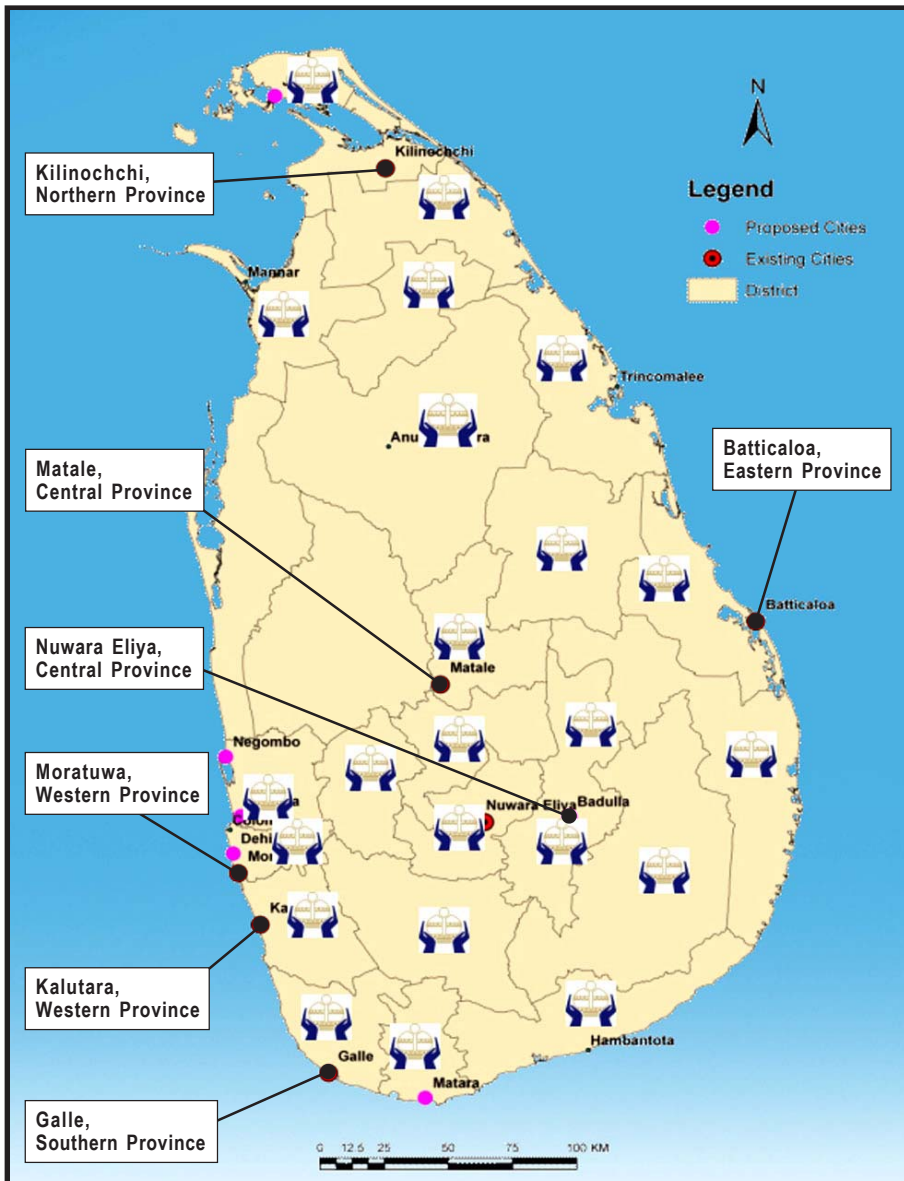


# SRI LANKA

## ACCA CITIES IN SRI LANKA



(From the presentation by Nandasiri Gamage, from the Women's Co-op, at the ACHR regional meeting in Bangkok)

The ACCA projects in Sri Lanka are being implemented by a country-wide network of women's savings groups (Women's Co-op), in close partnership with the NGO Sevanatha. They have used the ACCA resources to help create, test and standardize a city-wide slum upgrading procedure, which they call the Urban Settlement Upgrading Program (USUP), and which they are now replicating in all the ACCA cities. This USUP process has several clear steps, including surveying and mapping the city's slums, identifying potential vacant land, presenting the survey data to the municipality for approval, setting up savings groups, establishing a joint city development committee (usually chaired by the mayor), preparing city-wide upgrading action plans and then implementing actual upgrading and housing projects, as per the action plan.

Because Women's Co-op has 70,000 members, in 22 of the country's 25 districts, with collective savings of some US\$ 14 million, this is an organization with the scale and clout to make this kind of community-driven and city-wide slum upgrading into a national process! The ACCA Program, in turn, has helped Women's Co-op to add the elements of housing, land tenure and settlement upgrading into their already very large and sophisticated programs for saving, livelihood, welfare, health, culture, disaster relief and skills training.

The funds from ACCA all go first to CLAF-Net, a national fund which was set up after the tsunami, with ACHR support, and is jointly managed by Sevanatha, Women's Co-op and several other groups. The funds are then passed to the city-level CDFs, which are managed by the local branches of the Women's Co-op, which then give the loans for housing (in big ACCA projects) and grants for small upgrading projects, according to the city's upgrading action plan. There have already been some striking breakthroughs as a result of this ACCA-supported process. In the city of Moratuwa, for example, 488 households in 8 poor settlements have been given freehold titles to their land.

(Rupa Manel, Women's Co-op national leader, adds) ACCA has helped us to reach out to new cities and into war-torn areas where we could never go before. More than 7,000 families have become part of our women's savings movement. Because of ACCA, we have stronger social recognition, stronger strength to bargain. We have made many more good links with local governments in the ACCA cities. The ACCA program has also helped us to build trust and good leadership among our members.

(Ranjith from Sevanatha adds) ACCA has helped us to broaden our NGO's approach from focusing on individual projects to thinking more city-wide. All city surveys and mapping are now done by communities, and the city accepts their figures and makes their data the city's official data. Then the prioritizing of which settlements to upgrade is done by the people, who now have a more city-wide understanding and city-wide networks.

## ACCA in SRI LANKA :

### ACCA projects in 7 cities :

- Moratuwa
- Galle
- Kalutara
- Nuwara Eliya
- Matale
- Batticaloa
- Kilinochchi

36 small projects approved (5 finished, 19 in process and 12 not started yet)

7 big projects approved (all fully completed)

All the ACCA projects are being implemented by the Women's Co-op, in collaboration with Sevanatha and CLAF-net fund.



# SRI LANKA

## A WORKING PARTNERSHIP BORN AFTER THE 2004 TSUNAMI

### ACCA in SRI LANKA

#### PROJECT CITIES (total 7)

#### SMALL PROJECTS

Small projects approved : 36  
In number of cities : 8  
Total budget approved : \$115,000

#### BIG PROJECTS

Big projects approved : 7  
In number of cities : 7  
Total budget approved : \$280,000

#### OTHER BUDGET

City process support : \$21,000  
Nat. process support : \$17,500

#### IMPLEMENTING GROUPS

The ACCA projects in Sri Lanka so far are all being implemented by two organizations working in partnership:

- **Women's Co-op**, a national network of women's savings groups working in 22 out of the country's 25 districts, with 70,000 members.
- **Sevanatha** (a local NGO)

### A quibble about INTEREST RATES ...

Women's Bank members pay 24% annual interest on loans of any sort. To many, that may seem high, but WB is proud of their system in which no savings is ever deposited in a commercial bank - it's all constantly revolving in loans to members, and that 24% interest a member pays goes back into her branch's loan pool, where it brings benefit to other members. After the tsunami, they agreed to lower the rate to 18%, but only for housing loans, which had suddenly become an important need. Many outsiders still protested, "18% interest is too high for the poor!"

But they argue that in a country which has virtually no housing loans for the urban poor at all, they give only small, incremental housing loans, not big ones, and that many use these loans to add rental rooms which help repay the loans. Plus repayment is very good and the 18% interest has allowed them to more than triple their housing loan funds in tsunami-affected branches over the past few years.

The ACCA process in Sri Lanka has so far begun in three small cities, and is being implemented by a working team comprising Women's Bank (now called "Women's Co-Op" which organizes the settlements and starts savings), the Colombo-based NGO Sevanatha (which provides technical support for the surveying and housing process) and the Clap-net Fund (Community Livelihood Action Program Network, a revolving loan fund for housing and livelihood that was established after the tsunami, with seed capital from ACHR and collaboration with WB and other savings groups). Since the 2004 tsunami, these three organizations have been working very closely together to support community driven housing, livelihood and upgrading projects in areas all over Sri Lanka - first focusing on tsunami-affected areas, but now expanding to inland cities and areas affected by the long civil war that just ended. In the three cities so far, the team is working with the local municipal councils, as well as several national government agencies and land-owning bodies.

In the cities where they work together, the Women's Bank, Sevanatha and Clap-net have now established a clear methodology, and the focus from the very beginning is *city-wide*. They begin by introducing the ACCA program to the key local stakeholders and local and national government organizations. WB initiates savings in as many settlements as possible right away, and a joint process to survey and map all the communities begins with the community members. When a city-wide slum profile is prepared, the communities and supporters present it to the mayor and council members. This information is used to help jointly select some pilot communities for small upgrading and big housing projects to be supported by ACCA and Clap-net, and Sevanatha and WB then conduct "Action Planning workshops" individually in those selected communities to plan the projects. In Sri Lanka, many of the secondary towns and cities are really quite small, and the number of poor settlements is few, and the whole city's problems are really quite solvable.

## THE STRENGTH OF 70,000 MEMBERS AND \$100 MILLION SAVINGS :

Women's Bank, which celebrated its 20th anniversary last year, is a national network of women's savings groups which solve their various problems of land, housing, health, livelihood and welfare through their collective savings groups, and through a "bottom-up" process that is managed entirely by poor community women. With 70,000 members and collective savings of over US\$ 100 million, they have developed a variety of programs and special revolving loan funds for health care, education and housing. As Rupa Manel, WB's president tells anyone who asks, *"All this money comes from poor people, is managed by poor people and belongs to poor people."*

Over the past few years, WB has been focusing especially on the tsunami recovery process, and has expanded its membership enormously by reaching out and helping tsunami-affected communities to organize themselves, rebuild their houses and deal with their rehabilitation needs through a community-driven process rooted in collective savings. In this work, Women's Bank has worked closely with the new Clap-net Fund, and has become one of its most important partners in helping to bring their community organization through savings process to large numbers of tsunami-affected communities.

Initially, it was the Women's Bank's idea was to use the \$40,000 big project funds from ACCA to add capital to their already-existing housing loan funds in each city, and then let Women's Bank members in various communities borrow individually from this fund for their house repairs. But the ACCA intervention in Sri Lanka has been pushing them to think beyond their member-based approach and to use this opportunity look at the needs of the *whole city* and to try to find ways to solve the housing problems on a city-wide scale - not just for Women's Bank members. This is the group, after all, which has the scale and the capability and respect from all the key institutions to actually do that.

## HOW THE ACCA MONEY WORKS :

The funds from ACCA go first to the Clap-net Fund, and the Clap-net steering committee decides how to allocate the money. In the ACCA project, it is automatically allocated to the proposed communities. Then the money is released to the particular branch of Women's Bank where the projects are to be implemented (a "branch" is a collection of 10-15 savings groups). Each savings group branch opens a special account for housing loans. The ACCA project funds go from the Clap-net fund into this account, and through this account, they release the loans to members. The borrowers in each project community have to follow all the usual WB borrowing and repayment procedures, and pay the usual interest rates. The WB head office visits twice a month, and the national housing committee gives training for house planning and construction frequently. For housing loans, the WB has reduced their standard interest rate to 18% per year (see box at left). Before giving anybody housing loans, the WB first gives livelihood loans, to help the family initiate some new business and improve their earning, so they can repay their housing loan well. When the loans are repaid, all the principal and interest stays in that branch - it doesn't go to the center. The idea is that eventually, all the branches in each city will establish a city-level fund

This same fund management structure was developed after the tsunami by Clap-Net and Women's Bank and is already in operation all over the country. So the preparation of loan applications, procedures, monitoring systems and interest rates have already been discussed and worked out. The new innovation with this ACCA project has been the city-level fund. Normally, in the Women's Bank system, each branch functions independently, but as the focus has moved to a more comprehensive city-wide upgrading, all the small WB groups (branches) in the ACCA cities are being linked together into this new city-level fund. So each city will be a *"Women's Bank City."* The plan is to start the projects with the money from ACCA and from the community members, and use that money to negotiate for additional funds from the Municipal Council for infrastructure.



## WOMEN'S CO-OP "INFORMATION UNIT"



In July 2010, Nandasiri Gamage, who is the senior advisor of Women's Bank, sent a proposal to ACCA asking for small project support of \$10,000 to help set up a Women's Co-op "Information Unit", which he describes as being a timely need of the organization. The Women's Co-op has already purchased a building that is close to the Women's Bank Headquarters in Colombo, and the funds requested from ACCA (and subsequently approved) were used to cover the purchase of cupboards, tables, chairs, computers, office equipment and stationary for the new center.

**The Women's Bank has a system of setting up different "councils"** to take care of various development subjects that relate to the lives of the poor rural and urban women who are members. So they have set up councils on housing, health, training and education, entrepreneurship, disaster management, agriculture, culture, child care, and welfare. All these councils are managed and staffed by Women's Bank members, funded by Women's Bank savings and all of them work at national level on their various development subjects.

**Most of the work of these councils is in implementing a lot of actual programs on the ground, in the communities, but there is also a need for a lot of data collection and management of information about their various development issues, to gather and disseminate to WB branches.** That's why the WB is proposing for help to set up this "Information Unit", which will provide that space to these different councils. Two women from each council will work full time at this center.



## A NOTE ABOUT INTEREST RATES



### QUESTION : Is 18% interest too high for housing loans to the poor?

*During the Surabaya ACCA Committee meeting, in October 2009, Lajana protested the Women's Co-Op's policy of charging 18% interest for housing loans was too high for the poor. Rupa's response :*

**This is the first time the WB has reduced their interest rate!** Normally, we charge 2% per month (24% annually) on loans of any sort. We feel the 18% is reasonable for housing loans. Also, women who have been members for more than 10 years can get a subsidy on loans they take, where they pay only 20% annual interest. Why are we so strong on this? We never deposit any of our savings in any commercial banks - if you save some money today, that same money goes in a loan to another member - the money is all circulating within the circle of WB membership. If this member pays 24% interest, the benefit goes to another member, and some day the same benefit will come to everyone.

**We give only small, incremental housing loans :** Also, we usually give only small loans which enable people to build or improve their houses only incrementally - we don't give big loans to pay for building a full house! Then, when a member pays back the first loan, she can apply to get another slightly larger loan. She might use the first loan to build the foundation, and the next loan to build the columns and roof, and the next to fill in the walls. This system was not started with the ACCA program, but after the tsunami, when WB received a grant from ACHR, which went as seed capital for the revolving funds of the various branches. Over the last few years, these branches in tsunami-affected areas have accumulated a large amount of money, as the housing and livelihood loans - with interest - have been repaid. In this way, the original ACHR grant of 12 million Rupees (\$105,000) has now gone up to about 40 million Rupees (\$350,000) - all of this money in individual branches.

In Sri Lanka, there are no housing loans for the urban poor at all! The Housing Authority has collapsed and has no program. That is why the WB is willing to give loans for housing to members. Plus, many of the poor are building their houses not only for living, but for production or for rent. Many rent out a room in their house - in Rupa's settlement, there is a huge demand for decent, inexpensive rental rooms in upgraded settlements, and many families build on an extra room to rent out for 10,000 Rupees (\$87) a month, and this rent helps repay the housing loans. Nuwara Eliya is a tourist destination, and many of the families taking ACCA loans, are planning to improve their houses and bathrooms to have rent-paying guests.

**In Nepal, we also started with very high interest rates** (Lajana adds) : When the women's community savings cooperatives started, they also charged very high interest rates - about 25% annually. But later on, in the last ten years, they have reduced the interest - different rates for different loan purposes. For housing loans, the cooperatives now charge 10% or 12%. And for the ACCA Program, we have persuaded the cooperatives to reduce their interest rate on housing to just 5%, and they have agreed. In the Kirtipur housing project in Kathmandu - our first community driven housing relocation project - they also pay only 5% for their housing loans. And in the big project at Salyani, in Bharatpur, the 5% interest is partially used to pay for the logistics cost of the cooperative and community federation - which jointly manage the loan process.

**"ACCA has persuaded us to lower our interest rates for housing loans and to relax our requirements so that women can get housing loans very soon after joining savings groups!"** (Rupa, speaking at the ACHR regional meeting in Bangkok, in January 2011)



# CITY: MORATUWA

## Western Province, Sri Lanka

**THE TSUNAMI IN MORATUWA :** The southwestern coastal city of Moratuwa (population 177,190), Sri Lanka's third largest city, was one of the most severely battered by the December 2004 Asian tsunami. Six informal settlements along the city's coastline were almost completely obliterated by the waves, leaving hundreds dead and 3,000 families (mostly poor fisher folk) scattered in distant relief camps, without homes, belongings, boats or jobs - and most without any land ownership papers. Moratuwa quickly became a focal point for the relief work and longer-term livelihood revival and housing rehabilitation assistance of Sri Lanka's two large women's savings federations: Women's Bank and the Women's Development Bank Federation, both of which continue to work with poor communities in Moratuwa (but separately!).

**USING THE TSUNAMI TO BOOST WOMEN'S CO-OP SAVINGS :** The Women's Bank has been active in Moratuwa for since 2004. After rallying their members to provide emergency relief assistance in the immediate aftermath of the tsunami in Moratuwa, Women's Bank began setting up savings groups and channeling support to tsunami-affected households through loans for self-employment, house repair and rebuilding, fishing equipment and other purposes, to help people get back on their feet. The savings process has since expanded to many other non-tsunami-affected communities in Moratuwa. There are now 66 Women's Bank savings groups, with 1,400 members, in 9 branches, in Moratuwa.

**SLUMS IN MORATUWA :** Sevanatha's survey data (which is based on the Moratuwa Municipal Council's existing data on low-income settlements) counts 90 slum communities in Moratuwa, with 4,441 households (16,104 people). About a third of these settlements are squatting on government land, a third are squatting on private land, and a third are on land they own themselves. Many are facing the immediate danger of eviction. Many of these settlements lack water supply, electricity, paved roads and drainage.

**CITY PROCESS :** No city-wide slum survey or mapping has yet been carried out in Moratuwa - these figures are based on information Sevanatha got from the Municipal Council. The ACCA funds will all be managed through the CLAF-Net Fund, because most of city process will be carried out before the City Development Fund is actually established. However all activities in city process will be monitored through City Development Committee (which comprises representatives from the communities, the network, the local government, NGOs and other local development actors, and chaired by the Mayor of Moratuwa). The committee will act as the Platform of the project decision making, monitoring and coordinating overall project, and resource sharing for the city development purposes.

**ACCA IN MORATUWA :** The ACCA project involves a collaboration between the following partners :

- **Women's Bank** (now called "Women's Co-Op") (which will organize the communities, help set up and strengthen the savings groups and help implement the projects)
- **The Moratuwa Municipal Council** (which will assist in legal and land tenure matters)
- **City Development Committee** (which will coordinate and monitor the project)
- **Community savings groups** (which will organize themselves and implement the projects)
- **Sevanatha** (The NGO will provide technical support to the communities and the project activities)

### BIG PROJECT NOW COMPLETE : On-site upgrading of the Bodhiya Kumbura Community (65 households), on land which already belongs to the community members.



All 65 households in this community own their land. Most houses were of a temporary quality, located in low-lying areas. So people needed both technical and financial support to raise the foundations of their houses. WB had already formed five savings groups in Bodhiya Kumbura. The selection of this project was made in a meeting held in the Moratuwa Municipal Council, with the participation of Mayor, the Commissioner, Sevanatha, Women's Bank and community representatives. As in the other ACCA cities in Sri Lanka, this

settlement was chosen for ACCA-supported upgrading because it already has secure land tenure, making it ready for implementing right away. However, the hope is that the project will help other communities to secure land tenure and good houses in the long term. CLAF-Net has already decided to provide small loans to people in Porupana to pay deed fees to the government to obtain their title deeds. Under this program nearly 900 families will receive deeds from the government.

**The \$40,000 ACCA funds were used to provide housing loans to 65 households :** The \$40,000 ACCA budget was used to provide housing loans to all the community members, repayable in monthly repayments of \$50, for 3 years, at 8%, through the CLAF-Net Fund. Construction was partly collective and partly individual. Community members contributed \$32,500 to the project, and \$750 from the gov.

**SMALL PROJECTS :** As in the other ACCA cities, the small projects were prioritized and chosen on a preliminary basis, based on existing data on low income settlements in the Moratuwa Municipal Council. After the five projects were chosen, there was a city consultation meeting to assess the selected communities' needs and to gauge their support for the projects. According to settlements survey, 10 communities need assistance for implementation of small projects. However, project team has identified 5 communities with members of WB in Moratuwa for ACCA support.

- **Pochchi Watta. Toilets (35 households benefit)** \$3,000 from ACCA (*not started yet*)
- **Idal Watta. Drainage improvements (60 households benefit)** Budget: \$3,000 from ACCA. (*not started yet*)
- **Kudupuravapu Watta. Walkway improvement (30 households benefit)** Budget: \$3,000 from ACCA. (*not started yet*)
- **Nagrasaba Idama. Drainage improvement (24 households benefit)** Budget: \$3,000 from ACCA. (*not started yet*)
- **Mura Watta. Walkway improvement (52 households benefit)** Budget: \$3,000 from ACCA. (*not started yet*)

**The OTHER women's savings movement in Moratuwa :** The Women's Development Bank Federation, another savings-based women's movement, has also been active in Moratuwa, since long before the tsunami. In 2008, WDBF savings groups were in 32 slums in Moratuwa, and the federation has implemented several important housing projects in the city, in collaboration with the Municipality, the Ministry of Urban Development, UN-Habitat's Slum Upgrading Facility and SDI. (1) Temporary house construction in the tsunami-hit coastal Jayagathapura community (70 houses) (2) Land-sharing project in the Usaviwatta community (56 units in a 4-story block) (3) On-site upgrading in the Dandeniyawatta Community (230 households), (4) On-site upgrading in the Babatuwapara Community (22 households).

## CITY INFORMATION :

### URBAN POVERTY IN MORATUWA

Total urban population	200,000 people
Urban poor population	4,441 households (16,104 people)
Number of slums	90 communities
% population in slums	8 %
City-wide slum survey	Not yet

### SAVINGS (as of December 2010)

Date savings started	2006
Savings groups	137 groups (in 17 communities)
Savings members	1,388 members
Total savings	US\$ 408,000
City fund started	August 2010

### ACCA BUDGET APPROVED (in Nov 2010)

Small projects (5)	\$ 15,000
Big project	\$ 40,000
City process support	\$ 3,000



# CITY: GALLE

## Southern Province, Sri Lanka

The lovely historic port city of Galle (population 108,407), on Sri Lanka's southwestern coast, was one of the many coastal cities in Sri Lanka that was badly hit by the December 2004 Asian tsunami. Though Galle's magnificent forts and colonial buildings (declared by UNESCO a World Heritage Site) were mostly spared, the city's coastal neighborhoods and fishing communities were devastated. Nearly 3,000 people died, 14,000 houses and several hundred boats were destroyed, and more than half of the city's population was affected.

**HELP-O :** Human and Environmental Links Progressive Organization (Help-O) is a small NGO (which has recently turned itself into a "people's company") which has been working in Galle since 1993 on issues of community development (especially savings and credit) and urban environmental issues. In recent years, Help-O has worked to get local communities actively involved in developing plans to conserve environmentally sensitive areas of the city, especially the coastal greenbelt zones. After the tsunami, besides helping deliver emergency relief materials to poor communities, Help-O has worked with donors to organize cash-for-work schemes, collect data on tsunami-affected communities, and help some tsunami-affected households to get land and build new houses, with support from ACHR and the new CLAF-Net fund. The proposed ACCA project in Galle will target the city's 43 slum communities (6,969 people) - some tsunami-affected and some not

**ACCA IN GALLE :** The ACCA project in Galle will involve a collaboration between the following partners :

- **Help-O** (Community organizing and support for project implementation)
- **Galle Municipal Council** (Assist in legal and land tenure matters)
- **City Development Committee** (Coordinating and monitoring the project)
- **Communities and their savings groups** (organize communities and implement projects)
- **Sevanatha NGO** (Technical support for poor communities and for project activities)

**CITY PROCESS :** The ACCA funds will all be managed through the CLAP-Net Fund, because most of city process will be carried out before the City Development Fund is actually established. However all activities in city process will be monitored through City Development Committee (which comprises representatives from the communities, the network, the local government, NGOs and other local development actors, and chaired by the Mayor of Galle). The committee will act as the Platform of the Project decision making, monitoring and coordinating overall project, and resource sharing for the city development purposes.

### BIG PROJECT : On-site upgrading of the Bandaranayake Place Community, in Thalapatiya (85 Households), where people already own the land with individual land title.

The decision to select this community as the ACCA Big Project was made in a meeting held in the Galle Municipal Council, with the participation of the Mayor, the Municipal Commissioner, Sevanatha, Help-O and community representatives. The selection of this particular settlement for the ACCA big project, among other needy settlements, was based on the fact that this community has fairly secure land tenure already, which was considered an important first condition for the implementation of project in the short term. However, the ACCA project has been planned to assist other communities which do NOT have secure land tenure and good houses in the longer term.

- **Housing loans to build 40 new houses :** The \$40,000 ACCA funds will be used to give housing loans to the first batch of 40 households, to construct new, single-story detached houses with 40m<sup>2</sup> area @ \$1,000 loan per family. The construction will be partly collective and partly individual. The local government will contribute \$7,500 for the infrastructure development, and the community members will contribute \$2,000 to the project.
- **No details were given about the loans or the finance or fund mechanism.**

**BIG PROJECT CHANGE :** Sevanatha's second year ACCA update reported that the big project in Galle had changed. The big project was actually implemented in two communities :

- **Bombey Kasal Watta (22 + 40 households)** a relocation site where the land was provided the government (or people purchased it themselves?) 22 households got ACCA housing loans.
  - \$40,000 from ACCA
  - \$23,500 from the community
  - \$750 from the government
- **47 Watta (25 + 45 households)** a relocation site where the land was provided the government (or people purchased it themselves?) 25 households got ACCA housing loans.
  - Project is 100% completed now, with 47 direct and 85 indirect beneficiary households.



**SMALL PROJECTS :** These projects have all been identified only in a preliminary way, according to existing data on low income settlements in Galle. After the prioritization there was a city consultation meeting to assess the selected community's needs and support on the projects. However these priorities and community projects may change with the completion of the community mapping and survey.

- **Samagi Watta. Drains improvement (250 households benefit)** Budget: \$3,000 from ACCA + 225 from community + 450 from government = total \$3,675 (*in process*)
- **Walau Watta. Community center (14 households benefit)** Budget: \$3,000 from ACCA + 675 from community + 900 from government = total \$4,575 (*in process*)
- **47 Watta. Drainage improvements (25 households benefit)** Budget: \$3,000 from ACCA + 450 from community + 900 from government = total \$4,350 (*in process*)
- **Marogoda. Drainage improvement (15 households benefit)** Budget: \$3,000 from ACCA + 225 from community + 450 from government = total \$3,675 (*in process*)
- **Bombey Kasal Watta. Drainage improvement (20 households benefit)** Budget: \$3,000 from ACCA + 1,300 from community + 2,701 from government + 2,251 from other = total \$9,302 (*in process*)

## CITY INFORMATION :

### URBAN POVERTY IN GALLE

Total urban population	110,000 people
Urban poor population	2,015 households (6,969 people)
Number of slums	43 settlements
% population in slums	6 %
City-wide slum survey	March 2010

### SAVINGS (as of December 2010)

Date savings started	June 2009
Savings groups	103 groups
Savings members	962 members
Total savings	US\$ 48,912
City fund started	June 2009

### ACCA BUDGET APPROVED (in July 2010)

Small projects (5)	\$ 15,000
Big project	\$ 40,000
City process support	\$ 3,000

# CITY: KALUTARA

## Western Province, Sri Lanka

Kalutara is a small town on the south-western coast of Sri Lanka, about half-way between Colombo and Galle. The town is the administrative, commercial and transport center of Kalutara District, and an important destination for migrants from inland districts, who come to Kalutara for jobs, education, health care and administrative work. Kalutara was badly affected by 2004 Asian tsunami, when hundreds of people living in poor fishing settlements near the sea were killed and all their houses and fishing boats were destroyed.

**SLUMS IN KALUTARA :** Most of the poor families who had been living in settlements close to the sea have gotten new houses and infrastructure through tsunami reconstruction projects implemented by donors over the past few years. But there are still about 15 informal settlements in other parts of the town, most on government land, but a few on uncertain or private land. Although these communities have lived on the land for at least ten years, they have no basic infrastructure or land tenure security, and conditions in most are pretty squalid.

**CITY PROCESS :** As in the other two ACCA cities in Sri Lanka so far, the project in Kalutara is being implemented by Women's Bank, which organizes the communities, sets up savings groups and develops the projects. The Colombo-based NGO Sevanatha provides technical support for the communities and for project activities, and the Kalutara Urban Council assists in legal and land tenure matters. A City Development Committee has been set up, to coordinate and monitor the project, comprising representatives of all 15 poor communities, Woman's Bank, Sevanatha, the Kalutara Urban Council and other local government units.

**SURVEY AND MAPPING :** After the ACCA project in Kalutara began in October 2009, Women's Bank members carried out a detailed settlement survey and community mapping, with technical support from Sevanatha and the Municipal Council. As in Nuwara Eliya, the survey collected information about poverty, problems, needs, infrastructure and land ownership, and this information was used to analyze each settlement and give it a "score." Using this "scoring" system, the poorest settlements in the city were prioritized for support from ACCA. The survey found that of the 203 poor households in 15 settlements, 63% lived on government land, 34% had no access roads, 58% had problems accessing common toilets, 25% had no water supply in their settlements, and 47% lived in houses built of flimsy materials like tin sheets and thatch.

**100% SAVINGS IN KALUTARA :** Before the Women's Bank's support to the savings process began in September 2009, there were no savings groups at all in Kalutara. There are now savings groups in all 15 communities in the town, with 269 members, 30 groups and collective savings of 41,265 Rupees (\$412).

**SMALL PROJECTS :** Several settlements in the city have been identified for the first round of ACCA small project support - all given as grants to the communities (through the Clap-Net Fund), and all managed through the "Community Contract" system, with as many community members participating in the work as possible. The projects, which are still in the planning stage, will all cost about \$4,300, which includes \$3,000 from ACCA, \$300 from the communities and \$1,000 from the local authority.

- **Bosiripura (87 households) Community center.** \$3,000 from ACCA. (still in process)
- **Line-houses North (25 households) Toilets.** \$3,000 from ACCA. (still in process)
- **Kaleel Place (300 households) Toilets.** \$3,000 from ACCA. (still in process)
- **Bothuwa Watta (140 households) Drains through the community.** \$3,000 from ACCA. (in process)
- **Kaluganvila (15 households) Drains along the main walkway.** \$3,000 from ACCA. (still in process)



**ANOTHER LAND BREAKTHROUGH :** Since the ACCA intervention began in Kalutara, another 14 families in one of the small project communities, Kaluganvila, have received free public land for housing. Land reblocking and plot allocation have already been done by municipality, and designs for new house construction and infrastructure improvements are now being planned. Support for financing this project has already been negotiated with Homeless International.

## CITY INFORMATION :

### URBAN POVERTY IN KALUTARA

Total urban population	10,700 households (37,451 people)
Urban poor population	203 households (720 people)
Number of slums	15 communities
% population in slums	2 %
City-wide slum survey	October 2009

### SAVINGS (as of December 2010)

Date savings started	September 2009
Savings groups	30 groups
Savings members	293 members
Total savings	US\$ 2,600
City fund started	August 2010

### ACCA BUDGET APPROVED (in July 2009)

Small projects (5)	\$ 15,000
Big project	\$ 40,000
City process support	\$ 3,000

### BIG PROJECT : On-site upgrading of the Bothuwa Watta Community (40 households), on land which has been provided free by the Kalutara Municipal Council.



This is Kalutara's largest slum, which occupies a piece of municipal land. The community was jointly chosen to be the city's ACCA pilot housing project in a meeting at the Kalutara Municipal Council, which included municipal officials, Sevanatha, Woman's Bank and community representatives. The municipal land the people have occupied for years will be allocated to them free by the government, on an individual basis. All 40 houses in the settlement will be rebuilt on the same site. The 40 square meter houses will be financed with loans up to a ceiling of US\$2,000 per unit, but many will cost much less

than that. The loan amount will vary a little according to people's needs and affordability, but all loans will come from the Clap-Net Fund, and be repaid within five years into the new Kalutara City Fund. The house construction will be partly collective and partly individual. \$15,000 of the ACCA budget will be topped up by \$750 from the community and \$1,500 from the Municipal Council for improving the infrastructure.

**BIG PROJECT CHANGE :** Sevanatha's second year ACCA update reported that the big project in Kalutara had changed. The big project was actually implemented in the Guwanpura Community (15 + 40 households), a relocation site where the people bought the private land themselves (still with unclear tenure).

- \$40,000 from ACCA
- \$7,500 from the community (15 households)
- \$500 from the government
- \$48,655 from UN-Habitat or Homeless International (??)
- Project is 100% completed now, with 15 direct beneficiary households, and another 40 households in the community indirectly benefiting.



# CITY: NUWARA ELIYA

Central Province, Sri Lanka

**SRI LANKA'S "LITTLE ENGLAND"** The small city of Nuwara Eliya (pronounced "noo-REL-ya"), in the central highlands of Sri Lanka, has a long and interesting history. In the Ramayana story, after he abducted Sita (Lord Shiva's wife), King Rawana is supposed to have hidden her in a place very close to Nuwara Eliya. During the British colonial period, in the early 19th Century, the city became a popular holiday place for English people weary of the coastal heat and humidity. The town's high altitude and cool weather made perfect conditions for growing tea, and the British brought in hundreds of poor Tamil workers from south India to labor in the lush green tea estates they established on the rolling hills around Nuwara Eliya. The descendents of these tea workers still make up a large part of the city's population, and especially the poor.



**SLUMS IN NUWARA ELIYA :** Most of the town's poor live in 32 slum and squatter settlements (2,061 families), without land tenure and in extremely bad conditions, without toilets, water supply, drainage or electricity, many located on steeply-sloping hillsides. Some of these settlements are run-down housing "estates" and "line houses" built originally to house the tea plantation workers, and some are more recent squatter settlements. The Women's Bank (a national movement of women's savings groups with 70,000 members around Sri Lanka) had already helped to start savings groups in some of the town's poor settlements. The ACCA process in Nuwara Eliya is building on this Women's Bank process, which works as a kind of guarantee that the process will be sustained in the long term.

**CITY-WIDE SLUM SURVEY :** The ACCA project here is being implemented by Women's Bank, in partnership with the Nuwara Eliya Municipal Council, with the NGO Sevanatha providing support. The process began in January 2009 with a settlement mapping and profiling that was conducted by Sevanatha, which designed the survey and trained municipal staff and community leaders to help carry out the survey, with the assistance of Women's Bank. The survey collected information in all of the town's slums about poverty, problems, needs, infrastructure and land ownership, and this information was used to analyze each settlement and give it a "score." Using this "scoring" system, the poorest settlements in the city were prioritized.

**EXPANDING SAVINGS GROUPS :** After the survey, the next step was to set up savings groups in all the settlements identified in the survey. The Women's Bank had set up a few savings groups in Nuwara Eliya before the ACCA project began, and the survey gave a big boost to the city's savings process. Since January 2009, more than 40 savings groups have been set up around Nuwara Eliya, and membership is growing fast.

**BUILDING NEW PARTNERSHIPS :** Before the ACCA project, the Women's Bank had been working in Nuwara Eliya, but only in a few settlements, without any relationship with the municipal council, and without any work on land or housing issues. There is now a common purpose. The Municipal Commissioner is very supportive, and Municipal Council staff understand the benefit of the Women's Bank savings process and often go with WB leaders to help start new savings groups in new areas. A joint city development committee has been established to oversee the ACCA process, comprising community leaders, government and municipal council officials and Sevanatha, which meets monthly. Sevanatha presented the survey information to this committee, and through that process, the mayor and the Municipal commissioner are also involved now.



## CITY INFORMATION :

### URBAN POVERTY IN NUWARA ELIYA

Total urban population	7,137 households (35,081 people)
Urban poor population	2,061 households (8,145 people)
Number of slums	32 communities
% population in slums	23%
Latest survey conducted	January 2009

### SAVINGS (as of December 2010)

Date savings started	December 2008
Savings groups	65 groups
Savings members	716 members
Total savings	US\$ 125,137
City fund started	April 2009

### ACCA BUDGET APPROVED (in Feb 2009)

Small projects (5)	\$ 15,000
Big project	\$ 40,000
City process support	\$ 3,000



## SMALL PROJECTS : (Small project info updated from Sevanatha's Dec. 2010 report)

Several settlements in the city have been identified for the first round of ACCA small project support - all given as grants to the communities, to improve access roads, water supply and sanitation. As in several other countries, the Women's Bank is stretching the \$15,000 budget from ACCA to cover as many small projects as possible, and also using it to leverage more funds from the Municipal Council. Three of these projects are finished, and others are in the pipeline :

- 1 Nawagam Goda (153 households) Paved road and drains**, now finished. Total cost \$3,575 (which includes \$3,000 from ACCA + \$400 from the community + \$175 from the Municipality)
- 2 Kelegala Part 1 (12 households) Underground sewers**, now finished. Total cost \$3,230 (which includes \$3,000 from ACCA + \$180 from the community + \$50 and use of equipment and transport from the municipality)
- 3 Kelegala Part 2 (8 households) Underground sewers**, now finished. Total cost \$3,200 (which includes \$3,000 from ACCA + \$150 from the community + \$50 and use of equipment and transport from the municipality)
- 4 Mahinda Mawatta (32 households) Paved access road**, now finished. Total cost \$3,430 (which includes \$3,000 from ACCA + \$200 from the community + \$230 and equipment from the municipality)
- 5 Loverslip (175 households) Community center**, still in process. Total cost \$3,425 (which includes \$3,000 from ACCA + \$175 from the community + \$250 from the municipality)



## BIG PROJECT : Nawagam Goda (113 households) On-site upgrading in a community of poor municipal workers, on land provided free by the Municipal Council.

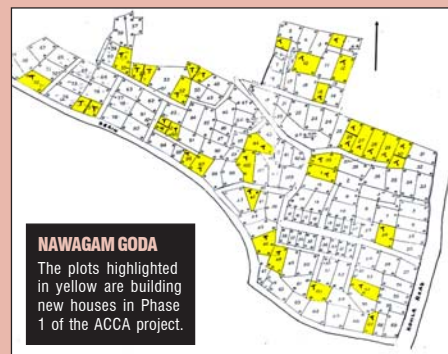


When the ACCA project began in Nuwara Eliya, the City Development Committee asked the Municipal Council to propose a settlement for upgrading which already had land tenure, to enable the first housing project to begin right away. The Municipal Council proposed the Nawagam Goda community. This large community originally provided land plots to 113 laborers working for the Public Works Department, who built their own shacks on that land. After retiring, these workers remained on the land, and many now supplement their incomes by growing vegetables for sale on their generous house plots. In 1999,

the National Housing Development Authority and the Municipal Council allocated this public land to the occupants, on an individual basis. But there was no support to build good houses or put in infrastructure, so the conditions are still quite bad, even though some families have improved their houses individually. The Women's Bank has already formed a savings group there, and more than half of the households are now members. The goal is eventually to get 100% savings membership in the settlement.

The city development committee has selected a target group of 39 poor households with the worst housing conditions (all WB members), scattered throughout the community, for the first batch of ACCA-supported house reconstruction loans. Many of the houses these people are constructing have been designed to include one or two rental rooms for tourists, which are already bringing in extra income to help the families make the loan repayments. At the same time, the whole settlement's infrastructure is also being improved collectively (especially lane paving, drainage and water supply), with leadership support from the WB and technical support from Sevanatha, in collaboration with the Municipal Council.

**LAND BREAKTHROUGHS IN TWO OTHER SETTLEMENTS :** Since the ACCA intervention began in Nawagam Goda, two other informal communities in Nuwara Eliya have been given the public land they now occupy by the Municipal Council, and are reblocking their settlements and upgrading their housing and infrastructure, with support from the Clapnet Fund, ACCA and the Municipal Council (17 households in Under Bank, and 26 households in Dowa).



## PROJECT Information :

### HOUSES:

Total # of households	113 families
Project Phase 1	39 families
Average housing loan	\$1,000 / family

### FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS:

From government	Provides land free \$14,000 (infrastructure)
From ACCA	\$40,000 (housing loans) \$3,000 (infrastructure grant)
From Community	\$20,000 (housing) \$1,500 (infrastructure) (in labor and cash)
From Clap-Net Fund	\$10,000 (housing loans)

**TENURE TERMS:** Individual land title



# CITY: MATALE

Central Province, Sri Lanka

There are about 708 poor families living in 39 mostly small settlements scattered around this small town, which is also in the beautiful central highlands of Sri Lanka, not far from Nuwara Eliya. The Women's Bank's has been supporting the setting up of women's community savings groups for several years in Matale, and there are already 39 savings groups (in 8 branches) with 558 members and collective savings of 213,000 Rupees (\$1,850), and collective loans given so far of 200,000 Rupees (\$1,750).

**SMALL PROJECTS:** Several settlements in the city have been identified for the first round of ACCA small project support - all given as grants to the communities (through the Claf-Net Fund), and all managed through the "Community Contract" system, with as many community members participating in the work as possible. The projects are now all underway.

- **MC Road (48 households) Water source improvement.** \$3,000 from ACCA + \$125 from the community + \$175 from the local government. (still in process)
- **Aluwihare (33 households) Drainage improvement.** \$3,000 from ACCA + \$100 from the community + \$125 from the local government. (still in process)
- **Agala Watta (36 households) Paved access road.** \$3,000 from ACCA + \$150 from the community + \$100 from the local government. (still in process)
- **Mandanda Watta (256 households) Wall around the site.** \$3,000 from ACCA + \$175 from the community + \$125 from the local government. (still in process)
- **Kalude Watta (21 households) Drainage improvement.** \$3,000 from ACCA + \$150 from the community + \$100 from the local government. (still in process)



## BIG PROJECT: Relocation of the 2nd Lane Kaludewala Community (55 households) to land which the people have purchased themselves, with individual land ownership.

As part of this community-driven relocation project, the families have built single-story "starter" detached houses, at a cost of about US\$ 2,000 per house. The community also contributed another US\$ 2,000 in cash per house. The construction was partly collective and partly individual. Under this project, the land ownership is individual "owner permits". The project is finished now. Project finance details:

- \$40,000 from ACCA (housing loans)
- \$27,500 from community members
- \$500 from the local government
- According to Sevanatha's Dec 2010 ACCA update report, this project is 100% finished.



## CITY INFORMATION:

### URBAN POVERTY IN MATALE

Total urban population	40,000 people
Urban poor population	525 households (2,474 people)
Number of slums	38 communities
% population in slums	6%
City-wide slum survey	February 2010

### SAVINGS (as of December 2010)

Date savings started	January 2010
Savings groups	15 groups (in 6 communities)
Savings members	138 members
Total savings	US\$ 5,000
City fund started	March 2010

### ACCA BUDGET APPROVED (in Feb 2010)

Small projects (5)	\$15,000
Big project	\$40,000
City process support	\$3,000

# CITY: BATTICALOA

## Eastern Province, Sri Lanka

Batticaloa is a small city of 86,618 people on the eastern coast of Sri Lanka, which has been on the front line of the country's just-ended civil war. Most people living in the city's poor communities are Tamils, and they have suffered from decades of ethnic violence and civil conflict. The city was also badly affected by the 2004 tsunami. Because most donor and government funded development projects are implemented around Colombo, little assistance has reached Batticaloa. Sevanatha has been working here under UN-Habitat supported projects. A January 2009 survey by the Eastern University of Sri Lanka found 25 poor settlements in the city - about half on government land and half on land the people own themselves. In most of these settlements, people have no house registration, with serious problems of water supply, drainage, toilets and access.

**SAVINGS:** Community-managed finance and savings are relatively new in Batticaloa (since the tsunami), but the Women's Bank has already set up savings groups in most of the communities in the city, with 2,404 active savings members already.

**CITY-WIDE ACCA PLANS:** The work will start with the preparation of land ownership map and land database for the Batticaloa urban area, to determine which communities can upgrade on site and which will have to relocate. With this data, negotiations will begin with various land owning institutions through the City Development Committee, to identify the owners willing to offer their land for communities - either on-site or for relocation. Women's Bank and Sevanatha will organize capacity-building workshops around issues of savings, finance management, livelihood and community upgrading. The city's mayor (a woman!) is very supportive.

**JOINT CITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE:** The project will be managed by a joint city development committee, which is already set up, and includes representatives from the Rural Development Societies (RDS), Women's Co-op, the Batticaloa Municipality, local community groups and Sevanatha. This committee will be the main mechanism to gather key stakeholders to discuss their priority problems, collaborate in a process of problem solving by contributing different types of resources. This Committee is chaired by the Mayor and decisions taken by the committee will be discussed in the Municipal Council for further assistance. This joint committee will hopefully become a platform to promote active community participation in the municipal decision-making process.

**WHO WILL DO WHAT IN THE ACCA PROJECT?** Women's CO-OP will organize the communities, start and strengthen their savings groups and implement the project. The Batticaloa Municipal Council will assist in legal and land tenure matters. The City Development Committee will coordinate and monitor the ACCA program. The Rural Development Societies (RDSs) will organize communities and support the project implementation. Sevanatha will provide technical support to the projects and monitor progress.

**CITY-LEVEL REVOLVING LOAN FUND:** All the ACCA funds in Batticaloa will be channeled through the Clap-net Fund, and all decisions about the funds will be made by the joint City Development Committee. A new city-level revolving loan fund will be established, under the Clap-net Fund, with the \$40,000 ACCA big project funds. All the community savings groups will be mobilized to contribute to this fund. Communities can then borrow collectively from this fund for land, housing and livelihood.

### BIG PROJECT: On-site upgrading of the Thiraimudu Community (520 households), on free municipal land that was originally provided to resettle tsunami-affected families.

The big project was decided upon in a meeting in the Batticaloa Municipality, with the mayor, the municipal commissioner, Sevanatha, Women's Bank and community representatives. Like the ACCA project in Nuwara Eliya, the big project community here was selected because it already had fairly secure land tenure, and this was seen as being a condition for implementing the project right away, without having to deal with the complications and delays of securing land first. The 520 families in Thiraimudu have land-use permits from the Municipal Council, which owns the land. The ACCA funds will be used to provide \$1,000 house building loans to a first batch of 40 families (WB savings members) in the community, to build new, 40m2 single-story detached houses (built incrementally). The total cost of the new houses will be \$2,500, and the \$1,500 balance will be paid for by the families. Sevanatha will provide technical and house design support.

- **Infrastructure:** One of the 5 small ACCA projects will be implemented in this same community, to support the construction of toilets in the new houses, and this will be the only investment in infrastructure in the project.
- **How the Housing loans will work:** The housing loans will be given in bulk from the national Clap-net fund to the Batticaloa City-level Development Fund (managed by Women's Bank), at 8% interest (repayment monthly), for a term of 2-5 years. The Batticaloa CDF will on-lend the money in bulk to the Women's Bank Branch at 12% (repayment monthly), which will then give the loans to members at 12.5% (repayment weekly). Only savings members are eligible for loans.

**SMALL PROJECTS:** The five small projects were identified, using the existing data (before survey or mapping) on low income settlements in Batticaloa to prioritize the most needy settlements. After the five communities were selected, a city consultation meeting was organized to assess the selected community's needs and determine their support for the projects. Other city stakeholders will be encouraged to join and support the infrastructure improvement in these poor settlements. Communities will be expected to contribute 10% of the project budgets through their labor, cash and materials.

- **Seththukudha** (49 households) Water supply. \$3,000 from ACCA. (not started yet)
- **Thiraimudu** (104 households) Toilets. \$3,000 from ACCA + \$567 from community + \$100 from gov. (in process)
- **Thimilaithivu** (22 households) Community center. \$3,000 from ACCA. (not started yet)
- **Punnacholai** (18 households) Toilets. \$3,000 from ACCA + \$675 from community + \$100 from gov. (in process)
- **Sinna Urani** (188 households) Water supply. \$3,000 from ACCA. (not started yet)

## CITY INFORMATION:

### URBAN POVERTY IN BATTICALOA

Total urban population	100,000 people
Urban poor population	1,729 households (7,600 people)
Number of slums	25 communities
% population in slums	8 %
City-wide slum survey	Jan 2009 (made by Eastern University of Sri Lanka)

### SAVINGS (as of December 2010)

Date savings started	July 2009
Savings groups	234 groups
Savings members	2,404 members
Total savings	US\$ 25,780
City fund started	December 2009

### ACCA BUDGET APPROVED (in April 2010)

Small projects (5)	\$ 15,000
Big project	\$ 40,000
City process support	\$ 3,000

**BIG PROJECT CHANGE:** Sevanatha's second year ACCA update reported that the big project in Batticaloa had changed. The big project was actually implemented in the Sinna Urani Community (121 + 290 households), a relocation site where the people bought the private land themselves.

- \$40,000 from ACCA
- \$60,500 from the community (121 households)
- \$1,500 from the government
- \$40,500 from UN-Habitat and HI (??)
- Project is completed now, with 121 direct beneficiary households, and another 299 households in the community indirectly benefiting.



# CITY: KILINCHCHI

## Northern Province, Sri Lanka

**THE WAR-RAVAGED TOWN OF KILINCHCHI**, which for two decades was at the epicenter of the country's long civil war, is a small town of about 50,000 people (mostly ethnic Tamils), in Kilinochchi District, in Sri Lanka's Northern Province, at the extreme northern tip of the country. For more than 15 years, the town was the headquarters of the LTTE (Tamil Tigers). During the last years of the war, fighting forced most people to flee the town and camp out in the surrounding jungles or make their way to refugee camps around the country. The area is still under military control, with no civil or elected administration.

**PEOPLE ARE NOW COMING BACK TO THEIR RUINED COMMUNITIES :** Since the war ended in January 2009, many of Kilinochchi's traumatized residents (30% of whom are war widows) have begun to move back into the ruins of their old communities or into new resettlement colonies that are being set up by the government. But in both new and old communities, conditions are very bad: no housing and no proper water supply, electricity, sanitation or drainage. About 60% of the towns residents (9,800 households) are living in these communities, of which about 5,600 households (57%) are on land they already own. These people have endured unspeakable hardships because of the war - losing family members and friends, their property, their livelihoods and their support structures as they've been displaced again and again. There are many land conflicts, as old owners are returning to find new people living on their land and in their old houses. Many areas in the town are also still being de-mined and are extremely dangerous.

**A NEW AREA FOR WOMEN'S CO-OP AND SEVANATHA :** In July 2010, the National Housing Development Authority (NHDA) asked Sevanatha to join a community workshop they organized to help build houses for returning families in Kilinochchi, and several of the communities asked for help to build much-needed toilets. Sevanatha and Women's Bank both feel that this is good an opportunity for both organizations to move into Sri Lanka's war-affected areas, where there are great needs now, to work with the people and build new linkages and areas of work - with support from ACCA.

**GOVERNMENT STILL SUSPICIOUS OF NGOS :** They fear some might be LTTE sympathizers, and there is still a screening process by a Presidential Task Force, to either allow or forbid groups from working in the area.

**CITY PROCESS SUPPORT :** The \$3,000 city process support budget from ACCA will be used in Kilinochchi for city-wide settlement mapping and land identification survey, organizing saving groups and monitoring progress, organizing meetings and workshops and exchange visits, doing detailed field surveys in communities chosen for pilot projects before granting loans. The funds will go through Clapnet and be managed by the joint city committee.

**SMALL PROJECTS :** The preliminary selection of the 10 small projects listed below was made based on government data on low income settlements in Kilinochchi. After prioritizing the most needy settlements, a city consultation meeting was held to assess the selected community's needs and support on the projects. The choice of communities for small projects may probably change, however, once the city-wide survey and mapping is finished. All the small projects will be implemented as "Community Contracts" to the communities, and will be managed jointly by the communities, Sevanatha and local authority.

- **Poonagar** (50 households) Toilet improvements. \$3,000 from ACCA. (in process)
- **Sivanagar** (50 households) Water supply. \$3,000 from ACCA. (not started yet)
- **Thiruvayaru West** (176 households) Drainage improvements. \$3,000 from ACCA. (not started yet)
- **Kaneshapuram** (215 households) Paved walkway. \$3,000 from ACCA. (not started yet)
- **Thondamannagar** (200 households) Toilet improvements. \$3,000 from ACCA. (not started yet)

### **BIG PROJECT : On-site upgrading of the Ponnagar Community (50 households), a government relocation site for war-displaced, who already own their own land plots.**

Ponnagar is a government relocation site for war refugees. As in the other ACCA cities in Sri Lanka so far, the decision to select this community as the ACCA pilot big project was made in a meeting held in the municipality (Pradeshiya Sabha) with the participation of Divisional Secretary and Special Commissioner of the P.S., Sevanatha, Sri Lanka Women's Bank and community representatives. And as in the other ACCA cities, the Silvanagar settlement was selected on the basis of its already having secure land tenure, which was felt to be a required condition for implementing a project quickly, in the short term.

**Each household will build a 550 sq. ft. detached, single-story house of 550 square feet (51m<sup>2</sup>),** which will cost \$2,000, of which \$1,000 will come as a loan from ACCA, through the Clapnet Fund (50 houses x \$1,000 = \$50,000), at 5 - 8% annual interest (loan terms not set yet with WB), managed by the Women's Bank branch. The houses will be built by each family, using either self-help or mutual-help, with construction being partly collective and partly individual. The NHA will also contribute some grant to the families for the housing, which will help cover the remaining \$1,000 cost of each house.



## CITY INFORMATION :

### URBAN POVERTY IN KILINCHCHI

Total urban population	150,000 people
Urban poor population	15,783 households (30,000 people)
Number of slums	42 communities
% population in slums	2 %
City-wide slum survey	Not yet

### SAVINGS (as of December 2010)

Date savings started	November 2010
Savings groups	5 groups
Savings members	50 members
Total savings	US\$ 8
City fund started	Not yet

### ACCA BUDGET APPROVED (in Sept 2010)

Small projects (5)	\$ 15,000
Big project	\$ 40,000
City process support	\$ 3,000

## **ACCA SELF ASSESSMENT**

### **by Women's Co-op members in two cities**

This report was prepared by Nandasiri Gamage, from the Women's Co-op  
April 11, 2011

#### **Remarks by Nandasiri on community-driven housing in Sri Lanka :**

Most valuable and fantastic people to assess the ACCA projects are the beneficiaries who own the projects and understand best their impact. Let us listen to their own words and try to understand the results that have been achieved by them.

In Sri Lanka, the process of building homes entirely by people themselves is an applicable and interesting process. Most government authorities, politicians and top-ranking officials, however, are conventional thinkers. And when it comes to building houses for the poor, most of them believe that should be their task, their duty and their form of merit-making. Then, these elite people sit on cool chairs and design houses for the poor according to their own ideas and their own whims.

These are the same people who will naturally go to famous architects for the design of their own home. Or they go through design books and select the most fantastic and the most sophisticated designs for their own family homes, after having various dialogues with their family members. After the construction they will be satisfied with their own design.

But when they look at housing for the poor, the thinking pattern works the upside down! Poor people cannot and do not have the right to design their houses! That must be done by the authorities. Therefore the size, contents, shape and structure of the house of a poor family must be designed by the officials. And the inability to take any decision about how their house could be shaped, according to their wishes, is a therefore a function of poverty.

Women's Coop strongly believes that "Housing by people" will be a must. The right to design and make decisions about their own house is a democratic practice. The design and construction of a house for a poor family should not be a task of any secondary party, simply because that family is poor.

ACHR under ACCA Projects encourage the people to have their own house on their own design and construction. What are the impacts of a people-based housing process? In the following page, I transcribe conversations I had with women community leaders in two of the cities where ACCA projects are being implemented: Moratuwa and Nuwara Eliya.





## ACCA in Moratuwa :

*Nandasiri talked to Sriyani Fonseka (from Lakshapathiya), Chandrani Silva (from Rathmalana) and H. A. Samudra from Moratuwa. These three women were among the 15 leaders who participated in the city-wide survey in Moratuwa. They surveyed 91 urban low-income settlements in order to launch the people-based housing program. At the end of the survey, 21 settlements were identified as the poorest settlements to start the ACCA process with. Here are some remarks from their conversation :*

**On the city-wide survey process :** I joined the Women's Coop 5 years ago. I used to go to all the leaders meetings, representing my group, to learn about the group system. Most of the time I did not speak, but I listened to all issues. These meetings were very interesting and there were many things to learn - all the experiences of our women. In the meantime, I was asked to participate in this city-wide slum survey with some known leaders of Women's Coop. We were guided by two young architects from Sevanatha - Rohana Rathnayaka and Sumith Waragamma. "We went from house to house with our group of leaders. This was a new experience for us, this gathering of data about our own people in other settlements. This was a special occasion for poor women like me.

**On becoming assets in the city :** As representatives of poor people in the city, we have gotten the opportunity to deal with various agencies like the Municipality members, the Mayor of Moratuwa and the Sevanatha NGO. In this process, members of the municipality have become acquainted with our work and with us. Now many officials come to meet us when they pass by our houses. Sometimes, municipal staff members come to us and invite us to their municipality wards, seeking our assistance to organize the poor into savings and credit groups. This is a new challenge to us. "*Can you come to talk to some women in this settlement where we are working to organize savings groups?*" We feel that we have something special to offer the people which members of municipality do not have. My feeling must be correct. Is this not a kind of recognition for us? With these requests, we understand that we have something that they do not have. They accept our words and our savings system. They trust us. Our ties with people are stronger than politicians.

**On friendly cooperation with the mayor :** The connection between us and the Mayor is very friendly. We asked for tools and equipment kits for our disaster management team to keep ready for emergencies, and he has helped us. Many of our communities are inundated with rainwater during the rainy season, and in such situations, our disaster Management team is ready to help people affected by the floods. The Mayor has approved eight such tool and equipment kits, for eight Women's Coop branches, to assist our disaster management teams. Now we are in the process of discussing with the authorities for the land rights of many people in our settlements.

**On cooperation with other stakeholders in Moratuwa :** The opportunity we got through Women's Coop of working with the authorities is a great chance. Now we are working with the Land Ministry, Divisional Secretariat, Water Supply Board, Electricity Board, members of the Municipal Council, the National Housing Development Authority and Sevanatha. We got a request from the Ministry of Cooperatives to hand over the keys of five houses to beneficiaries of the President's decent poor housing program. This is a good recognition for us.

**On changes in relationships and status in the city :** Municipal workers - especially the city sweepers - now clean our roads very well. They know that the Mayor is listening to us! They know about our close ties with the Mayor! They know we are strong enough to go to the Mayor directly! And there is another very special thing: now when poor women from around Moratuwa come to the mayor with their various problems, he requests them to meet us and to get organized into women's savings groups. We understand by this that there is something which we women can provide to the poor that the Mayor cannot provide. So in this way, we have proved our Women's Coop! It was a long way we traversed to get this recognition - it didn't happen in one or two months time. And it's not only the Mayor, but all the municipal council members like to listen to us now and ask for our help in mediating problems in the settlements.

**On choosing the beneficiaries for the "Decent Poor Program :** The power to select the poorest families among the poor, for assistance, fell upon us. We felt the responsibility. We had to do it properly and accurately. We were so keen on selecting the families impartially. We looked from all angles in selecting the poorest families. We did it well. It is because of Women's Coop we were given the responsibility in doing social work. *(another woman adds)* We were very keen in our selecting criteria in selecting the poorest families for the Decent Poor Program. We worked in a decent way to select the neediest people. We gave the priority to families with "Differently-able members" in them, neglected families in the settlement and to families whose only bread-winner has died.

**On the small ACCA projects :** The Mayor himself attended the occasion when we started working on the road construction under the small ACCA project. Many other municipal officers have attended those occasions when the Mayor presented. In one project, the access road we constructed went through a wooded waste-land that was very bumpy and difficult land. We asked the Mayor to send a road-roller to help us compact the soil before we laid the road - and he sent municipal roller!

**On learning through doing :** We may have been deprived of a formal education, but we feel now that we have entered into a new era of our own education. In addition to accountancy and book keeping training programs in the Women's Coop, we now also go to new classes in housing construction, under the Women's Coop's community architect program.

## ACCA in NUWARA ELIYA :

*Now we will turn to ACCA Project implementation in the town of Nuwara-Eliya. I spoke with three Women's Coop members here : Priyani Rosevergin Ranasinghe (from the Nawagam Goda Community branch), Velupillai Krishnakumari (from the James Street Branch) and H.G. Jayanthi (from the Hawaeliya branch).*

**Priyani on the BIG ACCA project in the Nawagam Goda community :** There are 114 members in our Women's Coop branch in the Nawagam Goda community. We became a branch in August 2009. Our settlement is within the Nuwara Eliya Municipal Council area. In our settlement, there are three different categories of housing ownership: people who have received ownership rights from the National Housing Development Authority, people who are "unauthorized sheltering people" and people who live on tea plantation land. Almost all the members in our savings branch have housing problems. Our savings members were encouraged in solving our housing problems with the beginning of the (two?) ACCA BIG projects in Dova (in Mahida Mawatha) and here in Nawagam Goda. There are 26 houses in the Dova area in Mahinda Mawatha.

Information about these people (*in Nawagam Goda?*) was gathered by Sevanatha, and we as community people provided the information as needed. We realized the real situation of the land right after the survey. We felt that the land rights must be given to us for better housing and recognition. We began to work with the Municipality. Sevanatha initiated some meetings with the Municipality to work for land rights. People in these two communities had lived more than 15 years as unauthorized dwellers. The NHDA, Sevanatha, UDA, Environment Authority, Disaster Management Authority, Officers of the Provincial Secretariat, members of the Municipal Council and community leaders participated in these meetings. We got the opportunity to meet with officers in various authorities and departments in these meetings, which were useful for our development efforts.

With the encouragement of Sevanatha, the Municipal Council initiated the City Development Committee, with the participation of various development authorities including our community representatives, to bring the people's voice.

All the slum areas in Nuwara Eliya (including Dova, Hawaeliya, Kelegala and one or two Bonavista housing projects) were encouraged by the housing upgrading process in Nawagam Goda, by people themselves. This is new thinking - not as a concept, but as a practical work for the habitable new houses but also the land rights as a human right considered as priorities.

All the inhabitants in Nuwara Eliya (not only Women's Coop members) have changed their minds about this new way of delivering good, habitable housing by people themselves. This has been a great change in the minds of common people in our town. Many more people have begun their housing construction, with or without external assistance. We very clearly know that this enthusiastic encouragement came from the work of Women's Coop members.

**Savings process growing :** Not only the housing but formation of new savings groups and the establishment of new branches has increased in the Nuwara Eliya Municipal area. Before the ACCA project was introduced, we had only two Women's Coop branches (named Hawaeliya and Ruwaneliya) with only 160 members. After the ACCA Project was introduced, we could establish six Women's Coop branches in Nuwara Eliya. Now there are seven branches in the Nuwara Eliya District (Nawagam Goda, Kelegala-1, Kelegala-2, Bonavista, James Street, and Ragala, with about 7,777 members and accumulated amount of US\$ 130,000.

### **Small ACCA projects in Nuwara Eliya :**

- **Drainage system in Nawagam Goda :** As a small ACCA project, we constructed a drainage system in Nawagam Goda, with all the labor contributed by the people.
- **Sewers in Kelegala :** In Kelegala, we members of Women's Coop started a sewerage system which connects the individual toilets to the main sewer line.
- **Drainage system in Dova :** In Dova, our women members totally participated in building a drainage system where there used to be floods every time there was heavy rain. Through our new drainage system, we have been able to we were able to prevent rainy water inundation in the dwelling area.
- **Retaining walls at Lines community :** (small project?) With regard to the Lines communities, in which the Tamil tea plantation workers live. Their houses were constructed during the white people era, but have deteriorated rapidly. Some of these houses are two storied. We had to design and construct strong side walls to prevent soil erosion which is affecting our houses in a hilly area like Nuwara Eliya. Community people participated in wall construction. Sevanatha assisted us in technical aspects and designing.