

A.28 Sri Lanka - 2009 - Conflict Returns

Case study:

Country:

Sri Lanka

Conflict:

Population movement due to civil war

Conflict date:

Conflict ended in May 2009

No. of houses damaged:

160,000

No. of people affected / displaced:

300,000

Project target population:

2,511 families

(Estimated 12,555 people)

669 houses built by

January 2012

Shelter size:

46m²

Materials Cost per house:

4,600 USD

Additional costs per house:

3,100 USD



Project description

This owner-driven programme provided cash to support people to build houses damaged or destroyed by the conflict. The project aimed to contribute to the sustainable rehabilitation and reconstruction in the north of Sri Lanka. It primarily supported people who have been displaced who were resettling after the conflict.

Strengths and weaknesses

- ✓ The owner-driven approach with direct cash grants to the beneficiary bank accounts created a sense of ownership.
- ✓ The project was able to build upon experiences and use staff from the post-tsunami recovery programme.
- ✓ The shelter projects were part of a larger programme including support in water, sanitation, livelihood, disaster risk reduction, community infrastructure and efforts to rebuild civil society.
- ✓ The project aimed to empower civil society, and provoke them to take initiatives on behalf of themselves.
- ✗ The project was delayed by lack of legal documents.
- ✗ Often beneficiaries could not produce evidence of land ownership, such as land permits, birth/death/marriage certificates etc. as they were lost during the conflict.
- ✗ Construction skills differ from one family to

another. As a result experienced staff were required to ensure that the project was effective.

- ✗ Because the project started with beneficiary lists from the local authorities, it was open to some politicisation.
- ✗ Each house required a minimum of eight documents and five separate transactions. This led to delays when combined with the processing of funds requests and bank transfers.
- ✗ The project aimed for high quality but as a result is relatively small scale, aiming to meet 1.5% of the housing needs. In total all organisations together aim to meet a total of 20% of the overall housing need.
- The organisation was able to establish good relationships with the government and military allowing improved access to difficult to work in areas. However given the context this required significant efforts to be seen to remain impartial.



Houses were rebuilt using cash grants.
Photo: Silvester Kueenseger, IFRC

Background

Conflict between forces of the government of Sri Lanka and Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) began in 1983 and continued until 2009.

Between 2006 and February 2009, over 281,000 people became internally displaced. This was in addition to over 214,000 people who had been displaced before 2006, meaning that over half a million people had been displaced by the conflict.

The total population that lived in the Northern Province of Sri Lanka prior to May 2009 is yet to be assessed.

The conflict left hundreds of thousands of people in transit, displaced, and seeking refuge with host families or in government-run camps or centres for internally displaced people. Two entire districts were fully deserted and three other districts had partial displacements as a result of the conflict.

Hundreds of thousands of people lost almost everything and suffered without shelter, water, sanitation, health care, livelihoods or other basic facilities.

The government and humanitarian actors estimated that approximately 160,000 houses in the north of Sri Lanka were in need of reconstruction. This figure excludes more than 100,000 families who were scheduled for return from India and other countries.

Of those houses that needed to be reconstructed, 74% needed to be constructed anew, and the rest required repairs. Considering the size, complexity, and evolving nature of the situation, it had been a challenge to gain access to isolated or inaccessible areas and to assess the needs of the most-affected people.

Implementation

The national organisation with support from its international counterparts received approval from the government to assist 2,511 households.

Of these, 2,181 are new build houses for fully damaged houses, and 330 are repairs for the partially damaged houses. 669 were completed by the end of 2011 with 1,294 ongoing.

Selection of beneficiaries

The organisation was provided

with a list of beneficiaries by the local authorities (a list from the District Secretariat, approved by the Government Agent), and given an opportunity to verify beneficiaries and communities.

The final selection was done by the by the organisation after conducting interviews. Each beneficiary in the given list provided the following documents at the interview:

- family details,
- copy of the National Identity Card,
- copy of the bank pass book/ bank details,
- copy of the deeds,
- consent letter by land owner approved by the assistant government agent if the land is not owned by beneficiary,
- plan of the site.

After the selection of the families, each community was given



Rebuilt house in Northern Sri Lanka.
Photo: Silvester Kueenseger, IFRC

a chance to object when the lists were publicly displayed.

Noting that families are re-building their houses on their own land, a site investigation was carried out following the beneficiary selection.

The site audit was done by a project technical officer and a field engineer to satisfy that the house had stood on the site before the war and was completely damaged and to ensure suitability for reconstruction.

Beneficiary files

A beneficiary file was built up for each beneficiary with the file cover clearly marked with the project name and number, beneficiary name and beneficiary address. The beneficiary file consists of :

- a family details form,
- a copy of the beneficiary's National Identity Card,
- a copy of the beneficiary Bank pass book indicating name and account number,
- copies of documents indicating ownership of land (copy of the deed or consent letter by the land owner approved by the assistant government agents if the land is not own by the beneficiary),
- a plan of the site,
- the site audit report conducted by the organisation,
- a copy of the house plan,



Grants were phased, and each grant was conditional upon the previous level of construction being attained. Photo: Ganga Kariyawasam, IFRC

- a baseline survey form,
- documents such as affidavits, certificates etc. in the absence of required documents,
- any other documents relevant to the project.

Housing construction

A cash grant amount of 2,900 USD (LKR 325,000) was paid to each beneficiary through the bank in five instalments. An additional grant of 267 USD (LKR 30,000) was provided to construct the toilet and for the water supply.

Each stage was to be completed by the beneficiary within three weeks of receiving the instalment. On completion of each stage, the next grant should have been received within one week.

The technical advisors and support is given by the technical officers and the field engineers, who supervised 100 families and 500 families respectively.

The standard house under the project is a permanent house of minimum size of 500ft² (46m²) floor area with two rooms. The following elements are required for the house to be considered as complete:

- The house is bounded by brick or block wall and covered by a tiled roof.
- There is one internal lockable room with internal plastering, flooring, doors & windows and sashes.
- There is one internal or external kitchen with internal plastering and flooring.
- There is one internal or external toilet with adequate effluent disposal.

Each beneficiary may adjust the standard design to suit their individual needs, within the parameters of the budget and minimum standards.

Housing construction with each instalment

Instalment	Amount	Work to be completed	Technical details
1	440 USD	Foundation (house and toilet) - within 4 weeks	Laying of 3" screed concrete, rubble masonry foundation in 1:5 cement mortar along with damp proof course plastering and applying of damp proof course tar.
2	790 USD	Construction of super structure (house and toilet*) with brick or block walls up to roof level - within 6 weeks	The brick or block work of the walls up to roof level including the lintel tie beam above the window level using two 10mm diameter tor steel bars in 1:3:4 concrete mixture and toilet super structure.
3	790 USD	Roof (house and toilet*) - within 4 weeks	House - roof work using clay roof tiles Toilet - roof work using clay roof tiles or concrete slab
4	615 USD	Internal plastering and floor concreting of one bed room, kitchen and toilet. Fixing of all door and window frames - within 6 weeks	The internal plastering of one bed room and kitchen in 1:5 cement sand mortar along with fixing of all door and window frames. Also must concrete the floor areas of one bedroom and kitchen with 1:3:4 concrete mixture.
5	220 USD	Flooring of one bedroom, kitchen and toilet. Complete one lockable room (fixing of doors and windows and sashes in one bedroom) - within 2 weeks	The fixing of door and window sashes in one bedroom. Each beneficiary must have at least one lockable room. Also lockable room floor and kitchen floor needs to be plastered and finished with cement.
Total	2,900 USD	Time taken to complete the construction work is 20 weeks. Additional time required for funds request and transfer.	

*Water supply can be provided instead of a toilet