



OVERVIEW OF

Sri Lanka

Overview of Sri Lanka



YEAR OF
1948
INDEPENDENCE

POPULATION
21,866,445
MILLION

8.9%
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: 10 per 1,000 live births. Sri Lanka ranks 136 in the world.

Human Development Index (HDI) for 2013: 0.750 (ranked 73 out of 187, indicating high human development).

Brief History of ChildFund in Sri Lanka

ChildFund came to Sri Lanka: 1985

Number of districts: 11

Number of enrolled children (FY14): 18,736

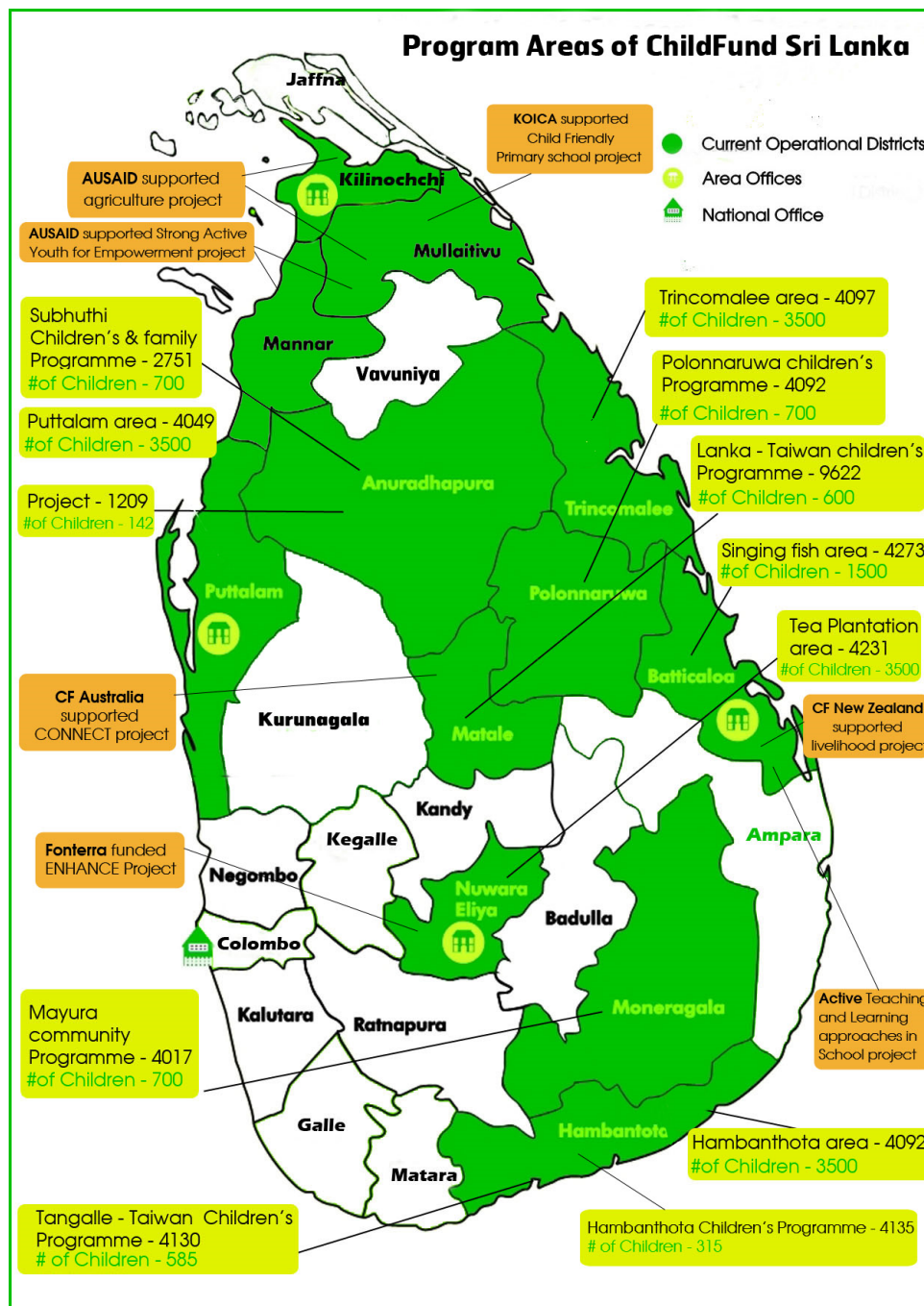
Number of participants (FY14): 131,219

ChildFund has worked in Sri Lanka since 1985. We commenced operations with five family helper projects in the Colombo and Galle districts. In 2003 ChildFund Sri Lanka began assistance to conflict-affected communities in Trincomalee and later expanded work to Batticaloa, Ampara, Vavuniya, Jaffna and Killinochchi. In 2004, ChildFund Sri Lanka also supported the tsunami response. ChildFund's projects are development oriented. Our program currently consists of a Sponsorship program and several grant projects. Child protection and social inclusion and cohesion are central to all the programs.

Brief History of ChildFund in Sri Lanka (continued)

We currently work with seven partners in 11 districts providing direct and indirect support to over 250,000 children, their families and communities. Our programs focus on working towards developing equal access to life choices and opportunities in health, nutrition, education and employment for children and youth in the most vulnerable communities.

Where We Work



Provinces where we work:

- Anuradhapura
- Batticaloa
- Hambantota
- Kilinochchi
- Mannar
- Matala
- Moneragala
- Mullaitivu
- Miwara Eliya
- Polonnaruwa
- Puttalam
- Trincomalee
- Kurunegala

Brief Program Overview



ChildFund works with communities at the grassroots level, to ensure that programs are based on issues voiced by children, youth and parents in those communities. Our programs are developed in coordination with relevant government agencies and are aimed at bringing about long-term positive changes in the communities in which we work.

In working with partners from the community, our program delivery model provides capacity building and resources to local organizations, enabling the development of leadership skills and ensuring long-term sustainability and community ownership of programs.

Our work is focused on helping deprived, excluded and vulnerable children improve their lives and grow into young adults, parents and leaders who bring lasting positive change in their communities. We build communities that protect and advance the worth and rights of children. We also have emergency programs to address disaster reduction and response. Our current grant projects focus on: nutrition, health and education; economic empowerment and livelihood support; child protection, inclusion of children with disabilities, and youth empowerment; active teaching and learning approaches in schools; and film and magazine making.

ChildFund Sri Lanka's programs focus on the journey of a child from birth to young adulthood and are divided into three life stage categories.

1. Healthy and Secure Infants

We know that the earliest years are the most critical in the positive growth and development of a child, so we promote programs that offer:

- Good nutrition and care during the prenatal period and early years.
- Opportunities to develop and learn through play and exploration.
- Stronger relations with informed adults who care for them.

2. Educated and Confident Children

We support children as they grow and develop by promoting programs that offer:

- Knowledge and life skills in schools, at home and in the community.
- Foundations to build life-long learning, confidence and resilience.
- Improving the quality of learning in schools.

3. Skilled and Involved Youth

We assist youth with the critical transition to adulthood by promoting programs that offer:

- Training to acquire skills needed to enter the workforce and meet other challenges.
- Skills to help understand and express emotions in ways that foster safe and fulfilling relationships.
- Enhanced social and leadership skills to become meaningfully involved for the betterment of their communities.

2014 Program Achievements



Healthy and Secure Infants

ChildFund Sri Lanka works to achieve improved nutrition rates, parenting skills and community-based learning for infants and young children aged 0-5. Our programs focus on ensuring that young children grow in a healthy, protective and developmentally supportive environment to reach their full potential.

ChildFund Sri Lanka's continued support to Early Childhood Centers (ECD) benefited 6,500 children. Support was provided in the form of building renovations, provision of indoor and outdoor play items, learning and teaching materials, access to water and sanitation, training for teachers and strengthening of parent-teacher associations. These efforts resulted in the creation of well-equipped and colorful child-friendly learning spaces.

Upgraded water systems or water filters and sanitation facilities were provided to 2,793 families with children aged 0-5 years. Easy access to water has cut down the time mothers spend on searching for and collecting water resulting in an increase in the time they spend with their children. Access to hygienic sanitation facilities and improved healthy home environments has reduced the occurrence of waterborne diseases like cholera, typhoid, hepatitis and diarrhea.

Awareness programs on primary health habits, hygiene, home based care and nutrition benefited 1,793 families. This will support caring of children, children's nutrition and the creation of healthy home environments. Lead mothers in the communities guided parents and care givers to developmentally healthy ways of interacting with children, stimulating their brain development and improving hygiene and nutrition.

A large number of children and families also benefitted through home garden support to grow and maintain vegetable gardens at ECD centers. Home gardening packages were also provided to families to improve household food security. Families with 0-5 year old children also received support for chicken rearing. Around 1,700 children received support through special clinics organized to screen infants and children, to identify growth problems and illnesses, and for medical support, and necessary medical referrals.

Through ChildFund's Ensuring Nutrition, Health and Children's Education (ENHANCE) project, which caters specifically to children in this age group in the estate sector, more than 650 families benefited from health and nutrition programs.

Educated and Confident Children

The 6-14 age group comprises the largest component in the communities in which ChildFund works. Through educational support, life skills training, and infrastructure development, ChildFund Sri Lanka works to improve poor educational performance and reduce the risk of those most likely to

2014 Program Achievements (continued)

drop out of school.

As part of our support for this age group, we developed infrastructure facilities in 17 rural schools and improved educational facilities for 2,450 children in remote villages. These improvements included classroom renovations, upgrading of water and sanitation facilities and provision of teaching and learning materials. This project resulted in the creation of stable and attractive child-friendly environments, which have encouraged regular school attendance.

The provision of school materials such as text books, school bags, shoes and bicycles helped 8,902 children to attend school regularly. Further, facilities such as learning materials, library books and furniture to learning centers helped to create environments more conducive to learning in communities that lacked houses with a study area or a learning-friendly environment for the children.

Training for 501 teachers in new teaching methodologies and child protection helped them gain skills to develop better methods and approaches to teaching children more effectively.

Children in this age group also benefitted from the Connect project, a multi-country collaborative media literacy and child-to-child global linkage project that was conducted in Puttalam and is currently running in Dambulla.

Skilled and Involved Youth

Unemployment and lack of relevant life skills are some of the key issues addressed in programs for youth. We provide training to youth to acquire skills to confidently enter the world of employment and mature adulthood, skills that help them develop emotional resilience and express emotions in ways that foster positive relationships.

Vocational skills were provided to 800 unemployed youth in fields such as tourism, heavy machinery, graphic designing, hotel management, IT, nursing and dress making. Another 125 youth received an opportunity to participate in industrial exposure visits to obtain familiarity with work opportunities and working environments. A total of 64 youth who underwent vocational training started self-employment or were able to link with employers.

To address the need for soft skills development 1,102 unemployed youth were provided training in leadership and communications. The soft skills program aims to support youth by instilling confidence in them to face interviews and work in a formal office environment.

Residential training workshops, youth camps and one day training sessions were conducted for 472 youth to improve their skills and knowledge in community mobilization, team activity, leadership, proposal writing, career visioning, cash management, sexual and reproductive health, and awareness on the risks of alcohol. Three community led activity proposals prepared by youth groups were selected and supported for implementation.

Through the Strong, Active Youth for Empowerment (SAYFE) project, youth in Northern Sri Lanka are developing innovative and educational proposals for small grant projects of youth clubs and are sharing their proposals at the national level through the National Youth Services Council. Youth are also engaged in conducting peer to peer research on high risk behaviors of youth in the North and have undergone training on data collection and analysis of information through this project.

2014 Program Achievements (continued)

Civil Society

While maintaining the key focus of our engagement on child development and protection, ChildFund Sri Lanka together with its Partners engaged in the capacity building of civil society organizations, to enable them to become proactive when dealing with matters that affect children in their communities.

Capacity building for Village Child Rights Monitoring Committees

ChildFund Sri Lanka together with its Partners is supporting the capacity building of Village Child Rights Monitoring Committees (VCRMC), which comprise local community members at the village level. The main focus of the committees is ensuring the protection and rights of children. Capacity building workshops for these community organizations are being conducted in coordination with the relevant government bodies.

The formation and strengthening of the committees especially in the context of high rates of child abuse has been an example of civil society strengthening. The committees meet regularly and prepare an action plan, which they implement, to reduce the incidence of child rights violations and various forms of child abuse. In order to strengthen the capacities of the committees, a number of training events and awareness programs have been conducted.

The strengthening of the committees through regular awareness programs conducted by police officers, child rights protection officers, health officers, chief incumbent of the temple, and reputed professionals in child protection has led to even minor child-related cases being reported to the police and the probation department. This mechanism and new community awareness and mobilization will play a critical role in minimizing child rights violations.

Strengthening Disaster Risk Reduction committees

ChildFund Sri Lanka is strengthening youth led Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) systems at the village level, to strengthen links and networks between the village, divisional and national level. ChildFund is supporting the process of emergency preparedness and response actions together with its partners, through the development of emergency preparedness and response plans, in order to build community resilience. Support is provided through planning and capacity building for youth led DRR systems and mechanisms in our program areas. Youth are trained and equipped for child-focused emergency interventions.

Disability Inclusion

Community Based Rehabilitation

Disability inclusion is an area of growing interest for ChildFund Sri Lanka. ChildFund together with one of our Partners is working on a Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) program in Puttalam, which focuses on enhancing the quality of life for children with disabilities and their families by meeting basic needs and ensuring inclusion and participation. It focuses on empowering persons with disabilities to access and benefit from education, employment, health and social services. The CBR program is implemented through the combined efforts of people with disabilities, their families and communities, and relevant government and non-government health, education, vocational, social and other services.

2014 Program Achievements (continued)

The CBR project saw the following achievements over the past year: three rehabilitation camps were conducted for 62 children with disabilities in Puttalam; and volunteers were trained and provided bicycles to facilitate them to support children with disabilities at home. Other assistance included sanitary facilities which included toilet materials and pipe borne water supply to children, provision of medical support and assistive devices, and livelihood support to families.

In the North of Sri Lanka there is limited data on children with disabilities. ChildFund with the support of ChildFund Germany/BMZ supported a research report, conducted by a local Disabled Peoples Organization, to understand the numbers, types and requirements of children with disabilities in the Mannar and Mullaitivu districts. This has led to a project in Mullaitivu that will provide much-needed diagnosis of the impairment and then support links between children and their families to available government services. This program is being undertaken with the CBR Unit of the Ministry of Social Services.

Programs—Coastal Areas

Livelihoods Enhancement in Batticaloa

The district of Batticaloa located along the eastern coast of Sri Lanka is one of the five dedicated partner areas supported by ChildFund. Currently New Zealanders sponsor around 1,000 children in the area with regular funds which are used to address issues relating to water, early childhood education and nutritional assistance. In addition, a public fundraising appeal is funding a teacher training project to increase the quality of education in the area. The project focuses on a holistic approach to community development and aims at community self-sustenance in the long term.

Through the Livelihood project, ChildFund Sri Lanka together with its Partner works towards sustainable economic growth and human development activities that contribute to improved sustainable economic development. Project activities include: Income generating initiatives; small and medium business development; microfinance services; support to improve production and/or marketing of goods and services. The community is largely both agriculture and fisheries based.

The project benefits 3,000 vulnerable families in Batticaloa. Grants were distributed to 19 Community Boards and six Child Well Being Committees. A total of 1,180 participants who have already received revolving loan funds have started livelihood activities. The repayment rate has been 100 % so far. Mentoring workshops have been organized for participants with local business women. Participants have also received training on cattle rearing, fishing and net mending. In order to increase awareness among participants who have been involved in fishing and to reduce unnecessary costs for fishing net mending, training sessions have been conducted for both male and female participants.

Programs—Agriculture

Economic Empowerment for Vulnerable Families

This project addresses a combination of issues facing vulnerable families in Trincomalee. At the core is an opportunity for economic empowerment through Goat farming, which has been identified as a successful home-based income raising business.

The targeted communities are those who have faced multiple devastating events and increasing vulnerability over the past 30 years, as a result of war, the tsunami disaster in 2004 as well as intermit-

2014 Program Achievements (continued)

ent flash floods and drought. This has resulted in dilapidated infrastructure, damage to agricultural products, destruction of livestock and destabilization of market networks. Damage to crops and livestock have created enormous problems for the families who are mostly seasonal income earners. Not only livelihood, but also food security has been increasingly at risk in recent years for these communities. As a result many of them are struggling to meet their health and nutrition needs, and the basic needs of their children, especially education. A significant proportion of the families are headed by females, who have been widowed or orphaned by the war and tsunami.

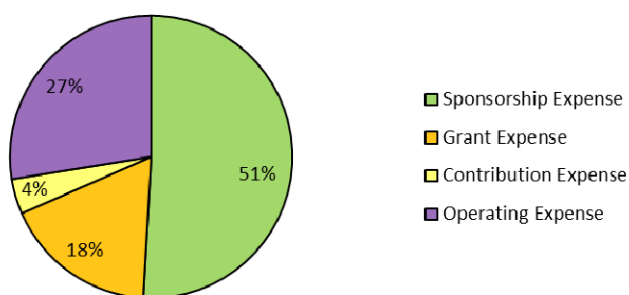
Commercial goat farming was identified as a successful income generating activity for rural families living in vulnerable conditions. The project also addresses the critical issue of child protection. Research shows that a key reason for the dramatic rise in reported child abuse is linked to children being left at home while the mother is away working. This also has a negative impact on the eldest girl child who is often left with household duties such as washing clothes, fetching water, cooking and attending to agriculture duties, resulting in restricted opportunities for education and socialization.

Home based goat farming has been identified as one of the best supplementary income-generating activities for rural farmers. Apart from the income generated through selling of culled older animals, fattened kids and goat milk, the families with young children also benefit from being able to consume goat milk in place of powdered milk and can easily save on average SLR 1000 per each month. The families are also able to save money on fertilizer by using the dung produced through goat farming, rather than buying manure from the market.

The project's ultimate objective is to support children to be better educated, nourished and protected. The project will benefit 425 families directly and 1,000 indirectly (including 22 disabled children). Other benefits will include training for the community on goat farming, establishment of Disaster Risk Reduction committees, training on basic child care, nutrition and child protection, including community based protection and reporting for lead parent volunteers, awareness sessions on child education, nutrition and protection in the community and the establishment of Child Protection Committees.

Financial Report

**Sri Lanka Total FY14 Expenses:
\$6,094,265**



Sri Lanka FY14

Sponsorship Expense	3,102,164	51%
Grant Expense	1,069,059	18%
Contribution Expense	244,773	4%
Operating Expense	1,678,270	28%
Total Expense	6,094,265	100%

Financial Report (continued)

ChildFund Alliance

Sponsorship: At the end of FY14, ChildFund Sri Lanka had 14,953 active sponsorships from the following Alliance members: (1) ChildFund International—3,584; (2) Taiwan Fund for Children & Families – 2,864; (3) ChildFund Australia – 2,561; (4) ChildFund Korea—1,920; (5) ChildFund New Zealand – 1,908; (6) ChildFund Deutschland – 633; (7) Barnfonden - 493; (8) ChildFund Japan – 295; (9) Un Enfant par la Main – 263; (10) BORNEfoden – 226; and (11) ChildFund Ireland - 206.

Grants: Since 2012, ChildFund Sri Lanka has received 22 grants from ChildFund New Zealand (8), ChildFund Australia (6), ChildFund Korea (7) and ChildFund German (1) totaiaing \$6,081,598.

The grants from New Zealand focused on improving the livelihood of communities; education services ad quality of learning; development of community infrastructure; and enhancing nutrition and health of infants and young children.

The grants from ChildFund Australia addressed the need for youth empowerment especially in the north; economic empowerment for vulnerable families; and a multi-country collaborative media project involving media literacy and child-to-child global linkage.

The grants from ChildFund Korea focused on rebuilding schools and improving the quality of learning, and the creation of child friendly primary schools. An additional grant provided pianos to rural schools.

The grant from ChildFund Deutschland will focus on programs for children with disabilities.

Contributions: During FY14, ChildFund Sri Lanka received \$112,535 (a 22% increase over FY13) in contributions for its projects and programs from ChildFund Korea (\$51,556), ChildFund New Zealand (\$31,943), ChildFund Australia (\$13,689), ChildFund Deutschland (\$13,203) and Barnfonden (\$2,145).

Challenges

Sri Lanka has maintained positive social indicators compared to other countries in the region and has experienced a significant decline in poverty over the last decade. However, pockets of poverty continue to exist across regions and between social groups. This is especially so in the districts of Batticaloa (in the Eastern Province), Jaffna (in the Northern Province), Moneragala (in Uva Province) and in the estate sector. Affected communities lack basic infrastructure and sanitation facilities and access to health and education. An estimated 9% of Sri Lankans who are no longer classified as poor live within 20% of the poverty line and are vulnerable to shocks which could cause them to fall back into poverty.

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 required for children and youth with disabilities and in rebuilding civil society structures.

Overall, there is an increasing trend in reports of violence against children, mainly sexual abuse, abandonment and assaults. Lack of protection at home due to migration of mothers for work

Challenges

abroad can also be linked to the higher vulnerability of children to abuse.

Sri Lanka is on track to meet most of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG), outperforming other South Asian countries. Progress on reaching the goals related to malnutrition and child mortality is, however, slower. Indicators are mixed on the environment: while Sri Lanka is an early achiever on indicators of protected area, ozone depleting substance consumption, safe drinking water and basic sanitation, it is slipping backwards on forest cover and CO2 emissions.

Climate-related hazards pose a significant threat to economic and social development in Sri Lanka. Extreme variability in rainfall has been a defining feature in the country's climate. Climate projections have indicated a rising rainfall trend in the wet zone and decreasing rainfall trend in the dry zone, with the risks associated with water-related climate variability expected to intensify. Less frequent precipitation in already dry areas could increase the frequency and duration of droughts while higher and more variable rainfall is expected to increase the frequency and intensity of floods, affecting monsoon-dependent areas in particular. Climate change is expected to significantly impact agriculture, water resources, energy, environment and fisheries in Sri Lanka.

Why Sponsorship Is Important

Strong enough to tread the road ahead with confidence

Born and raised in the rural farming village of Mineemulla in the district of Puttalam, located in north western Sri Lanka, Aruni was the youngest of the two daughters in her family. Now at the age of 21, she is living with her parents after retiring from her school life and is currently a university under-graduate.

She was considered to be the brightest student in her school and she excelled in Mathematics. She wished for a career in Accounting. Although she fell short in her first attempt at her A/L exam in 2012, she persevered, and her determination made it possible to secure entry into the local university in her second attempt in 2013. During this period, amidst many obstacles, she had the opportunity to join the Association of Accounting Technicians (AAT) program to help her with her career advancement.

When Aruni was enrolled in ChildFund Sri Lanka's Sponsorship program in 1999, she was attending kindergarten. Initially, writing letters to her sponsor was done with the help of her mother, until Aruni became proficient and literate enough to write on her own. The connection between both families was strong and constant. The validity and strength of the bond between both families was so strong, that Aruni was supported by her sponsor's wife even after his death. As time passed by, her sponsor's widow became ill and her daughter took her place for the continuation of the sponsorship. Aruni grieved the loss of her friends as she contemplated the contributions they have made in changing her life. *"They made a great difference in my life,"* she said.

Why Sponsorship is Important (continued)

During her school years Aruni was keen on taking part in many activities which helped her develop her social and cultural knowledge and greatly influenced her self-confidence to believe and endure. Her participation in multiple activities helped her nurture hard and soft skills necessary for her to set the platform upon which to build and grow. Aruni grew up in a house without electricity where she had to use safety lamps to illuminate the room. Now, as part of their plans for a secure future, Aruni and her family have started saving for the future.

Aruni is thankful for the timely intervention and help provided to her through ChildFund for her educational advancement. "I feel unafraid to face obstacles and more confident in my abilities now," she says. She feels competent to tread the road ahead and is sincerely grateful for the skills and abilities she has amassed. Now that she has access to a home with electricity this will certainly lessen her burden. Her parents are confident in her and state that they will support Aruni in her education.

Wings to chase my dreams

Nirosha was born and raised in the village of Gatalawa in Galenbindunuveva. Nirosha was the youngest in her family with two sisters and a brother. Her parents are cardiac patients and on daily treatment. Nirosha's parents sustain and provide for the family by farming.

Nirosha had a bitter and unpleasant childhood. She describes it as, "We lived in small house built using clay and a roof made out of coconut leaves. Our house had a single room, kitchen and living room and I had to spend most of my childhood in it. We were never sheltered from the hazards of nature. During the rainy seasons we were drenched. It was difficult for six people to live together in it.

We never had enough to eat. We used to share the little food we had and contain our hunger."

With support from ChildFund Sri Lanka Nirosha has improved her life in leaps and bounds. This is what she has to say about her present condition: "After becoming a part of the program I have a home to go to where I am safe from the rain and will never go hungry. I feel that I was able to finally break free from poverty".

Nirosha has completed her primary and secondary education and is currently following higher studies. She is moved by the impact the program has had on her life and this is what she has to say. "For as long as I can remember, I used to go to the school in my village. Although I successfully completed my secondary education and had the option to go to a different school, I made a choice to stay because it gave me purpose and I had faith that my school will provide what I need. I was able to enter the university and this was a dream come true for me and my family. I am grateful to everyone who had a stake in this and helped me get this far."

Even after successfully completing her school education, Nirosha remained with the program and was able to develop important life skills. "I am currently following a diploma in English language and I believe that English is a necessity to succeed in my future. I am currently working as a trainee in a local bank and the certificates awarded to me by participating in the different programs were useful to secure this position. I am confident that I can overcome any hurdle that I face in my life in the future."

Why Sponsorship is Important (continued)

Nirosha uses her time and experiences to reinvest into the community to help the needy. She states, "I am grateful to my parents and siblings who helped me complete my life, especially the second father I have never seen in my sponsor.. Although we do not speak frequently, my life has changed completely because of your contribution and I am truly grateful".

