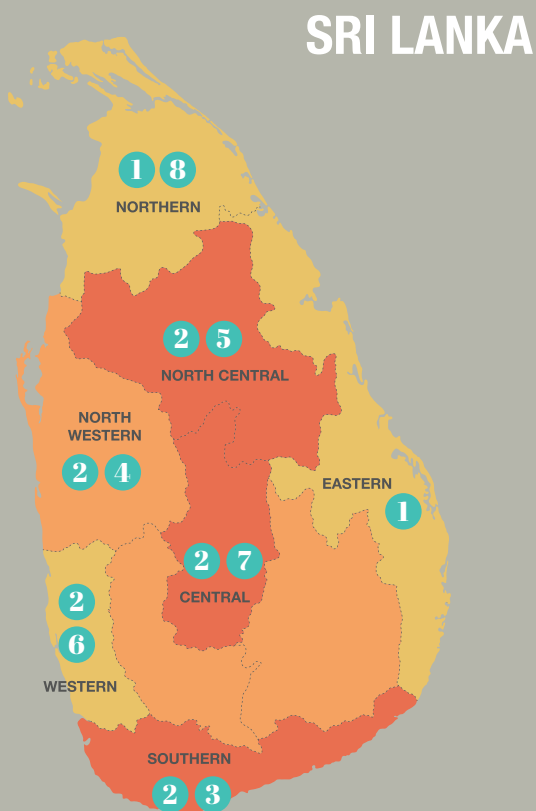


**DIRECT AID PROGRAM**

# Sri Lanka

## 2023 Grant Recipients

Australia's Direct Aid Program is a small grants program that works with local communities to reduce poverty and achieve sustainable development. It sits alongside Australia's long-term development strategy for Sri Lanka and plays an important role in supporting local community efforts towards poverty reduction. In 2023, A\$435,000 was awarded across eight projects, with a focus on economic growth and recovery and building stable, cohesive and inclusive societies.



- 1 Community-wide interventions to prevent violence and promote effective protection
- 2 Samanalayaya Regional Drama Festival
- 3 Therapeutic support and livelihood development for people with disabilities
- 4 Livelihood support for women in the informal sector
- 5 Strengthening livelihoods for dry zone farmers in Anuradhapura
- 6 Skills development for the urban poor
- 7 Strengthening women's livelihood opportunities among tea plantation communities
- 8 Increasing food security in Northern Sri Lanka

# ●●○ Stable, cohesive and inclusive societies

Project:

## 1 Community-wide interventions to prevent violence and promote effective protection

Organisation: Centre for Human Rights and Development

Location: Northern and Eastern Provinces

Years of conflict in Sri Lanka's Northern and Eastern Provinces has seen many thousands of women left to take care of their households, including as primary-income earner. This challenges traditional expectations of the cultural and social roles of women in what are patriarchal contexts. Gender-based violence, prevalent throughout the conflict, remains an ongoing threat amidst breakdowns in social and family structures. The Centre for Human Rights and Development will seek to put in place measures to prevent gender-based violence and offer greater protection for women through:

- Training women network members on the legal aspects of addressing violence against women and girls.
- Documenting incidents of gender-based violence and providing support to identify the most appropriate response and or redress mechanism.
- Provide legal aid and other support for victims of gender-based violence.
- Supporting the litigation of cases through the courts.
- Facilitate support networks for survivors of gender-based violence.



CENTER FOR  
HUMAN RIGHTS  
AND DEVELOPMENT



Project:

## 2 Samanalayaya Regional Drama Festival

Organisation: Sunera Foundation

Location: Western, North Western, Central, North Central, Southern Provinces

Held every 18 months, the Samanalayaya Regional Drama Festival showcases the theatrical works of people with disabilities from nine districts. Rehearsals are undertaken for six months in the lead-up to the festival, with a focus on building the confidence and skills of people with disabilities, particularly children and youth, and showcasing their strengths and talents to audiences. The festival will feature the talents of around 900 people with disabilities aged 12 and over, and will involve nine regional talent and one national talent show.

SUNERA  
foundation

## ●●● Economic growth and recovery

### 3 Project:

#### Therapeutic support and livelihood development for people with disabilities

**Organisation:** Navajeevana Rehabilitation Tangalle

**Location:** Hambantota District, Southern Province

Working with disabled people's organisations, Navajeevana Rehabilitation Tangalle will provide livelihood support to 125 people as a means of improving income and financial security. Services such as physiotherapy and access to mobility aids will also be provided, enabling people to better engage in income generation. Activities will include:

- Livelihoods skills training.
- Provide ongoing mentoring and in-kind assistance to individuals as they seek to establish a business.
- Support for small-scale business development.



### 4 Project:

#### Livelihood support for women in the informal sector

**Organisation:** Women's Chamber of Industry and Commerce

**Location:** North Western Province

Many women working in the informal sector lack formal qualifications or access to professional development. This translates into less income as they cannot charge the same for their services or products as a qualified provider or employee. The Women's Chamber of Industry and Commerce will work to improve business and employment opportunities for up to 75 women through the provision of:

- Professional development opportunities.
- Support to secure formal employment.
- Small business development skills, counselling and mentoring.



### 5 Project:

#### Strengthening livelihoods for dry zone farmers in Anuradhapura

**Organisation:** South Asia Partnership

**Location:** North Central Province

Farmers in Anuradhapura District's dry zone have faced rising costs of agricultural inputs, including fuel, seeds and fertiliser, as a result of COVID-19 and Sri Lanka's recent economic crisis. The South Asia Partnership will work with 100 smallholder farmers and support them to collectively bargain for better prices. The organisation will also introduce the BIOINTENSIVE farming model to the farmers, with a view to introducing renewable energy as a means of lowering production costs and reducing farmer reliance on external fuel sources. Activities will include:

- A baseline survey of smallholder farmers covering income, production costs, crop varieties and yields, and farm-gate and market prices.
- BIOINTENSIVE farming demonstration plots, with a focus on engaging women farmers.
- Install four solar-powered water pumps.
- Establish producer groups to better organise farmers and increase bargaining power.
- Establish market linkages and facilitate marketing of produce.
- Establish seed and organic fertiliser production units.





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## 6 Project: Skills development for the Urban Poor

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**Organisation:** Centre for Society and Religion

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**Location:** Colombo 15, Western Province

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With the onset of Sri Lanka's economic crisis in 2022, those living in urban settlements faced challenges due to high inflation and increased costs of living. With little opportunity or resources to engage in a subsistence economy, food insecurity grew. To mitigate some of these challenges, the Centre for Society and Religion will support 155 women, youth and children across five urban settlements through the following:

- Livelihood support programs for women and youth in areas such as dressmaking, handicrafts, beauty, electricals, ICT, coupled with business management skills.
- In-kind support for start-ups.
- Promotion of home gardening.



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Project:

## **Strengthening women's livelihood opportunities among tea plantation communities**

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**Organisation:** Plantation Rural Education and Development Organisation

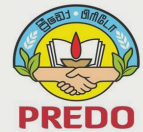
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**Location:** Central Province

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Sri Lanka's recent economic crisis resulted in reduced work days for many tea plantation workers, including women. This insecure work environment saw worker incomes reduced, placing pressure on households to make ends meet. The Plantation Rural Education and Development Organisation will support 60 women to build their knowledge and skills with a view to establishing small businesses as a means of supplementing the income they earn in tea plantations. Activities will include:

- Identify potential income generation and credit sources in the area.
- Specialised training on selected income-generating activities.
- Provide in-kind assistance to women who establish small businesses, including ongoing technical and monitoring support.
- Linking women with micro-businesses industries and district market development networks and other government and non-government organisations.



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Project:

## **Increasing food security in Northern Sri Lanka**

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**Organisation:** Tech Ceylon Social Ventures

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**Location:** Northern Province

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Tech Ceylon Social Ventures intends to establish five small-scale food processing centres to meet increasing demand from local producers, including women, for better access to processing services such as rice milling and coconut oil production. The demand for local processing facilities is being driven by households seeking to increase household production as one means of combating higher costs of living and food insecurity. The centres will be hosted by local cooperatives and Tech Ceylon Social Ventures will undertake the following activities:

- Building renovations and machinery procurement for processing centres.
- Processing centre staff recruitment and training.
- Develop an affordable pricing strategy.
- Promote the processing centres among local producers.
- Conduct regular monitoring to ensure the quality of products and services.



For more information, visit <https://srilanka.embassy.gov.au>