

May 2023

7 NEWSLETTER FOR HAPPY SENIORS

Diriya Piyasa Housing Scheme -Housing for elders-



✓ Background

Sri Lanka is a nation where elderly care is regarded as a supreme human quality and put into practice. In an age where the world is becoming urbanized, the existence of the role of the elderly is being challenged. The nuclear family has transformed to such an extent that it does not take care of the physical and mental needs of the elderly citizen in the house.

In such a situation, the government has taken steps to intervene and promote the welfare of the elderly community by respecting and caring for the elderly. Hence, the Government of Sri Lanka has accepted and ratified United Nations Principles for Older Persons (Resolution No. 46/91) dated December 16, 1991 recognizing the contribution made by the elderly to society. The government has recognized that aging adults should be provided with the necessary infrastructure for a socially and economically fulfilling life.

📋 Contents of schemes and priority

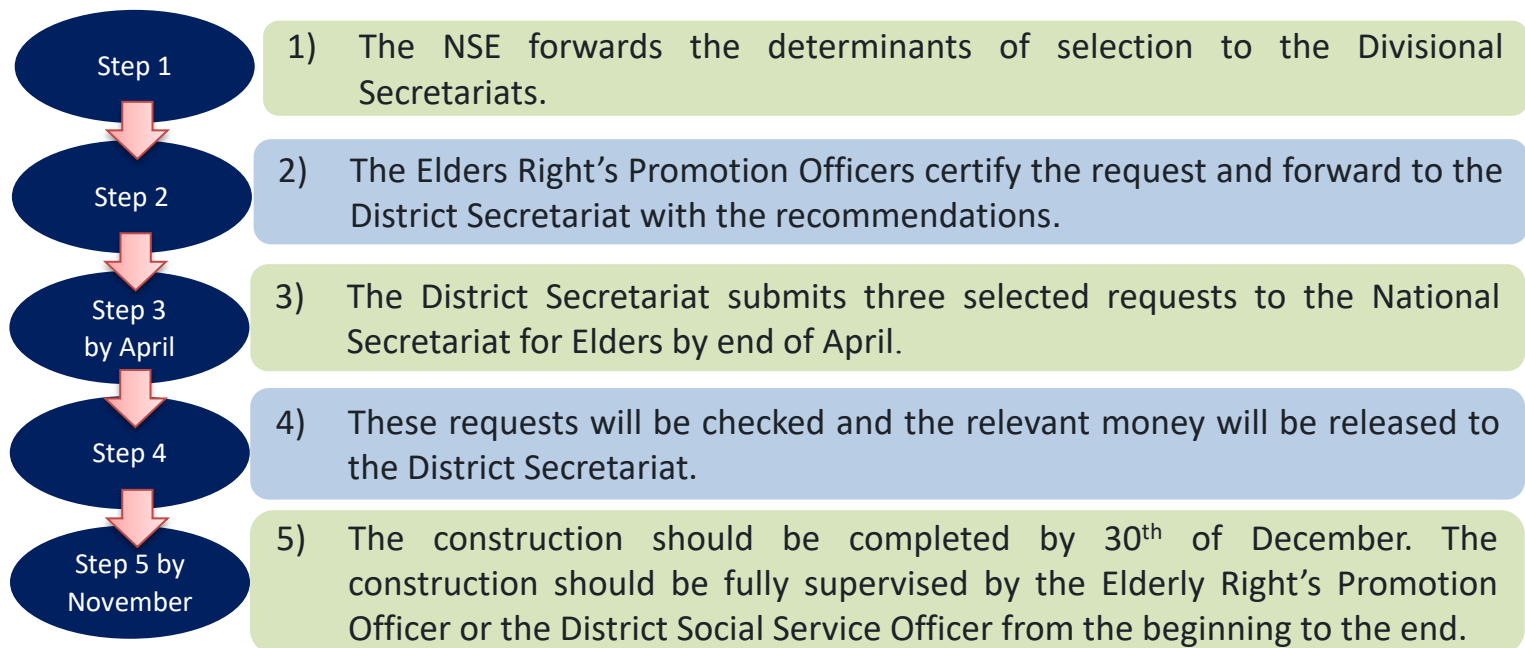


- This scheme is to provide financial support (Rs. 700,000/-) from the Social Security Fund for the construction of a new house or for the renovation and development of the existing house.
- Generally, 2 beneficiaries in each district and total 50 beneficiaries are selected every year based on the budget.

Priority of the beneficiaries

- Persons above the age of sixty
- Those with low-income of Rs. 6 thousands a month or less
- Persons with disabilities
- Widowed
- Single parents
- Living alone

Selection procedure



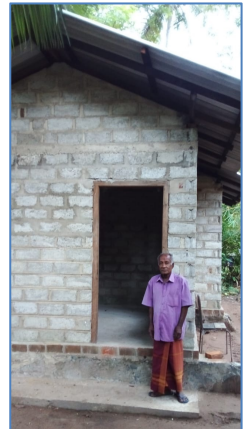
Introduction to Good Activities

1. Pinpointing those who need housing



This is to ensure that the limited funds ends up in the hands of those who truly need it and not in the hands of others. Nevertheless, this is not an easy solution and the following must be considered:

- Government budget constraints, which also reflects the government's capacity to raise revenue.
- Incentive effects, such as when nonpoor people change their behavior to receive benefits intended for the poor.
- Political economy. This arises when some nonpoor people do not support efforts to help poor people.



2. Promotion of relational living

The housing programme recognizes desires to maintain in-person social interactions, such as relationships with existing cohabittees or within the wider community. The promotion of such relational, rather than independent, living is likely to be key factors in the attainment of wellbeing.



Without recognizing the importance of relational living and social interactions, housing programmes may lead to greater potential for social isolation as residents are presented with fewer opportunities to continue social ties and a sense of community.

Staying in one's own home as a person ages has the advantage of keeping them in a familiar place where they know their neighbors and the community. They can make home repairs or modifications to make their life easier and safer.



Messages from the field



If one sees a prosperous country, its heirs would be the senior citizens. We will forever be indebted to them because of their physical and mental labor to make lands fertile. Diriya Piyasa [Encouraging Spaces] is a program introduced by the National Secretariat for Elders to provide shelter to such a group. At present, fifty houses have been developed all over Sri Lanka. Each house costs Rupees 0.7 Million. It is clear that Diriya Piyasa has taken the lead among the programme portfolio at the National Secretariat for Elders.

There is no doubt that Diriya Piyasa, with its objective of helping the elderly inherit their own houses program and fulfilling their dreams until they take their last breath, will be able to achieve tremendous success in the years to come.

M. Dilani Kumari (Elders Rights Promotion Officer, District Secretariat Kegalle)

The Diriya Piyasa Housing Scheme is another major program among the welfare programs implemented by the National Secretariat for Elders. The programme supports eligible homeless elderly citizens with low-incomes in the community.

Among the basic needs of humanity are food, clothing and housing. Hence, the programme identifies low-income earners over the age of sixty who have not fulfilled their wishes and are homeless. By providing a home for the elderly citizen, it has been possible to get great self-satisfaction in the practical experience of the service that we have done. Helping others experience happiness, especially the elderly, is a great merit.



The Diriya Piyasa program has provided the most valuable programs as well as provision for two beneficiaries in each of the districts last year. It is great to note that the maximum amount of 5 lakhs given last year to each person has now been increased to 7 lakhs this year.

I would like to express my gratitude for the mission carried out by the National Secretariat for Elders for the elderly who are living in poverty amid the severe economic hardships of today.

S. R. P. Chamila Udayangani (Elders Rights Promotion Officer, District Secretariat Matara)

Example of the reconstruction





Messages from recipients



My wife and I were living in a wooden house. We did not have a permanent home. My child is also sick. So last year, the National Elders General Secretary arranged the house for us. The office gave an aid amount of five lakhs. With that money, we were able to build a permanent house. By this time, my wife also died. I live in this house with my child. I would like to thank everyone who helped me to build this house. I am very helpless. This kind of help to the elderly is very valuable.

M. U. D. Piyadasa, Ranvijayagama, Udapola, Deraniyagala



Happiness and thanks — A poem

The happiness of giving a house is ours
Fragrant flowers bloom in our hearts
Respected officers and gentlemen, ours to all
Ours is with gratitude and respect
Provision given of five lakhs
The house built is a super house
Talk about the aid given
We offer thanksgiving flowers to everyone

Vijith Dissanayake, Deiyandara, Mullatiyana



The care that needs to be given to elders, who nurtured the economic, social, cultural and values of our country, cannot be measured. We were always brought up under the guidance of elders. As a Sri Lankan nation that is said to have inherited such a culture, they have independence, dignity and self-esteem in their adulthood.

With the aim of creating an environment to live with dignity, the Diriya Piyasa Housing Scheme is implemented under the financial contribution received from the National Fund for the Welfare of Elders. This project will set the background for the physical and mental health of the elderly so that they are not invalid in society.

**Raveendra Sunimal Gunathissa,
Elders Rights Promotion Officer, National Secretariat for Elders**

Please send examples of good work in your community to
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Directorate of Youth, Elderly and Disabled Persons, Ministry of Health
National Secretariat for the Elderly, Ministry Social Empowerment
Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) Project for Capacity Enhancement of
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