



## 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 secure and affordable homes is made more pressing by poverty, under-development and disasters such as floods and landslides. More than a decade after the end of the civil war, many internally displaced families are still living in inadequate shelter in the north and east of the country. The last housing needs survey by the government was in 2016, which showed 800,000 families out of 6 million families in the country did not have a home of their own. In the tea plantation districts, workers live in "line rooms" without proper water and sanitation facilities. Many of them still lack adequate homes despite the launch of a major government housing initiative with funding support from the Government of India in the central, southern and western provinces.



#### HABITAT FACTS:

- Habitat started in Sri Lanka in 1994.
- **Individuals served in FY2022 – 7,515**
  - Through new construction – 295
  - Through incremental construction – 3,030
  - Through market development – 4,190
- **Volunteers engaged in FY2022 – 1**

#### COUNTRY FACTS:

- Capital city** – Colombo
- Population** – over 22.1 million
- Life expectancy** – 76 years
- Unemployment rate** – 6.7%
- Below poverty line\*** – 1%

\* Based on US\$2.15 a day (World Bank)

# How Habitat addresses the need

## **Safe, affordable housing**

Habitat Sri Lanka partners with families to build 51-square-meter core homes that they can expand in future when funds are available. The 100-home GRACE project exemplifies both new construction and building in stages. Habitat's preferred approach is homeowner-driven construction where families take ownership of the construction process by managing financial resources and procuring the services of construction workers and supplies of building materials. The families select the housing design, choose the building materials and suppliers while Habitat Sri Lanka provides technical assistance and construction expertise. Families and local construction workers are also trained in the use of eco-friendly, locally available construction materials such as compressed stabilized earth blocks and other appropriate construction technologies.

## **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 construction of toilets, installation of water tanks and training in good hygienic practices. In 2021, Habitat partnered with the American Chamber of Commerce, or AmCham, in Sri Lanka to provide water, sanitation and hygiene facilities to government schools through the Helping Hands project. The three-year partnership aims to improve school children's access to clean water and improved toilets and raise their awareness of handwashing, hygienic practices. Menstrual hygiene training also helps to promote girls' health, dignity and well-being as well as their school attendance. In the first year of the project, more than 2,500 students in three government schools benefitted with the support of AmCham's Sri Lankan corporate members..

# What you can do

## **DONATE**

Please go to [habitat.org/donate](https://www.habitat.org/donate) and select "Designate your donation" to donate to Habitat Sri Lanka.

## **VOLUNTEER**

Under the Global Village program, builds have resumed in select locations in Asia and the Pacific. Please visit [habitat.org/gv](https://www.habitat.org/gv) for more information and updates.

## **TITHE**

Habitat affiliates in the U.S. support the international work through an annual tithe. For additional information, email [tithe@habitat.org](mailto:tithe@habitat.org) or contact your local Habitat organization.

## **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](mailto:info@habitatsrilanka.org) Website: [habitatsrilanka.org](https://www.habitatsrilanka.org)  
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