

Government of Australia Supports Mannar Urban Council to Mitigate the Risk of Sea Water Intrusion in a Vulnerable Coastal Village

September 2014, Mannar, Sri Lanka: A ceremony to launch a disaster risk reduction project to mitigate sea water intrusion at Pallimunai East village in Mannar District was held on 17th September 2014 with the participation of senior district and local authority officials.

This project has been identified as a priority disaster mitigation initiative by the Technical Working Group (TWG) to minimize the risk of sea water intrusion into the coastal village of Pallimunai East. It is being implemented by the Mannar Urban Council in partnership with UN-Habitat, in close coordination with the Coast Conservation Department and the Department of Wildlife Conservation. Funding for this initiative has been provided by the Government of Australia under the Project “Disaster Resilient City Development Strategies for Four Cities in the Northern and Eastern Provinces of Sri Lanka”, currently underway in the cities of Akkaraipattu, Mannar, and Vavuniya and Mullaitivu.



The District Secretary of Mannar, Mr. M.Y.S Deshapriya, the Regional Assistant Commissioner of Local Government, Mr. M.A.J Thuram, Chairman, Mannar Urban Council, Mr.S.Gnanapragasam, the Vice Chairman, Secretary, Council Members and other officials participated in this event.

Settlements in Pallimunai East located in the Mannar Urban Council area regularly experience the impacts of sea water intrusion during the North–East monsoon season, leading to the periodic displacement of over 200 families. The impact of sea water intrusion is due to the settlements’ location in close proximity to the coastal zone boundary at virtually mean sea level.



coastal area.

This project will provide multiple benefits to the community of Pallimunai East. The proposed mitigation measures include the allocation of an area as an open space which can be used for recreational activities, excavation of a detention pond to hold excess water which will gradually drain into the adjacent tidal flat, a compacted earth dam with additional rubble protection along the tidal flat to control erosion, construction of a sluice gate with a reinforced concrete structure to discharge the collected rain water in the detention pond to the tidal flat and construction of a new culvert to re-establish drainage of the tidal flow. In addition, an information center will be established to enhance awareness on the conservation value of this vulnerable

Speaking at the event, the District Secretary of Mannar commended the project partners for their commitment towards mitigating the impact of sea water intrusion in the area which has disrupted the lives of the community for many years, while the Chairman of the Urban Council of Mannar acknowledged the support provided by the Australian Government and UN-Habitat in enhancing the capacity of the Urban Council by providing opportunities to engage in disaster mitigation actions.

Funding of LKR. 9 Million has been allocated for the sea water intrusion mitigation project. The project will be completed by the end of 2014, directly benefiting over 200 families.