

OVERVIEW OF

Sri Lanka

Overview of Sri Lanka



YEAR OF
1948
INDEPENDENCE

POPULATION
21,675,648
MILLION

7.0%
Population
BELOW
poverty line

Languages

Sinhala and Tamil are the official languages of the country while English is recognized as the link language.

Under-five Mortality Rate: 12 per 1,000 live births. Sri Lanka ranks 128 in the world.

Human Development Index (HDI) for 2012: 0.715 (ranked 92 out of 187, indicating high human development).

High Drop-out: An estimated 200,000 school-going children drop out of school annually

Nutrition: 1 out of 5 children born with low birth weight; nearly one-third of children under 5 are underweight

Brief History of ChildFund in Sri Lanka

ChildFund came to Sri Lanka: 1985

Number of districts: 11

Number of enrolled children (FY13): 19,235

Number of participants (FY13): 266,597

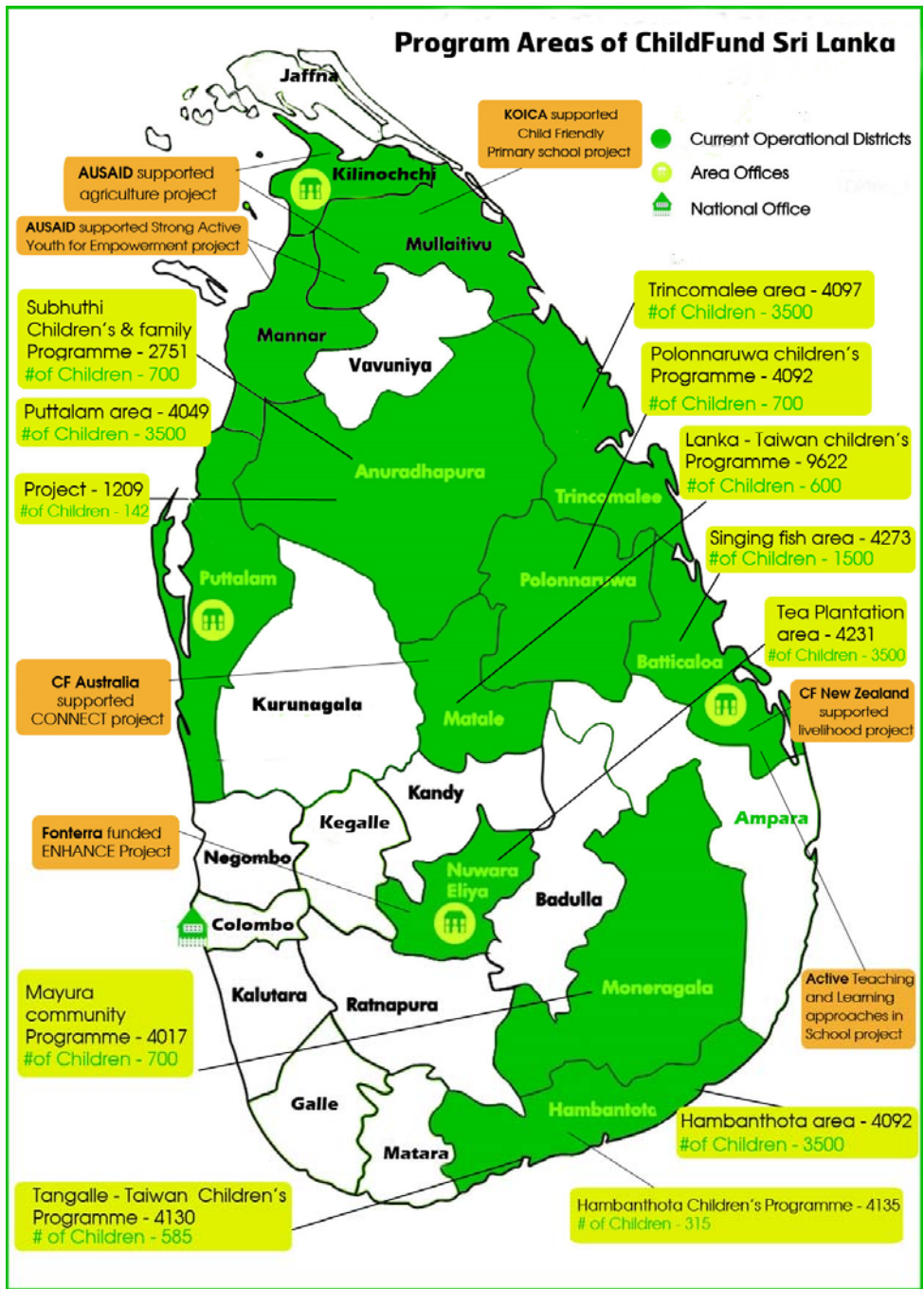
ChildFund has had a presence in Sri Lanka since 1985. We commenced operations in Sri Lanka with five family-helper projects in the Colombo and Galle districts. Since then our program has evolved to work with families and their communities to decide their own development priorities so that their children have equal access to life choices and opportunities in health, nutrition, education and employment opportunities. In 2003, ChildFund Sri Lanka began assistance to conflict-affected commu-

Brief History of ChildFund in Sri Lanka (continued)

nities in Trincomalee and later expanded work to Batticaloa, Ampara, Vavuniya, Jaffna and Killinochchi. Child Protection and social Inclusion and Cohesion are central to all the programs.

At present, ChildFund Sri Lanka works in 13 districts directly as well as through local partner organizations.

Where We Work



- Provinces where we work:**
- Anuradhapura
 - Batticaloa
 - Hambantota
 - Kilinochchi
 - Mannar
 - Matale
 - Moneragala
 - Mullaitivu
 - Miwara Eliya
 - Polonnaruwa
 - Puttalam
 - Trincomalee
 - Kurunegala

Brief Program Overview



ChildFund Sri Lanka works with children during the three stages of their life—as infants, children and youth. The programs incorporate health, education, nutrition and livelihood intervention that nurture and protect children and youth, while also uplifting their communities.

Our aim is to ensure that young children grow in a healthy, protective and developmentally supportive environment to reach their full potential.

We create quality learning opportunities for children to enhance their achievements in education through our education programs and improve school infrastructure facilities, train teachers in developing “joyful classrooms,” and promote parents supporting their children’s education.

Our youth program assists young people with making healthy life choices and improving their access to employment, through developing professional soft skills and offering career guidance and technical skill development. We work with them to develop leadership skills to build confidence and become change agents in their families and communities.

We also have emergency programs to address disaster reduction and response.

2013 Program Achievements

Healthy and Secure Infants: Better Care for Infants and Young Children

Around 5,500 children benefitted from ChildFund Sri Lanka’s continued support to Early Childhood Development (ECD) centers. Support included building renovations, providing play items, access to water and sanitation, teacher training, and strengthening parent-teacher associations. ECD center support was provided in villages where early childhood education services were very poor and parents could not afford to send their children to ECD centers. Through ChildFund’s projects, mid-day meals, with nutritious food available locally, were provided to ECD centers. In addition, local communities were trained in identifying nutritious food and methods of cultivation. They were also given home gardening kits and seed to continue this endeavour. ChildFund also advocated for the introduction of minimum standards for ECD centers.



2013 Program Achievements (continued)

ChildFund Sri Lanka trained 340 mothers with children aged 0 to 3 on home-based care. They in turn, as lead mothers in their village communities, guided parents and care givers to interact with children, stimulate their brain development and improve hygiene and nutrition. They also received training and support in establishing child-friendly environments in their homes. Considerable changes in their parenting and home management practices were observed, as a result of the training. ChildFund Sri Lanka also supported the formation of a Lead Mothers' Forum to enforce the volunteer based on ECD and home-base/center-based ECD activities with the active participation of mothers in nine zones. This initiative helped to promote the physical, mental and social well-being of children by empowering their parents with knowledge, skills and attitudes.

A large number of children and adults are benefitting from upgraded water systems and water filters provided by ChildFund Sri Lanka. This has also made access to water easier and safer and reduced the time spent by mothers on collecting water, enabling them to spend more time with their children.

Educated and Confident Children: Providing Quality Educational Opportunities and Enhancing Achievements in Basic Education

ChildFund Sri Lanka is constructing and renovating facilities in six schools that were damaged by the war, in the north of the country. Once completed, more than 1,200 children will have access to improved learning facilities. At present, approximately 50% of the work has been completed. In other areas supported by ChildFund, approximately 2,296 children have benefitted from improvements to school infrastructure facilities. These improvements include classroom renovations, upgrading water and sanitation facilities and providing teaching and learning materials. To encourage regular school attendance, children were provided school supplies, travel fees and bicycles.



ChildFund Sri Lanka projects provided supplementary classes and peer education sessions to 8,379 children in critical subjects such as math, language and science. As a result of this education assistance program, which focuses on improving access to educational support, many children have shown improved performance on the term tests.

The ChildFund Connect project, which aims to improve media literacy and cross cultural awareness in children, trained 60 children who demonstrated their skills by developing a number of short films. The films were shown to children and their communities at a film festival organized by children.

2013 Program Achievements (continued)

Skilled and Involved Youth: Leadership and Livelihood Skills for Youth

ChildFund Sri Lanka organized “Vision Camps” which guided and helped 664 youth to identify their strengths, weaknesses and challenges in the external environment. At the end of the camps, youth were able to develop their own career plans. During the three-day camps, the youth also received training in leadership skills.

ChildFund Sri Lanka provided 273 youth with vocational skills training in areas such as tourism, heavy machinery, graphic designing and bag making. Out of the 273 youth, 59 (22%) became self employed. Another 69 youth participated in industrial exposure visits to become familiar with work opportunities and working environments. In addition, 139 youth were trained in backhoe loader, dress making, cookery, dairy farming and fruit production.

ChildFund Sri Lanka continued to provide assistance and services to youth through career guidance centers in their villages. Access to news about job opportunities, CV preparation assistance and access to the Internet are some of the services provided by the centers.

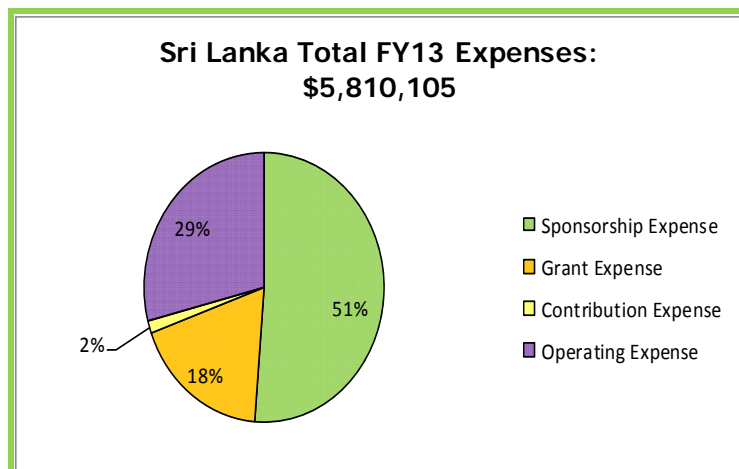


Empowering Communities

ChildFund Sri Lanka provided training on business skills such as marketing challenges, strengths, weaknesses, threats and opportunities to nearly 1,000 farmers. Through the project to strengthen livelihoods of war-affected families in northern Sri Lanka, 1,000 farmers received agriculture accessories, home gardening packages and training on pest control, water management, access to market and organic methods of cultivation, etc. Families were also provided tools to start small businesses. Farmers have been able to increase their produce and income with this support. Through its water and sanitation initiatives, ChildFund Sri Lanka provided sanitary toilets to 47 families.



Financial Report



Sri Lanka FY13

Sponsorship Expense	2,977,392	51%
Grant Expense	1,060,662	18%
Contribution Expense	86,496	1%
Operating Expense	1,685,555	29%
Total Expense	5,810,105	100%

Challenges

Sri Lanka has maintained positive social indicators compared to other countries in the region. However, there are persistent disparities across regions and between social groups. As a result, there are target populations in the country that lack basic infrastructure and sanitation facilities and access to health and education.

In the north and east where families have returned after a 30-year war that ended in 2009, infrastructure, livelihood assistance and life skill development needs exist. Malnutrition is high and assistance is also required for children and youth with disabilities and for rebuilding civil society structures.

Overall, there is an increasing trend around reports of violence against children, mainly sexual abuse and assaults. Lack of protection from the mother due to migration of women for work abroad can also be linked to the higher vulnerability of children to abuse.

In the plantation sector, issues such as malnutrition, lack of adequate care and protection from parents, and low educational achievements are a significant problem.

Further, Sri Lanka experiences frequent natural disasters such as floods, droughts and strong winds which regularly displace families.

As road access is difficult in rural areas, additional time and resources are required to meet the needs of rural communities where there is limited access to infrastructure services and economic opportunities.

High inflation and currency depreciation continue to impact the increasing cost of living in Sri Lanka. Employment challenges include mismatches between the competencies of graduates and the demands of the labor market. A significant level of unemployment prevails among young people, women and the educated in general.

Recent demographic, epidemiologic and socioeconomic changes have produced a different set of health challenges in the form of non-communicable diseases. The most significant among these is dengue.

Why Sponsorship is Important

An elle game was in progress on a ground adjoining a lake in Puttalam. Nearly 50 children were playing and more were watching the game which was very similar to baseball. Suddenly she spotted a familiar face.

"Dilan, Dilan ... it is you isn't it?" his sponsor said as she held his hand. They had never met. But she knew him instantly from the pictures she had received. Dilan (17) was very surprised to be suddenly and unexpectedly held by a stranger. But it took him only a few minutes to realize that it was his sponsor from Korea, who was on a visit to Sri Lanka to meet him. *"I've written many letters to her and sent pictures and I was quite excited when I heard that she was coming to Sri Lanka,"* Dilan said. For his sponsor the game had suddenly become very special because she had unexpectedly discovered Dilan there.



It was a happy union. There were smiles and tears as the two spoke with each other. *"Meeting someone who is in a photo is like meeting a stranger but it feels like we've known each other a long time. It feels very close and not strange at all,"* she said.

His sponsor had learned a lot about his life and his family through the letters they had exchanged.

Dilan said that through their exchanges he had learnt about a new country and culture. He had developed an interest in cinema in his sponsor's country, Korea. He even had a few favorite actors and actresses. His sponsor expressed her happiness at finally meeting Dilan. *"I got to know him though his letters and it's nice to finally meet him"* she said. She had several gifts for him including a bag, jacket that she helped him try on amidst jokes and laughter. *"I heard that he wants buy some animals and this money is to buy some goats or a cow,"* she said, *handing over an envelope. She added "I can tell from Dilan's face and his general appearance that things are getting better and better and that I'm making a meaningful contribution."*

Dilan has received educational support and his family has received livelihood support from ChildFund Sri Lanka over the years.



Why Sponsorship is Important (continued)



Lahiru's father, a hard working farmer cultivates chili, a few fruits and cashew nuts in his garden. He said the assistance from Lahiru's sponsor had helped them to obtain school supplies and also build a toilet for their home.



As his sponsor told him stories about his own family and showed Lahiru pictures, their connection seemed to grow even closer. Lahiru who loves to draw, shared his drawings and also told his sponsor about his ambition one day to become an art teacher. *"Study well and be a good man one day,"* were his sponsor's words of advice as they parted.