

# Sri Lanka



## Habitat for Humanity in Sri Lanka

Habitat for Humanity Sri Lanka aims to provide decent and affordable housing to people in need in the country. Established in 1995, Habitat Sri Lanka has enabled more than 23,000 low-income families to build strength, stability and self-reliance through shelter.

## The housing need in Sri Lanka

Despite great advances made by housing programs in Sri Lanka, the housing need across the island is great. Many families displaced by the 26-year conflict in Sri Lanka – which left homes, schools and other infrastructure destroyed – are still in need of permanent and secure housing. Many of these families live in shacks made of tin sheets. In Sri Lanka's commercial capital, Colombo, a large proportion of the population lives in crowded, informal settlements with limited access to clean water and safe sanitation. Housing for workers in the estate sector for tea, rubber and coconut is another area of concern. The poverty level among the estate workers is higher than the national average, making it impossible for families to gain access to secure shelter. Families living on plantations in the Central Province are also vulnerable to landslides during the monsoon months.

## How Habitat addresses the need in Sri Lanka

Habitat Sri Lanka works with partners and volunteers in building decent, affordable homes with families in need of adequate housing. Almost 3,000 families were supported in building their homes that were destroyed after the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami. In May 2013, a 4,000-home housing project funded by the Indian government for internally displaced people in the Eastern Province was launched. In February 2017, a 14-million-euro (more than US\$14.8 million) project funded by the European Union broke ground in Mullaitivu district in the north. About 2,455 families will be assisted to build or repair homes with the use of locally made construction materials. The multi-faceted housing project is set to benefit more than 215,000 people in northern and eastern Sri Lanka. In addition, funding from Alwaleed Philanthropies will enable 80 homes to be rebuilt for cyclone-affected families in the Central Province. Another project in 2017 will see 100 houses being constructed for estate workers with funding from the Indian government.



Habitat Sri Lanka partners with volunteers to build decent homes.

## COUNTRY FACTS\*

<b>Capital</b>	Colombo
<b>Main country facts</b>	Gained independence in 1948
<b>Population</b>	Over 22.2 million
<b>Urbanization</b>	18.4 percent live in cities
<b>Life expectancy</b>	76.8 years
<b>Unemployment rate</b>	4.7 percent
<b>Population living below poverty line</b>	8.9 percent

\*Source: World Factbook

## HABITAT FACTS

**When Habitat started in Sri Lanka**  
1995

**Individuals served in FY16**  
34,325\*

\*Includes construction and market development

**Volunteers engaged in FY16**  
104

### Housing solutions

House construction; water and sanitation; environmental and energy-saving initiatives; disaster response



## House construction

Habitat Sri Lanka works with families to build affordable, incremental housing. Typically, a core house of about 32.5 square meters (350 square feet) is constructed with a larger foundation laid so that houses can be expanded by homeowners when funds are available. The homeowner contributes to the design of the home and chooses the material and suppliers while Habitat Sri Lanka provides technical support and construction expertise. Families are also trained in environmentally friendly construction technologies and in house life cycle management and maintenance.

## Water and sanitation

With water and sanitation at the core of sustainable development, Habitat Sri Lanka helps families to build or repair water and sanitation facilities and provides WASH training in communities. A water and sanitation project funded by the Jersey Overseas Aid Commission through Habitat Great Britain in the Central Province will provide clean water to 600 people.

## Meet a Habitat family

Nadeesha and her young son were the first of 13 families to receive a house built by Habitat Sri Lanka in Diyalagoda, Kalutara district. After her husband died from an accident in 2012, Nadeesha and her then newborn baby had to fend for themselves. Home was a temporary wooden hut with no sanitation facilities. Nadeesha, 28, was helped under Habitat Sri Lanka's "BuildHerUp" campaign which provided permanent shelter and safe sanitation for vulnerable women and girls. Nadeesha never dreamt that donors and international volunteers would help her build a two-bedroom house with a kitchen and sanitation facilities. "After I lost my husband, I didn't think I would ever be able to provide for my son. But now all my hopes are fulfilled and we finally have a place to call home," she said.



Nadeesha, a widow with a young son, is thankful for a decent place to call home.

## Environmental and energy-saving initiatives

Since 2001, Habitat Sri Lanka has trained 2,000 households in the use of solar cookers. Seedlings of trees such as teak, mahogany, jak and tumbuk as well as fruit and vegetable seeds are distributed to families. This enables families to start home gardens which yield produce to supplement their food intake and reduce expenses.

## Disaster response

Habitat Sri Lanka helps disaster-affected families through the distribution of emergency shelter and clean-up kits. Transitional shelters and core houses may also be provided at a later stage. Habitat Sri Lanka is currently building 80 houses for families who are affected by landslides following May 2016's Cyclone Roanu. A large-scale project funded by the European Union has also been launched in Kilinochchi, Batticaloa and Mullaitivu in the East where Habitat will build 2,455 houses for internally displaced people.

## What you can do

You can help Sri Lankan families improve their living conditions by taking one or more of the following actions:

### DONATE

USD \$: [habitat.org/donate/srilanka](http://habitat.org/donate/srilanka)

### VOLUNTEER

Join one of the scheduled Global Village trips to Sri Lanka or lead your own. For more information go to: [habitat.org/gv](http://habitat.org/gv)

### TITHE

Establish a strong and rewarding tithe partnership to help build houses globally! Quote **SRI LANKA** on your checks sent to: Habitat for Humanity International, Attn: Affiliate Tithe, 121 Habitat St. Americus, GA 31709

To learn more about Habitat projects in Sri Lanka or in other parts of the region, please contact us.

### CONTACT

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