

RYS-Built Community Center Opens in Sri Lanka

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Kalpitiya, Sri Lanka—Members of Parliament and other dignitaries attended the opening ceremony for a village community center built by the Religious Youth Service (RYS), a UPF project.

The ceremony took place on April 18, 2015, in Kalpitiya, a village in the Puttalam District, about 200 kilometers (nearly 125 miles) from the capital, Colombo. The population includes thousands of people from the northern and eastern parts of the country who were displaced by the 26-year-long civil war.



Building a much-needed community center for the Kalpitiya villagers was chosen by RYS as a service project for 2012. The RYS participants, with the help of like-minded groups such as the Tharunyata Hetak

youth organization, enthusiastically took part in making its foundation and a substantial part of its structure.

The building will allow villagers to hold meetings, self-help programs, family functions, cultural activities and social celebrations.

Mr. Neomal Perera, a member of Parliament representing the Puttalam District, was the chief guest. Another MP, Mr. Thilanga Sumathipala of the Colombo District, who had coordinated the building project, organized the program. Many dignitaries, elected representatives and local officials attended the ceremony, as did a large number of villagers who were thrilled to see their dream become a reality.



Dr. Chula Senaratne, secretary general of UPF-Sri Lanka, explained how a splendid vision had come to fruition. Evoking the theme of the RYS project 2012—“Sustainable Peace for a Sustainable Future”—Dr. Senaratne highlighted how RYS has inspired young people to think high, dream big and work together for a united, harmonious and peaceful world. The completion of the project is a joyous moment for both RYS and UPF-Sri Lanka, he said.

Religious Youth Service in Sri Lanka has a proud history of accomplishing innovative peace projects and programs. It has organized projects every year since 2000, involving people, especially youth, from different faiths and nationalities and vastly enriching the social and religious harmony in the multicultural island nation.