

Sri Lanka



Habitat for Humanity in Sri Lanka

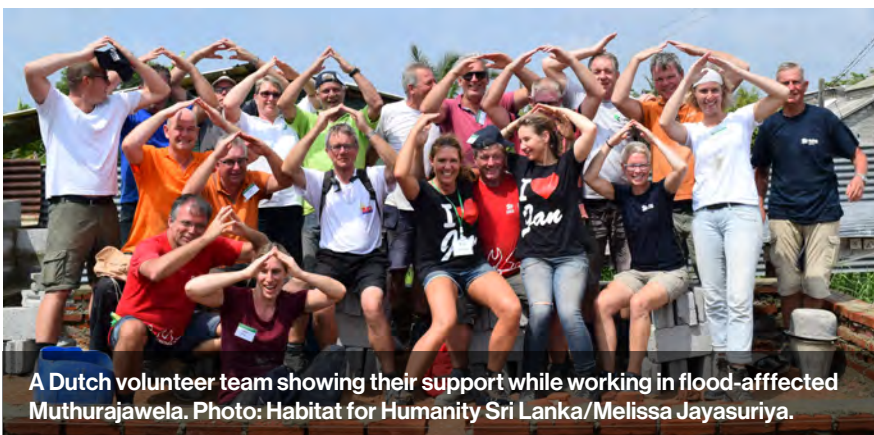
Habitat for Humanity Sri Lanka seeks to provide decent and affordable housing to marginalized and vulnerable communities across the country. Established in 1994, Habitat Sri Lanka has enabled more than 24,600 families to build strength, stability and self-reliance through shelter. Habitat also implements water, sanitation and hygiene projects. To rebuild lives and increase resilience, Habitat Sri Lanka works with disaster-affected families to build homes and conducts training in disaster risk reduction.

The housing need in Sri Lanka

Despite great advances made by housing programs in Sri Lanka, the need for safe, secure and permanent housing in Sri Lanka is made more pressing by poverty, civil strife and natural disasters such as cyclones, floods, landslides. Nearly a decade after the 26-year-long civil war ended in 2009, many families are still identified as internally displaced persons, living in temporary tin sheet shacks in the north and east of the country. It is estimated that one in two people living in the capital Colombo is a slum dweller who lacks adequate access to clean water and safe sanitation. The lack of decent housing for tea, rubber and coconut plantation workers is another area of concern. These poverty-stricken workers live in inadequate housing known as line houses without proper water and sanitation facilities.

How Habitat addresses the need in Sri Lanka

For 23 years, Habitat Sri Lanka has partnered with supporters and volunteers to build decent and affordable homes for families in need of adequate housing. Following the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami nearly 3,000 families were supported to rebuild their homes through the reconstruction housing project led by Habitat Sri Lanka. 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 the Kilinochchi, Mullaitivu and Batticaloa districts. The multi-faceted housing project will support 2,455 war-affected families in northern and eastern Sri Lanka and feature the use of locally made construction materials. Funding from Alwaleed Philanthropies in 2017 provided for the construction of 80 homes for cyclone-affected families in the Kegalle district. In 2018, Habitat Sri Lanka is building 100 homes for rural plantation workers with funding from the Indian government, and 37 homes are being constructed for flood-affected families in Kalutara.



A Dutch volunteer team showing their support while working in flood-affected Muthurajawela. Photo: Habitat for Humanity Sri Lanka/Melissa Jayasuriya.

COUNTRY FACTS

Capital	Colombo
Main country facts	Gained independence in 1948
Population	Over 22.4 million
Urbanization	18.5 percent live in cities
Life expectancy	76.9 years
Unemployment rate	4 percent
Population living below poverty line	6.7 percent

Source: World Factbook

HABITAT FACTS

When Habitat started in Sri Lanka
1994

Individuals served in FY17
37,715

**Includes construction and market development*

Volunteers engaged in FY17
495

Housing solutions

Decent homes; alternative construction materials and technology; water, sanitation and hygiene; disaster risk reduction and response



House construction

Habitat Sri Lanka works with families to build decent, affordable homes which are usually about 51 square meter (550 square feet) in size with two bedrooms, a living room, a kitchen and toilet. Building their core house incrementally gives Habitat homeowners the option of expanding it when funds are available. Under the homeowner-driven construction approach, the future Habitat homeowner contributes to the house design and chooses the materials and suppliers while Habitat Sri Lanka provides technical support and construction expertise. Families are also trained in the use of eco-friendly locally made construction materials and alternative construction technologies.

Disaster response

Habitat Sri Lanka helps disaster-affected families through the distribution of emergency shelter kits and clean-up kits in the aftermath of a disaster. Transitional shelters and core houses may also be provided at a later stage. Habitat Sri Lanka recently completed building 80 houses for families who were affected by landslides

following May 2016's Cyclone Roanu. With funding from the European Union, Habitat is building 2,455 houses with internally displaced persons in Kilinochchi, Batticaloa and Mullaitivu districts. In addition, 37 families who live in temporary shelters in a flood-prone community in Kalutara are partnering with Habitat Sri Lanka to construct their own homes.

Water and sanitation

With chronic kidney disease being a serious health problem, particularly in rural Sri Lanka, Habitat is committed to providing families with access to safe drinking water to contain the threat. The works include the installation of water tanks, distribution of water filters and training in water purification, construction of wells and latrines. Through training conducted in schools and rural communities, Habitat aims to instill good hygienic practices. About 600 families now have clean water after the completion of a water and sanitation project in the Central Province in 2017. The project was funded by the Jersey Overseas Aid Commission through Habitat Great Britain.

Meet a Habitat family

When Cyclone Roanu struck in May 2016, Nadeeshani's family lost their newly constructed house in Sabaragamuwa Province, in Western Sri Lanka. Their belongings including her three children's school books and toys were all destroyed. Nadeeshani and her husband Dayarathne did not think they would ever own a home again. After partnering with Habitat Sri Lanka, however, they could build a decent home that they plan to expand with their own savings. Their daughter Kiruli, 7, said: "I love my new Habitat house. Most of all, I love having a garden to ride my bicycle and play with my new friends from next door."



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](https://www.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](https://www.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.

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 [youtube.com/user/habitatsl](https://www.youtube.com/user/habitatsl)

Nadeeshani and Dayarathne with their children (from second from left) Ravindu, Kiruli and Shanuli at their Habitat home.

Photo: Habitat for Humanity Sri Lanka/Kaavya Pathirana.