

Sri Lanka

Main Objectives

UNHCR continued to work on behalf of IDPs to improve their access to national protection and humanitarian assistance. After June 2001, UNHCR turned increasingly to specific objectives such as strengthening partnerships with other humanitarian and development agencies/institutions, particularly UNICEF, to address the serious issue of under-age recruitment.

Impact

- The UNHCR presence was a vital means of monitoring the situation of IDPs and providing protection and emergency relief when necessary. A large number of IDPs were assisted both directly and indirectly by UNHCR, e.g. the relocation of 974 families (4,396 persons) in Vavuniya and 235 families (1,175 persons) in Mannar districts.
- As a result of intervention by UNHCR and other concerned organisations, the Government refrained in 2001 from sponsoring returns to areas generally deemed to be unsafe.
- UNHCR has been advocating the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, which set forth the rights, basic standards and treatment of IDPs in all phases of displacement. These principles are increasingly serving to underpin the approach to IDP issues taken by the government and humanitarian and human rights agencies in Sri Lanka.
- UNHCR signed a co-operation agreement with the National Human Rights Commission in order to increase its capacity to focus more on



the rights of IDPs and to help resolve problems arising in individual cases. As a result, roughly 230 people were assisted.

- UNHCR improved child protection through close collaboration with UNICEF to monitor child recruitment in the conflict-affected area.

Working Environment

The Context

The conflict in Sri Lanka entered its 19th year in 2001. The year began with the Liberation Tigers of

Tamil Eelam (LTTE) declaring a unilateral cease-fire that lasted only until April, when serious fighting resumed in the Jaffna peninsula. In July, the LTTE attacked the country's main air force base at Katunayake and the adjoining international airport. The entire economy suffered as a consequence. The fragile security situation kept huge numbers of IDPs in limbo without a solution in sight. Nevertheless, voluntary repatriation from India to Sri Lanka of a small number of refugees took place to areas under Sri Lankan Government control.

A significant political break-through emerged at the very end of 2001. One of the first steps taken by the newly-elected Government was to revive the Norwegian initiative to facilitate direct talks between the Government and LTTE. A series of confidence-building measures were taken by the both parties, such as the lifting of restrictions on movement of people and commodities in and out of the areas directly affected by the conflict.

At the end of 2001, UNHCR estimated that over 800,000 persons remained internally displaced, of whom UNHCR assisted directly and indirectly some 680,000 persons. Of the 713,379 persons receiving food assistance from the Government, an estimated 175,000 persons were residing in Government Welfare centres and a total of 11,842 persons continued to seek refuge in the Madhu Open Relief Centre, where UNHCR maintains a full time protection presence.

Constraints

Promoting national protection and durable solutions in the midst of an armed conflict continued

Persons of Concern				
Main Origin/ Type of Population	Total in Country	Of whom UNHCR assisted	Per cent Female	Per cent under 18
Sri Lanka (IDPs)	683,300	-	-	-

Income and Expenditure (USD) Annual Programme Budget				
Revised Budget	Income from Contributions ¹	Other Funds Available ²	Total Funds Available	Total Expenditure
6,232,204	5,860,196	1,333,087	7,193,283	5,967,330

¹ Includes income from contributions restricted at the country level.

² Includes allocations by UNHCR from unearmarked or broadly earmarked contributions, opening balance and adjustments.

The above figures do not include costs at Headquarters.

to be a challenging task. The unpredictable and fluid security situation made it extremely difficult for UNHCR to operate and gain access to people. The security situation not only limited UNHCR's access to IDPs who were effectively stranded (unable to move freely, unable to find work) but also posed a significant risk to all aid workers. The Government's restrictions on body armour, vehicle protection (against landmines) and communication equipment made it impossible for UNHCR to comply with the Minimum Operational Security Standards (MOSS) established by the United Nations. The widespread presence of mines and unexploded ordnance – largely a consequence of almost continuous changes in the front lines – will undoubtedly become serious obstacles to the return of IDPs to their homes. In July 2001, areas under LTTE control and in the north of the country were deemed too dangerous for the continuation of several of UNHCR's activities in Vanni.

Funding

Donor interest in the UNHCR's operation in Sri Lanka remained high. The financial requirement presented in the 2001 Global Appeal was well covered by earmarked contributions from donors, aware of the importance of UNHCR's work in Sri Lanka.

Achievement and Impact

Protection and Solutions

The impact of the conflict on children in the north and east of Sri Lanka remained serious, particularly the risk of recruitment of child-fighters by the LTTE. UNHCR and UNICEF worked together to monitor the incidence of child recruitment by observing and promoting school attendance. UNHCR signed a co-operation agreement with the National Human Rights Commission in order to increase the capacity of the Commission to focus on the rights of IDPs and to help them resolve individual problems. UNHCR also continued to refer



Community life and activities are an important part of their lives. Returnee IDPs in Vavuniya. UNHCR / M. Kobayashi

the protection needs of individuals in detention to the ICRC.

The Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement are the foundation for UNHCR's protection interventions on behalf of IDPs. UNHCR continued to urge the Government and NGOs to adopt these principles through public information activities, training and distribution of written materials. A Situation Analysis Project, based on the Guiding Principles, is expected to provide a comprehensive analysis of the present situation of IDPs in Sri Lanka. This will undoubtedly help us in reviewing our activities.

Activities and Assistance

Community Services: Some 280,000 IDPs, mainly women and children, had access to a variety of community-based projects through 33 multi-purpose community centres, four feeding centres for children, centres for the psycho-social rehabilitation of children, and social mobilisation activities for women. UNHCR helped a new NGO, the Jaffna Social Action Centre, to promote the rights of women and children. A landmine expert was made

available to assist the UN Country Team in the development of a joint mine action programme for Sri Lanka.

Crop Production: A total of 36 projects were carried out to distribute agricultural tools and provide loans to some 10,000 IDPs and returnees to improve their food basket and disposable income.

Domestic Needs/Household Support: UNHCR distributed non-food items to 3,500 IDP families such as plastic sheetings, cooking utensils, soap and educational materials.

Education: UNHCR constructed a total of 11 primary schools and provided school furniture for 13 schools. UNHCR also organised five vocational training programmes targeting school dropouts.

Forestry: UNHCR distributed seedlings and saplings of fruit trees and perennial plants to IDP communities of some 1,600 families, and organised a series of training on perennial crop cultivation.

Fisheries: UNHCR implemented eight micro projects to distribute fishing tackle and provided

loans to a total of 446 families (1,784 persons), enabling them to increase their income and improve the overall well-being of their families.

Health/Nutrition: UNHCR constructed and repaired wards in two community medical centres in Jaffna District. UNHCR also supplied two mortuary coolers to the Jaffna teaching hospital and provided a boat ambulance to island villages in Jaffna district, thereby significantly improving IDPs' access to health services.

Income Generation: To help improve the economic situation of those IDPs and returnees deemed to be particularly vulnerable, 25 projects were implemented, providing loans to over 3,800 persons, including 109 families headed by vulnerable women and 416 physically disabled individuals. Training on small business skills was provided for 180 young adults.

Legal Assistance: In partnership with the National Human Rights Commission, the Legal Aid Project and the Sri Lankan Bar Association, a series of activities were undertaken to help protect the rights of IDPs and facilitate their access to justice within the framework of the Sri Lankan legal system. Specific achievements included the referral of 100 cases of human rights cases to the Human Rights Commission for follow-up action and the establishment of five legal foundation centres in Vavuniya, Mannar, Trincomalee, Batticaloa and Puttalam. Under the legal aid project, 230 individuals with human rights problems were assisted by lawyers.

Livestock: UNHCR distributed livestock and provided loan credits to 446 families (1,784 persons) and 170 vulnerable women to improve their food security and economic well-being.

Operational Support (to Agencies): UNHCR funded the costs of UNVs and part of operational costs of NGOs as well as those of local authorities involved in the assistance programme.

Sanitation: UNHCR constructed 490 communal latrines in welfare centres, schools and villages. UNHCR also renovated children's homes, benefiting 200 children, and organised sanitation related awareness programmes for 3,500 families.

Shelter/Other Infrastructure: UNHCR constructed 760 semi-permanent houses for IDPs/returnees and distributed shelter materials to 413 families for the construction of temporary shelters. UNHCR constructed and repaired more than 20km of roads in nine different locations to improve public access to services and markets.

Transport/Logistics: UNHCR maintained a fleet of four lorries to transport humanitarian supplies into the conflict-affected areas. During the year, UNHCR organised 52 convoys to deliver medical supplies, school equipment, non-food relief items and other supplies to operational partners, who then handled distribution to targeted beneficiaries.

Water: 103 tube and open wells were constructed to improve access to potable water for IDPs and returnees.

Organisation and Implementation

Management

UNHCR maintained offices in Colombo, Jaffna, Mallavi (covering Kilinochchi and Mullaitivu), Madhu, Trincomalee and Vavuniya with a total of 73 staff (13 professional officers, one national officer, 48 general service staff and eight UNVs). UNHCR offices in Sri Lanka and India maintained close contact and exchanged information.

Working with Others

The Government has primary responsibility for protection of and assistance to the civilian population directly affected by the armed conflict. The role of humanitarian organisations, including UNHCR, is therefore, complementary. UNHCR worked with one Government agency, six international and eight national NGOs as operational partners. The most significant change in the implementation strategy was the partnership with the National Human Rights Commission and the Legal Aid Foundation of the Sri Lankan Bar Association. UNHCR assisted the Emergency Preparedness Working Group which was set up by the Consortium of Humanitarian Agencies (CHA) with the support of the e-Centre (Regional Centre for Emer-

gency Training in International Humanitarian Response) based in Tokyo. Working in conjunction with CHA, UNHCR also organised contingency-planning workshops at district level in Trincomalee, Vavuniya, Mannar, Anuradhapura and Ampara, to enhance preparedness for further displacement. UNHCR worked closely with UNDP and UNICEF to develop a UN joint programme, commencing in 2002, for action on landmines and unexploded ordnance in potential areas of return.

UNHCR actively sought collaborative work with other UN agencies and development institutions in order to improve the quality of life of the targeted population. This will serve as the basis for post-conflict rehabilitation, reconciliation and development. For example, UNHCR worked with the World Bank on the Northeast Irrigated Agriculture Project (with UNHCR's notable involvement in needs assessment and monitoring). UNHCR worked closely with UNICEF on the protection of children. A number of projects were implemented jointly with WFP in several communities in Mannar District where a large number of IDPs resettled. UNHCR initiated dialogue with GTZ and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) with a view to future collaboration.

UNHCR is an active member of the UN Country Team in Sri Lanka, particularly in the Relief and Rehabilitation Theme Group and the Security Management Team. UNHCR continued to work within the framework of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, which was finalised in 2001 to cover the period 2002-2006.

Overall Assessment

During the year 2001, UNHCR was able to shift its focus of operations from assistance, characterised by micro-projects and the Open Relief Centres, to more protection-driven activities, which could respond to a wide range of protection and human rights issues. Assistance activities, however, continued to play an important role in addressing protection issues. UNHCR continued to engage in dialogue with both the Government and LTTE to address the protection problems of displaced persons.

Offices

Colombo
Jaffna
Madhu
Mallavi
Trincomalee
Vavuniya

Partners

Government Agencies

Resettlement and Rehabilitation Authority of the North

NGOs

Campaign for Development and Solidarity
Care international
Lanka Jatika Sarvodaya Shramadana Sangamaya
Médecins Sans Frontières (France)
MEMISA
OXFAM
Rural Development Foundation
Sewa Lanka Foundation
Sri Lanka Red Cross Society
World University Service of Canada
ZOA Refugee Care

Others

UNVs

Financial Report (USD)

Expenditure Breakdown	Annual Programme Budget		Annual Programme Budget	
	Current Year's Projects	notes	Prior Year's Projects	notes
Protection, Monitoring and Co-ordination	1,798,627		3,578	
Community Services	51,691		90,954	
Crop Production	26,056		205,009	
Domestic Needs / Household Support	24,643		17,437	
Education	141,883		270,985	
Food	0		13,981	
Fisheries	17		16,895	
Forestry	13,094		4,831	
Health / Nutrition	9,689		63,381	
Income Generation	43,285		70,284	
Legal Assistance	27,431		173	
Livestock	13,583		70,509	
Operational Support (to Agencies)	559,459		181,206	
Sanitation	22,887		107,603	
Shelter / Other Infrastructure	154,663		324,161	
Transport / Logistics	96,534		22,330	
Water	72,613		28,176	
Instalments with Implementing Partners	810,308		(974,574)	
Sub-total Operational	3,866,463		516,919	
Programme Support	776,353		0	
Sub-total Disbursements / Deliveries	4,642,816	(3)	516,919	(5)
Unliquidated Obligations	1,324,514	(3)	0	(5)
TOTAL	5,967,330	(1) (3)	516,919	

Instalments with Implementing Partners

Payments Made	1,589,217		453,110	
Reporting Received	778,909		1,427,684	
Balance	810,308		(974,574)	
Outstanding 1st January	0		1,016,326	
Refunded to UNHCR	0		58,218	
Currency Adjustment	0		16,466	
Outstanding 31 December	810,308		0	

Unliquidated Obligations

Outstanding 1st January			666,296	(5)
New Obligations	5,967,330	(1)	0	
Disbursements	4,642,816	(3)	516,919	(5)
Cancellations	0		149,377	(5)
Outstanding 31 December	1,324,514	(3)	0	

Figures which cross reference to Accounts:

- (1) Annex to Statement 1
- (3) Schedule 3
- (5) Schedule 5