

## **HEART @ HABITAT FOR HUMANITY SRI LANKA.**

*“Generosity is giving more than you can ... generosity is not giving me that which I need more than you do, but it is giving me that which you need more than I do.”*

This quote from famous philosopher Kahlil Gibran accurately summarises the generosity and *heart* that exists here at Habitat for Humanity Sri Lanka...

Our humble driver Mr. Palani Balasubramaniam (known as Bala to most) has been with Habitat for Humanity for 9 years. Bala who is also a proud Habitat Home Owner, makes faithful loan repayments to our Hatton Habitat affiliate for his humble home in Hatton. He has a wife and 2 children who are 22 and 15 years of age.

This year for Bala’s birthday he wanted to provide a house for a poor family. After taking on weekend and holiday work, Bala was able to save and donate Rs; 35,000 to HRC Central. The Matale satellite has chosen Mr. M.D. Wijerathne of Ihalapuwakattawela, Dambulla.

Mr. Wijerathne (also known as Robert) lives with his wife, daughter (whose husband left her and their 2 children) and 2 grandchildren in what can only be called an inadequate house. Thatched roof and mud walls on a tiny plot of land offers poor living conditions for his family and grandchildren. Poverty has been an unwelcome visitor in this family’s household since they first commenced living here in 1984. Robert is an extremely hardworking farmer who does animal husbandry, vegetable and paddy cultivation Robert has been able to save Rs. 1000 per month and is part of a savings group which has 15 members. To date, each member of that group has saved Rs. 12,500. HFHSL Matale Satellite has, to date, been able to complete 6 houses and the balance houses are pending completion.

Robert has collected sand and metal in addition to his monetary savings and he has relatives who are willing to support him with the construction of a roof for his dream home. His savings group members will help him with the ‘sweat equity’ of construction and he has recently been able to collect some extra money to buy cement blocks.

This savings group has had a loan repayment percentage of 100% and now the time has come to commence work on Robert’s home. 2 June 2009 is the date that construction is set to commence. Robert and his family need all the help they can get. Thomas Fuller once said that “charity begins at home” so where best to ask for support than from our family here at Habitat for Humanity Sri Lanka. Bala has generously donated Rs. 35,000 to kickstart the project. With such heart at the grassroots level here at HFHSL, one can only imagine the potential we all have to help another one of our fellow Sri Lankans out as he is about to embark upon a pivotal stage of his life...

**Let us rally alongside Bala to show our compassion and commitment and get involved to help Robert build his home. A site visit to Dambulla by anyone who is willing and able here at HFHSL would be most appreciated as well as any financial donations. Please email [francisf@hfhsl.org](mailto:francisf@hfhsl.org) to express your interest to get your hands dirty alongside friends for a great cause!**



Bala at the Dehiwala office of Habitat for Humanity Sri Lanka



Robert and his wife standing outside their current home

