

UN-Habitat Provides Training on Innovative Construction Techniques for Artisans and CBO Members from Mannar District

May 2014, Northern Province. UN-Habitat Sri Lanka recently conducted a training programme for skilled construction workers and members of Community Based Organisations (CBOs) of Mannar district on the use of innovative, environmentally-friendly construction technologies coupled with a field visit to Killinochchi and Mullaitivu districts. This training programme was conducted under the project “Improving Living Conditions in Returnee Areas of Sri Lanka through Housing” funded by the European Union, Government of Australia and Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC).



Implemented by UN-Habitat and SDC, this project is supporting the reconstruction of 4,400 conflict damaged houses and a number of community infrastructure facilities such as preschools, community centres common wells, internal roads, and rainwater harvesting systems in the districts of Mullaitivu, Mannar, Killinochchi and Batticaloa through a participatory process of construction.



12 participants, including 8 skilled workers and 4 CBO members from Palaikkuli, Karadikkuli, Saveriyarpuram and Koolankulam GN Divisions in Mannar visited housing and infrastructure projects in Killinochchi and Mullaitivu including as preschools, community centres and model houses to observe innovative construction practices. At these project sites, the opportunity was given to exchange experiences with local skilled artisans, engineers and CBO members on construction techniques and management practices.

The training programme enhanced the participants' knowledge through exposure to good practices and construction techniques adopted in housing and infrastructure projects in Mullaitivu and Killinochchi districts, where infrastructure activities are in progress with funding from several donors.

Discussing the field visit, Mr.M.S.Nysar, CBO member from Karadikkuly, said “Since we resettled in our village, we have started implementing projects with funding from several organisations. However, we didn't get an opportunity for practical training. This is the first time I have been exposed to such new and innovative ideas on cost-effective construction techniques”.

Mr. I.Vickneswaran a skilled mason from Mannar district stated “This is a good opportunity to observe different types of houses and infrastructure and learn new technologies. By observing these aspects in the field, we have learnt that valuable time can be saved by using the techniques such as fair-faced block work”.

At the end of the field visit, a set of tools to replicate fair-faced masonry work was provided to the CBOs. It is expected that the participants will adopt the newly identified techniques in their respective project locations in Mannar. In July 2014, a follow-up training programme will be conducted by UN-Habitat in Mannar district to train additional artisans and CBO members.