





Link Natural's waste recycling and reforestation Initiatives also impressed me. Planting trees and converting herbal waste into compost are examples of how corporate operations can actively preserve the environment. Similarly, Siyapatha Finance's reforestation drives have added thousands of trees across the island. From planting mangroves to cleaning beaches, these efforts prove that CSR in Sri Lanka is not only about "giving back" but also about creating a healthier and more sustainable environment for generations to come.

### 03). Educational support and seminar programs

The Accounting and Finance Circle at NSBM Green University has taken the initiative to assist students enrolled in the A/L commerce stream. They voluntarily plan seminars and use peer teaching techniques to impart their accounting knowledge. This is one of the best examples of corporate social responsibility (CSR) in the field of education, as it comes from students who dedicate their time and expertise to support the success of others

It is about sharing knowledge, mentoring, and encouraging other students, not about large infrastructure or money.

This type of initiative demonstrates that corporate social responsibility (CSR) in education can originate from driven youth who wish to give back to the community.

### The Global SDG Framework and CSR

Adopted by the UN in 2015, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) offer a 17-goal plan for eradicating poverty, safeguarding the environment, and guaranteeing prosperity

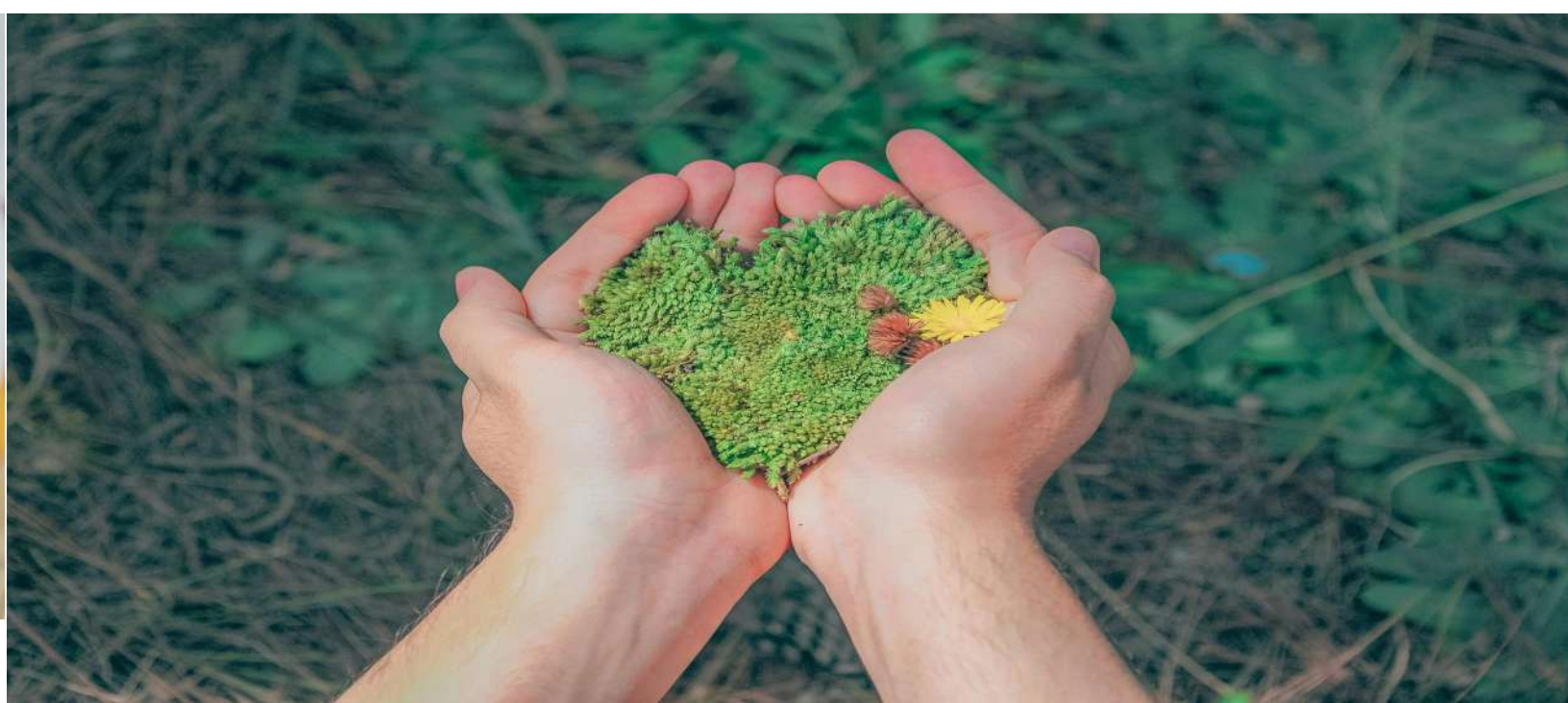


by 2030. Globally, CSR initiatives are becoming more in line with these goals:

Adopted by the UN in 2015, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) offer a 17-goal plan for eradicating poverty, safeguarding the environment, and guaranteeing prosperity by 2030. Globally, CSR initiatives are becoming more in line with these goals:

I believe that long-term, quantifiable projects should be the main focus of CSR in Sri Lanka going forward, rather than one-time donations. This change is already being shaped by digital learning platforms, green finance, and CSR outsourcing models.

What excites me most is how CSR can connect with youth initiatives. Club beach clean-ups, tree-planting events, and student-led initiatives demonstrate that youth can also contribute to these changes. The impact will be even more significant if businesses collaborate with young



People and student-led initiatives demonstrate that youth can also contribute to these changes. The impact will be even more significant if businesses collaborate with young people.. The SDGs and corporate social responsibility (CSR) are real and occurring everywhere, in my opinion. Businesses are capable of more than just making money, as I see when I watch IT labs being set up, food being given to the hungry, or beaches being cleaned.

As a student, I think CSR has the potential to be one of Sri Lanka's most effective instruments for achieving the 2030 objectives. It gives us hope for a genuinely sustainable future by demonstrating that responsibility and development can coexist.



**W Worendi De Silva**

**23.1 Batch**

**BSc (Hons) Accounting and Finance**



# THE ROLE OF THE CSR PROJECTS IN TACKLING POVERTY AND HUNGER IN SRI LANKA



Poverty and hunger remain two of the most pressing challenges in Sri Lanka. Though the country has made progress in reducing poverty rates, with absolute poverty dropping to 6.7 percent, nearly 15 percent of the population still lives below the poverty line. For many families, meeting the minimum daily calorie intake remains out of reach, and childhood malnutrition continues to be a critical issue. These realities make it difficult for Sri Lanka to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals set by the United Nations, particularly SDG 1, which aims to eliminate

poverty, and SDG 2, which focuses on ending hunger. With limited resources and an economy that continues to face setbacks, the government alone cannot resolve these issues.

In this context, Corporate Social Responsibility, or CSR projects has become increasingly important. CSR projects is not merely a form of charity but a business model where companies take active responsibility for the wellbeing of society and the environment. In Sri Lanka, CSR is often visible through projects aimed at poverty alleviation, education, nutrition, and livelihood development.

However, many companies still treat CSR as occasional acts of generosity, such as donations or sponsorships, rather than embedding it into long-term strategies that create real, lasting change. alleviation, education, nutrition, and livelihood development. However, many companies still treat CSR as occasional acts of generosity, such as donations or sponsorships, rather than embedding it into long-term strategies that create real, lasting change. Sri Lanka's recent history adds to the urgency of this work.



Sri Lanka's recent history adds to the urgency of this work. The thirty-year civil war, which ended in 2009, consumed a large portion of national resources, leaving little for development and welfare. Even after the war, economic instability and fiscal constraints limited the government's capacity to fully address social issues such as poverty and hunger. In such circumstances, CSR projects became more than a moral duty; it became a necessity. Companies, with their resources, networks, and influence, have the potential to fill the gaps left by the state, providing communities with the support they desperately need.

Yet, despite its promise, the CSR projects in Sri Lanka is still far from achieving its full potential. Research indicates that many initiatives are fragmented, short-lived, or fail to address the deeper structural causes of poverty and hunger. For CSR projects to be truly transformative, it must be reimagined as an integral part of business strategy rather than an external

obligation. Companies need to commit to projects that empower communities, strengthen livelihoods, and ensure food security in sustainable ways. Greater collaboration between the private sector, government, and non-governmental organizations is also essential to avoid duplication of efforts and to maximize impact.

In conclusion, poverty and hunger remain complex challenges that no single institution can solve on its own. While Sri Lanka's government faces limitations in funding and capacity, CSR has emerged as a crucial partner in addressing these pressing issues. Its success lies not in short-term charity but in long-term, strategic, and transparent initiatives that genuinely improve people's lives. CSR projects in Sri Lanka has already shown its potential through media campaigns, university research, and NGO collaborations, but much more remains to be done. If businesses embrace their responsibility with vision and dedication, CSR projects can become a powerful force in helping Sri Lanka move closer to a future free from poverty and hunger.



**H. D. M. D. Devundarage**

**24.1 Batch**

**Event, Tourism & Hospitality Management**



# TOWARDS A BRIGHTER FUTURE



**W**hen I first walked into the library at Dhampe Primary School, it didn't even feel like a real library. The walls were cracked and worn, the desk and chair were broken, and dusty old books sat untouched on the shelves. For the 68 students and their teachers in this small village school, the library was just an empty, forgotten room.

As undergraduates studying project management, our batch of nearly 140 students was tasked with organizing a CSR project during our first year. But we didn't want to do just another routine clean-up or donation drive. We wanted to do something meaningful—something that would last beyond one day. That's when we found Dhampe Primary School.

From the very beginning, I was lucky enough to lead this project every step of the way—from concept to completion. That simple idea evolved into a month of intense effort, marked by fundraising, planning, late-night painting sessions, community gatherings, and ultimately, the creation of something truly transformative.

This is the story of how a group of students came together to breathe life back into a forgotten space, transforming it into a bright, welcoming place full of learning and hope.

## **Project Planning: Turning an idea into action**

The initial idea to renovate a school came during one of our project management brainstorming sessions. After visiting several nearby schools, Dhampe Primary School caught our attention— not just for its poor condition, but for its potential. .

As project lead, I started by dividing the work into clear phases: assessing needs, building our team, fundraising, renovation, and community outreach. With 140 batchmates joining the effort, I organized everyone into 13 teams of 10-12 members each. Each team took ownership of raising Rs. 14,000—a structure that kept us organized while making every contribution feel meaningful.

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A detailed timeline was set, and weekly progress updates were conducted to ensure everyone stayed on track. From the beginning, the project was run like a real-world community initiative complete with scheduling, budget planning, communication strategies, and stakeholder management.

### **Fundraising: Creativity Meets Commitment**

To reach our collective fundraising target, each team chose unique, creative, and independent methods. Once everyone understood the purpose, their enthusiasm and innovation truly shone.

Some teams ran food stalls, preparing and selling homemade meals and snacks on campus. Others organized mini film screenings, selling tickets to students and showing popular movies. A few groups got crafty, making and selling handmade bookmarks, cards, and other creative goods—not just to raise money, but to spread the word about the project.

The best part? These different approaches didn't just help us fundraise efficiently—they sparked excitement across the entire university. People started asking, “What's the Dhampe Project?” And just like that, the

initiative began to gain momentum.

In just a few weeks, we hit our target—proof of what happens when passionate people come together. This wasn't just about money; it was about what we could achieve when we all worked toward something bigger than ourselves.



### **Execution: Breathing New Life into the Library**

With the budget secured, we moved into the renovation phase. The transformation was anything but easy — but every moment was worth it.

We began by thoroughly cleaning the space, removing debris, dust, and old furniture. The walls, both inside and outside, were painted in vibrant, cheerful colors to give the room a welcoming and refreshing look. We added hand-drawn educational artwork and wall paintings, hoping to make the space feel not only functional but inspiring.



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In addition to the library work, we organized a schoolwide cleanup campaign. Overgrown grass was trimmed, the walls of classrooms were cleaned, and Within one month, we transformed a neglected room into a fully functional library. Where there was once a storage room for broken furniture, now stood a bright, lively library—full of color and ready for learning. Then the heart of Dhampe Primary School was beating again.

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The old cupboards got a second life with fresh paint and

repairs, while brand-new child-sized desks and chairs promised comfort for young readers. Some nights, we worked past sunset, triple-checking every detail until the space felt just right.

In addition to the library work, we organized a school cleanup campaign. Overgrown grass was trimmed, the walls of classrooms were cleaned, and unused areas were cleared. Even though our focus was the library, we couldn't ignore the opportunity to help improve the overall school environment.

Within one month, we transformed a neglected room into a fully functional library. Where there was once a storage room for broken furniture, now stood a bright, lively library—full of color and ready for learning. Then the heart of Dhampe Primary School was beating again.

### **Lessons in Leadership and Project Management**

Leading a project of this scale was one of the most valuable learning experiences of my life. Managing over 140 individuals, organizing timelines, resolving conflicts, motivating teams, and staying accountable to our vision gave me real-world insight into project management far beyond textbooks

I learned something powerful: when you trust people and give them space, they do amazing work. Each group operated independently, yet with clear expectations and shared communication. Weekly progress reviews,

flexibility in methods, and regular check-ins helped ensure that everything was aligned without micromanaging.



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I also had to deal with unexpected obstacles delays in delivery, paint shortages, and miscommunications all of which taught me how to adapt under pressure.

The most fulfilling part was watching how everyone owned the project. No one was forced to participate; they did it because they believed in it. That kind of teamwork is rare, and I'm proud to say we built it together.

The reality that students offered their help to us to clean up even after the handover was what touched me. Perhaps the greatest achievement of all was the pride and sense of ownership we gave them. Painting a few walls was never our only objective. It was intended to have a lasting effect. And everyone's excitement for learning and happiness, as well as the spark in their eyes, was evidence that we had succeeded.

than checking boxes were the goals. As students, we didn't have official titles or corporate finances. However, we had enough teamwork, passion, and vision to bring about significant, long-lasting change.



**Tharaka Hengoda**

**23.2 Batch**

**BSc in Business Management**

**(Project Management ) (Special)**



### **In conclusion, beyond bricks and books**

Renovating a building was never the only goal of this endeavor. Restoring a learning environment, motivating young people, and serving as a reminder that real project management is about adding value rather



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