

Asian-Pacific Children's Convention (APCC) in FUKUOKA Students Group Visits UN-Habitat Project Sites in Sri Lanka



8 April 2016, Colombo, Sri Lanka: A group of high school students from Japan visited Sri Lanka on a study tour in March 2016. During their visit, the group visited several post conflict reconstruction project sites of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) in the Northern Province. The APCC group consisted of 12 students, a journalist and two chaperons.

The study tour was organized by the Asian-Pacific Children's Convention in FUKUOKA, a civic movement funded by local governments and other private entities. UN-Habitat's Regional office for Asia and the Pacific is one of the supporting organizations. The APCC group visited UN-Habitat's post conflict reconstruction project locations in Mannar and Kilinochchi districts in the Northern Province from 23rd to 25th March.

In Mannar district, the students visited several project interventions. In Musali Divisional Secretariat (DS) division, the group visited permanent houses constructed by families through a homeowner driven process. The students had the opportunity to discuss housing construction methods and challenges with the homeowners and to interact closely with the families. The students also visited a Multi-Purpose Community Centre in Silvathurai. Technical assistance for these projects have been provided by UN-Habitat, with funding provided by the European Union, Governments of Australia and Switzerland. Thereafter, the students visited the Sithivinayakar Hindu College in Mannar, where they were warmly welcomed by the school administrators, teachers and school children. This school has been selected by UN-Habitat for support by the project "Sustainable Resettlement through Community-Driven Improvement of the Learning Environment in "Mannar District, Sri Lanka" funded by the Government of Japan.



Following a traditional welcome ceremony, the students had the opportunity to inspect the school buildings, in particular the classes that are conducted in temporary shelters. Currently 12 classes are conducted in temporary shelters with minimal amenities and facilities. In his briefing, the school principal expressed his gratitude to the Government of Japan for providing funding towards the development of the school which will benefit the school children as well as the people of Mannar. Implemented by UN-Habitat from 2015-2017, this project is supporting the construction of school buildings and WASH facilities in 15 schools as well as 7 teachers' quarters in Mannar district.



From March 24-25th the APCC group visited Kilinochchi District. Amongst several activities, the students visited the Kilinochchi water tank and water supply system assisted by JICA. Thereafter, the students visited Krishna Preschool in Sooranpattu village and assisted the community members with the construction activities by painting its internal walls. The preschool is being constructed with funding from the Government of Japan under the "Project for Rehabilitation of Community Infrastructure, Improvement of Livelihoods, and Empowerment of Women in the Northern and Eastern Provinces". The construction of the preschool is managed

by the Sooranpattu Women's Rural Development Society with technical assistance from UN-Habitat.