



Country profile

Sri Lanka

The housing need in Sri Lanka

Despite great advances as a result of Sri Lanka's housing programs, the country's need for safe and secure housing is made more pressing by poverty, civil strife and disasters such as cyclones, floods and landslides. More than a decade after the end of the civil war, many internally displaced families are still living in temporary tin sheet shacks in the North and East of the country. The government's 2016 housing needs survey showed 800,000 families out of 6 million families in the country did not have a home of their own. Some were living in temporary or rental homes while others were homeless and landless. Impoverished plantation workers also lack adequate housing as they live in what are known as line-houses without proper water and sanitation facilities.



HABITAT FACTS:

- Habitat started in Sri Lanka in 1994.
- **Individuals served in FY2020 – 16,620**
 - Through new construction – 2,845
 - Through repairs – 105
 - Through incremental building – 50
 - Through market development – 13,620
- **Volunteers engaged in FY2020 – 102**

COUNTRY FACTS:

- Capital city** – Colombo
Population – 21.8 million
Life expectancy – 77.7 years
Unemployment rate – 4.18%
Below poverty line – 4.8%

How Habitat addresses the need

Safe, affordable housing

Habitat Sri Lanka partners with families to incrementally build 51-square-meter core homes that they can expand in future when funds are available. An example of such incremental building is the 100-home “Brick by Brick” project. Based on the homeowner-driven construction approach, families contribute to the house design and choose 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 available construction materials such as compressed stabilized earth blocks and appropriate construction technologies.

Disaster response

Habitat Sri Lanka enabled 80 landslide-hit families to rebuild their houses following May 2016’s Cyclone Roanu and distributed emergency hygiene kits to 1,000 families after 2017’s Cyclone Mora. Under the European Union-funded “Homes not Houses” project, Habitat has empowered more than 2,370 conflict-affected families to resettle and rebuild their lives and future through sustainable housing and community economic development. Cash grants were also provided to homeowners earning daily wages to help them cope amid the COVID-19 pandemic. Separately, 37 families who lived in temporary shelters in a flood-prone community in Kalutara partnered with Habitat to construct their own homes.

Water and sanitation

Chronic kidney disease is a serious health problem, particularly in rural Sri Lanka. Habitat is committed to providing families with access to safe drinking water through the installation of water tanks, distribution of water filters and training in water purification and good hygienic practices. In 2018, Habitat partnered with Hatton National Bank to install water storage tanks, providing 50 families in Batticaloa with safe drinking water, and to build school toilets, enabling more than 150 students to have access to safe sanitation.

What you can do

DONATE

USD \$: habitat.org/donate

To donate to Habitat Sri Lanka, click on “Designate your donation to a location or cause”.

VOLUNTEER

The Global Village program was suspended in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Please go to habitat.org/gv for updates, including when and where the program will resume.

TITHE

Habitat affiliates in the U.S. can establish a tithe partnership to help build houses. Write SRI LANKA on your checks sent to: Habitat for Humanity International, Attn: Affiliate Tithe, 121 Habitat St. Americus, GA 31709

CONTACT

Habitat for Humanity Sri Lanka, No. 120A - 2/1, Srimath Anagarika Dharmapala Mawatha, Colombo 00700, Sri Lanka

Tel: +94 11 2674361-2 Email: info@habitatsrilanka.org Website: habitatsrilanka.org
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