

Evaluation Report 3/2018

# EVALUATION OF UN-HABITAT'S COUNTRY PROGRAMME IN SRI LANKA, 2013-2017



MAY 2018

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## ACRONYMS

<b>CAP</b>	Community Action Planning
<b>CBOs</b>	Community Based Organisations
<b>CDC</b>	Child Development Centres
<b>CERF</b>	Central Emergency Response Fund
<b>CIAs</b>	Community Implementation Agreements
<b>CP</b>	Country Programme
<b>CPM</b>	Country Programme Manager
<b>CRP</b>	Cost Recovery Plan
<b>DCDSL</b>	Department of Co-operative Development Sri Lanka
<b>DOA</b>	Delegation of Authority
<b>DRR</b>	Disaster Risk Reduction
<b>ESDP</b>	Education Sector Development Programme
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>EWHCS</b>	Estates Workers Housing Cooperative Societies
<b>FGDs</b>	Focus Group Discussions
<b>FR</b>	Final Report
<b>GTG</b>	Gender Theme Group
<b>GoSL</b>	Government of Sri Lanka
<b>HQ</b>	Head Quarters
<b>HDI</b>	Human Development Initiative
<b>HRWG</b>	Human Rights Working Group
<b>INGO</b>	International Non-governmental Organisation
<b>KIIs</b>	Key Informant Interviews
<b>KOICA</b>	Korea International Cooperation Agency
<b>MoE</b>	Ministry of Education
<b>MoH</b>	Ministry of Health
<b>M&amp;E</b>	Monitoring and Evaluation
<b>MABs</b>	Municipal Advisory Boards
<b>MDG</b>	Millennium Development Goal
<b>MIC</b>	Middle Income Country
<b>MOPAN</b>	Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network
<b>MPCC</b>	Multi-Purpose Community Centre
<b>NAITA</b>	National Apprentice and Industrial Training Authority
<b>NBRO</b>	National Building Research Organisation
<b>NERDC</b>	National Engineering Research and Development Centre
<b>NSBS</b>	Nearest School is Best School
<b>OHCHR</b>	United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
<b>PHDT</b>	Plantation Human Development Trust
<b>PMU</b>	Project Management Unit
<b>PSUP</b>	Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme
<b>PTAs</b>	Parents' and Teachers' Associations
<b>QIs</b>	Quality Inputs
<b>QR</b>	Quarterly Report
<b>RBM</b>	Results Based Management
<b>RPCs</b>	Relevant Communities and Plantation Companies
<b>RDA</b>	Road Development Authority

<b>RDC</b>	Rural Development Society
<b>ROAP</b>	Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific
<b>RPC</b>	Regional Plantation Company
<b>RWH</b>	Rain Water Harvesting
<b>SDCs</b>	School Development Committees
<b>SLIG</b>	Student Learning Improvement Grants
<b>SP</b>	Strategic Plan
<b>SDGs</b>	Sustainable Development Goals
<b>ToR</b>	Terms of Reference
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>UNCG</b>	United Nations Communication Group
<b>UNCT</b>	United Nations Country Team
<b>UNDAF</b>	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
<b>UNEG</b>	United Nations Evaluation Group
<b>UN-Habitat</b>	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
<b>UNHCR</b>	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
<b>UNHRP</b>	United Nations Housing Rights Programme
<b>UNSDF</b>	United Nations Sustainable Development Framework
<b>USD</b>	US Dollars
<b>VTA</b>	Vocational Training Authority
<b>WASH</b>	Water, Sanitation, Hygiene
<b>WB</b>	The World Bank
<b>WRDS</b>	Women's Rural Development Society

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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### Evaluation Overview

Since 1978, UN-Habitat has supported the development of human settlements policies in Sri Lanka.<sup>1</sup> Since this time, UN-Habitat has cooperated with the Government to initiate a range of national programmes and projects.<sup>2</sup> After the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami, UN-Habitat increased its support of Sri Lanka. The Southern Coast and North-East experienced severe damage, with 30,000 houses damaged and 70,000 destroyed. UN-Habitat's activities ranged from advocacy to policy advice, coordination and building partnerships, implementation of housing recovery and reconstruction projects, and technical assistance. From 1983-2009, the conflict between the Government of Sri Lanka and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) resulted in the devastation of the Northern and Eastern Provinces. By 2009, 450,000 people had been displaced and 160,000 houses were damaged or destroyed. Between 2009 and 2016, UN-Habitat facilitated the construction of houses and community infrastructure facilities in these provinces. UN-Habitat's accumulated effects in Sri Lanka over the last four decades are evident in their work in post-disaster reconstruction, housing, climate change and disaster risk reduction, water and sanitation, low-income settlement upgrading, livelihoods, gender equality, urban planning, policy development, and capacity building.

As stated in the ToR, the purpose of this country programme evaluation is, "to document and assess the results and accumulated effects of the UN-Habitat programme in Sri Lanka conducted with emphasis on the period from 2013 to 2017."<sup>3</sup> This period covered the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) for Sri Lanka (2013-2017), which was linked to priorities defined by the Government of Sri Lanka.

Out of the projects in the country portfolio, two projects with different characteristics were reviewed in-depth with regard to results and accumulated effects at project level. Thematically, UN-Habitat's portfolio in Sri Lanka focusses mainly on housing, infrastructure, and community engagement. The two projects focus on infrastructure and community engagement. Housing is a strong element of UN-Habitat's larger portfolio in Sri Lanka, as outlined below in *Background and Context*.

The selected projects reflect UN-Habitat's vision on the three-pronged approach<sup>4</sup> and its country mission, as well as, focus on improving livelihoods, cross-cutting issues, availability of data, donors, and collaboration with other UN agencies. These two projects are:

1. Sustainable Resettlement through Community-Driven Improvement of the Learning Environment in Mannar, Sri Lanka, 2015-2017
2. Human Development Initiative through Empowerment and Settlement Improvement in the

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<sup>1</sup> <https://unhabitat.org/srilanka/>

<sup>2</sup> UN-Habitat, Terms of Reference, Evaluation of UN-Habitat's Country Programme in Sri Lanka, 2 November 2017 (updated: 12 January 2018)

<sup>3</sup> UN-Habitat, Terms of Reference, Evaluation of UN-Habitat's Country Programme in Sri Lanka, 2 November 2017 (updated: 12 January 2018)

<sup>4</sup> The three-pronged approach places emphasis on urban legislation, urban planning and design, and urban economy and municipal finance. These correspond to the first three focus areas of the strategic plan for 2014–2019, and they can be seen as the levers for transforming cities and human settlements into centres of greater environmental, economic and social sustainability. A fourth focus area, or sub-programme, urban basic services, is also prioritized, as large numbers of urban dwellers in developing countries still lack access to adequate basic services, especially water and sanitation as well as reliable waste management services, sustainable mobility solutions and safe domestic energy. See, for example, UN-Habitat, Economic Foundations for Sustainable Urbanization: A Study on Three-Pronged Approach: Planned City Extensions, Legal Framework, and Municipal Finance, Second Edition, March 2017, <https://unhabitat.org/books/economic-foundations-for-sustainable-urbanization-a-study-on-three-pronged-approach-planned-city-extensions-legal-framework-and-municipal-finance/>

Plantation Settlements, Sri Lanka, 2017.

This evaluation will provide information to UN-Habitat management, its offices and staff responsible for project development and implementation in UN-Habitat country offices, regional offices and at headquarters, as well as its governing bodies, donors and key stakeholders in Sri Lanka of the value-added, achievements, lessons, challenges and opportunities for UN-Habitat's Sri Lanka operations.

These findings should inform future strategy, adjustments, opportunities, collaboration, replication and upscaling. These are all important in future mainstreaming, especially given that the Sri Lanka programme is one of the largest in UN-Habitat Asia's portfolio. The findings will highlight country lessons that can be utilized in other countries. Institutional aspects will be emphasized, especially the support received from the Headquarters in relation to the income generated from the Country Programme on an annual basis.

## Evaluation Objectives and Intended Audience

In terms of the specific objectives, this evaluation will:

1. Assess the **relevance** of UN-Habitat Sri Lanka's programme between 2013 and 2017 to attain accumulated positive results for beneficiaries, local authorities, and government institutions that are supportive of UN-Habitat's strategic objectives.
2. Assess the **efficiency** and **effectiveness** of the UN-Habitat projects in Sri Lanka in achieving results and the accumulation of results.
3. Identify what successful approaches and **strategies** worked, and which did not, drawing out key findings and lessons from UN-Habitat's experience in Sri Lanka.
4. Take into account the intended users of the evaluation, make **recommendations** to effectively deliver, develop and expand UN-Habitat's portfolio in Sri Lanka.

The evaluation will examine mainstreaming of such issues as resource mobilization, coordination, ownership, and adherence to critical cross-cutting issues (human rights, gender, youth, and climate change). The intended audience is the UN-Habitat management, its offices and staff responsible for project development and implementation in UN-Habitat country offices, regional offices and at headquarters, as well as its governing bodies, donors and key stakeholders in Sri Lanka.

## Methodology

In the ToR, UN-Habitat proposed using the five *evaluation criteria*. These criteria consist of: Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Impact and Sustainability. The evaluation was conducted by two independent consultants, Dr Stephen Van Houten (International Team Leader) and Mr Manikku Wadu Leelaratne (Local Evaluator), in close consultation with the UN-Habitat Evaluation Unit, the Regional Office for Asia and Pacific, and the UN-Habitat Country Office Sri Lanka. The evaluation was carried out during February and March 2018.

Based on the ToR and discussions with UN-Habitat, the following multi-faceted, mixed design methods were used, all of which are participatory, inclusive and target group sensitive. The data was collected through the following methods: Desk review, key informant interviews (KIIs), focus group discussions (FGDs), observation, site visits, photos, videos, and validation workshops.

Interviews and FGDs were conducted in Colombo, and Mannar and Nuwara Eliya Districts. Skype and telephone interviews were used where required. FGDs were used to accommodate larger groups of key

respondents. The total number of respondents was 256, with 62 interviews and 15 FGDs, with 45% female and 55% male respondents. There were 10 site visits (see *Summary* in *Annex 2*), 5 for each project, and 2 Validation Meetings.

## Most Important Findings and Conclusions

This first Sri Lanka Country Programme evaluation by UN-Habitat shows satisfactory overall and project-specific results achieved for the period 2013-2017. These achievements were evident in the areas of post-disaster construction, housing, urban planning, climate change, disaster risk reduction, water and sanitation, low income settlements and upgrading, and humanitarian relief. This evaluation showed that the Country Programme made significant contributions to Goal 11 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development – Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable – as well as to the other Goals, namely (number of the goal in brackets):

- Provide equitable and inclusive quality education and life-long learning opportunities for all (4)
- Attain gender equality, empower women and girls everywhere (5)
- Secure water and sanitation for all for a sustainable world (6)
- Ensure access to affordable, sustainable, and reliable modern energy services for all (7)
- Reduce inequality within and among countries (10)
- Promote actions at all levels to address climate change (13)
- Achieve peaceful and inclusive societies, rule of law, effective and capable institutions (16)
- Strengthen and enhance the means of implementation and global partnership for sustainable development (17).

These results achieved spanned a period of marked political upheaval, civil war, and natural disasters with subsequent displacement and damage. This evaluation showed that UN-Habitat responded positively to the ensuing needs and opportunities in Sri Lanka.

A summary of the findings according to the five evaluation criteria is provided below.

NO.	CRITERIA	SCORE	FINDINGS
1	RELEVANCE	Highly Satisfactory	Stakeholders, at all levels, claimed that the Country Programme (2013-2017) and the two projects that were in-depth reviewed were relevant and useful, in response to the global, UN, UN-Habitat, donor, national, regional and local needs and priorities. UN-Habitat's success in consistently responding to beneficiary needs across almost four decades was the common theme of the evaluation. UN-Habitat, based on its history, current projects. and planned work. is well placed to remain relevant and useful in

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