

Regional Programmes

The regional programmes complement the bilateral interventions, mainly in the areas of aid to uprooted people, environment and trade.

Between 2005-2015 the EU has contributed to the owner-driven reconstruction of over 20,000 houses for war-affected returnees. Approximately 10,000 have been built in the East and another 10,000 in the North. This has been funded by the EU's regional facility called Aid to Uprooted People (AUP) with EUR 50 million. A call for proposals for a new programme for an additional 3,000 owner driven 'developmental' houses has been recently launched and it will hopefully start before summer end 2015.

The EU's approach to housing has been evolving along with a decade of lessons learned. The first AUP programme supported the World Bank who built 86,000 houses under the North and East Housing Reconstruction Programme (NEHRP) between 2006-2009. This programme set up the reference standards such as the size of a full house to 550 Sq feet and a number of minimum quality criteria. Then, the EU funded NGOs *Arbeiter Samariter Bund* (ASB), Practical Action and ZOA promoted the importance of livelihood support measures to housing and mainstreamed the use of local resources and appropriate materials. More recently, the EU has partnered with the Government of Australia and Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC) to fund UN-Habitat and SDC to implement another 9,000 units. UN-Habitat has further developed community processes such as to address grievances in the beneficiary selection procedures, facilitated land tenure security, promoted the leadership of women in Village Reconstruction Committees, mainstreamed the use of bulk procurement and recently made further advances in low-cost construction technologies.

The second regional programme is SWITCH ASIA, promoting sustainable consumption and production. This programme aims to contribute to economic growth and poverty reduction in Asia and mitigate climate change through the promotion of sustainable consumption and production. In Sri Lanka, four grant projects have been implemented in the area of waste management, bio gas and greening hotels. Most recently, the SWITCH- Asia Policy Support has been signed in December 2014 and aims to provide technical assistance to the Ministry of Environment to support policy development, implementation, monitoring and dialogue in the area of sustainable development.

The Asian Investment Facility (AIF) is a regional programme that in Sri Lanka includes the Sanitation and Hygiene Initiative for Towns (SHIFT). This programme is implemented by Agence Française de Développement (AFD) supports the National Water Supply and Drainage Board (NWSDB) in restructuring the NWSDB by improving its operational and financing capabilities. EU contributes EUR 5.9 million to some EUR 200 million loan facilitated by AFD.

The final regional programme entails Trade Related Assistance by the EU. The EU Delegation is preparing a project with Department of Commerce of the Ministry of Industries to support trade capacity building and trade development in Sri Lanka.