

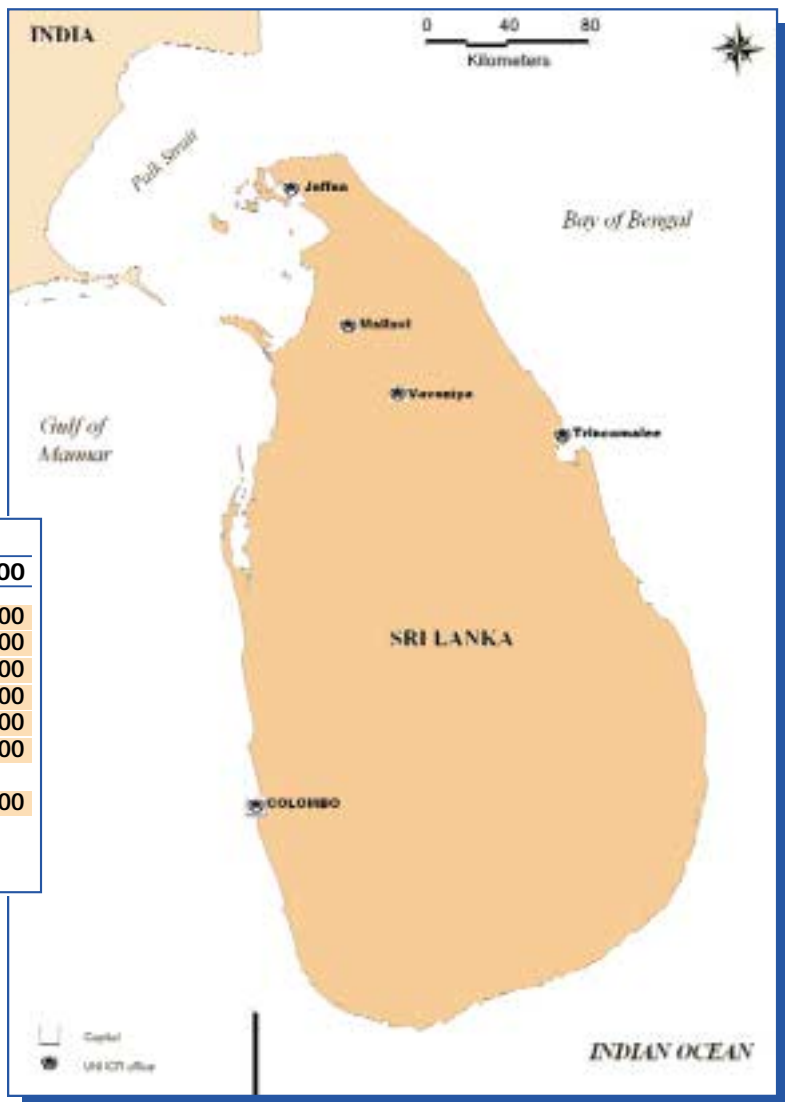
# SRI LANKA

## IN SHORT



### Main Objectives

- Improve access to national protection and humanitarian assistance for internally displaced persons (IDPs) in the north and north-east of Sri Lanka.
- Minimise internal population displacement, and provide alternatives to flight from regions of instability.
- Create stability for displaced communities and conditions conducive to long-term solutions.
- Facilitate the return and reintegration of displaced populations, especially the vulnerable, to settlement areas.



Planning Figures		
Areas	Jan. 2000	Dec. 2000
Jaffna Peninsula	120,600	120,600
Vavuniya District	46,200	46,200
Mannar District	37,800	37,800
Killinochchi	66,000	66,000
Mullaitivu	80,600	80,600
Trincomalee	61,200	61,200
<b>Total</b>	<b>412,400</b>	<b>412,400</b>
<b>Total Requirements USD 5,666,663</b>		

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## WORKING ENVIRONMENT

### Recent Developments

Since the escalation of the conflict between the Sri Lankan authorities and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) in late 1995, several hundred thousand people have been displaced within the northern provinces of Sri Lanka. Simultaneously, some 140,000 IDPs have returned to Jaffna, while others have moved to the southern Vavuniya and Mannar districts. Violence has also led to repeated population displacement within the Vanni region, and more departures for India.

Since March 1999, an additional 20,000 have been displaced, of whom 10,000 have received humanitarian assistance from UNHCR, ICRC and NGOs in LTTE-dominated areas. After the Sri Lankan armed forces regained control of Madhu, a UNHCR-supported Open Relief Centre was closed, after operating for ten years, and the population either returned to their places of origin or moved to new locations. It is especially worrying that food supplies for those still remaining in the conflict zone have been repeatedly interrupted. UNHCR maintains a continuous dialogue with both the Government and the LTTE on the protection of basic rights and the delivery of humanitarian assistance.

### Constraints

The displaced people of the north and east of Sri Lanka have in many cases already had to move several times, but still face a situation characterised by a heavy military presence and protracted conflict. There are strict controls on the movement of people and goods so it is difficult to gain access to shelter and basic services like health and education. Employment opportunities are very scarce. Until a lasting solution is found to the civil conflict, repeated displacement will leave people increasingly vulnerable and reliant on humanitarian assistance.

### Protection and Solutions

UNHCR will continue to facilitate freedom of movement through dialogue with the Government as well as with the LTTE. It will also promote other initiatives conducive to the safe return of refugees. These include in particular the conti-

nued monitoring of conditions in centres for the internally displaced as well as conditions upon their return. Tasks are prioritised through constructive dialogue with the civilian population.

UNHCR will continue to help the Sri Lankan authorities and other agencies protect displaced persons in emergency situations. This means raising awareness among the military, the civilian population, Government officials in the north and east, and the LTTE, of UNHCR's role. UNHCR's commitment and continued involvement is crucial in conflict-torn areas where the Government may not always be able to guarantee assistance and protection for IDPs. UNHCR will continue to intervene with the authorities to resolve problems hindering the voluntary return of displaced persons. UNHCR's involvement with and advocacy of the procedures for issuing travel passes to residents of welfare centres in Vavuniya and Mannar districts has helped simplify the pass system, thus improving freedom of movement. The procedures are more complicated for persons from areas dominated by the LTTE, and UNHCR continues to advocate an easing of restrictions.

Some 75 per cent of the IDPs are women and children, and UNHCR will continue to give priority to their needs. Consequently, UNHCR and its partners incorporate gender analysis into the planning process. The resulting projects include psychosocial rehabilitation of traumatised individuals, leadership training and community welfare activities specifically for widows, single parents and the disabled. UNHCR will continue to actively advocate the demilitarisation of children and their physical protection.

### Assistance

Although UNHCR's aim is to minimise internal population displacement, for planning purposes it assumes that the ongoing conflict will cause further displacement, necessitating immediate assistance to IDPs. Essential relief items will have to be provided, including an emergency water supply, temporary shelter (such as plastic sheeting and roofing materials), health and sanitary services, and transport.

Host communities will be helped to cope, so as to provide some stability for the displaced population and to cater for the needs of newly arrived IDPs. Micro-projects will be launched in a variety of fields (water and sanitary facilities, health, agriculture). Assistance will encourage self-reliance

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## STRATEGY



through income-generating activities, earned income being essential to supplement the dry food rations provided by the Government. UNHCR will assist host communities with basic infrastructure.

UNHCR's main objective in Government welfare centres is three-fold: improved personal safety, improved general conditions for residents, and the promotion of lasting solutions. In addition to its monitoring and advocacy role on behalf of displaced persons in the centres, UNHCR will provide limited assistance to improve and augment Government services.

UNHCR will continue to facilitate the local reintegration of displaced persons whenever a return to villages of origin or permanent settlement is possible. Operations will be mainly in the districts of Killinochchi, Mannar, Mullaitivu, Trincomalee and Vavuniya. Assistance to these returning IDPs is essential, especially during the early stages of rehabilitation. Here, the focus will be on micro-projects fostering the development of infrastructure, in addition to improving skills and income-generating activities through vocational training, grants and revolving loan schemes. Close monitoring and confidence-building measures will contribute towards early rebuilding of community support and self-reliance, which means a bet-

ter quality of life for the population at large.

#### Desired Impact

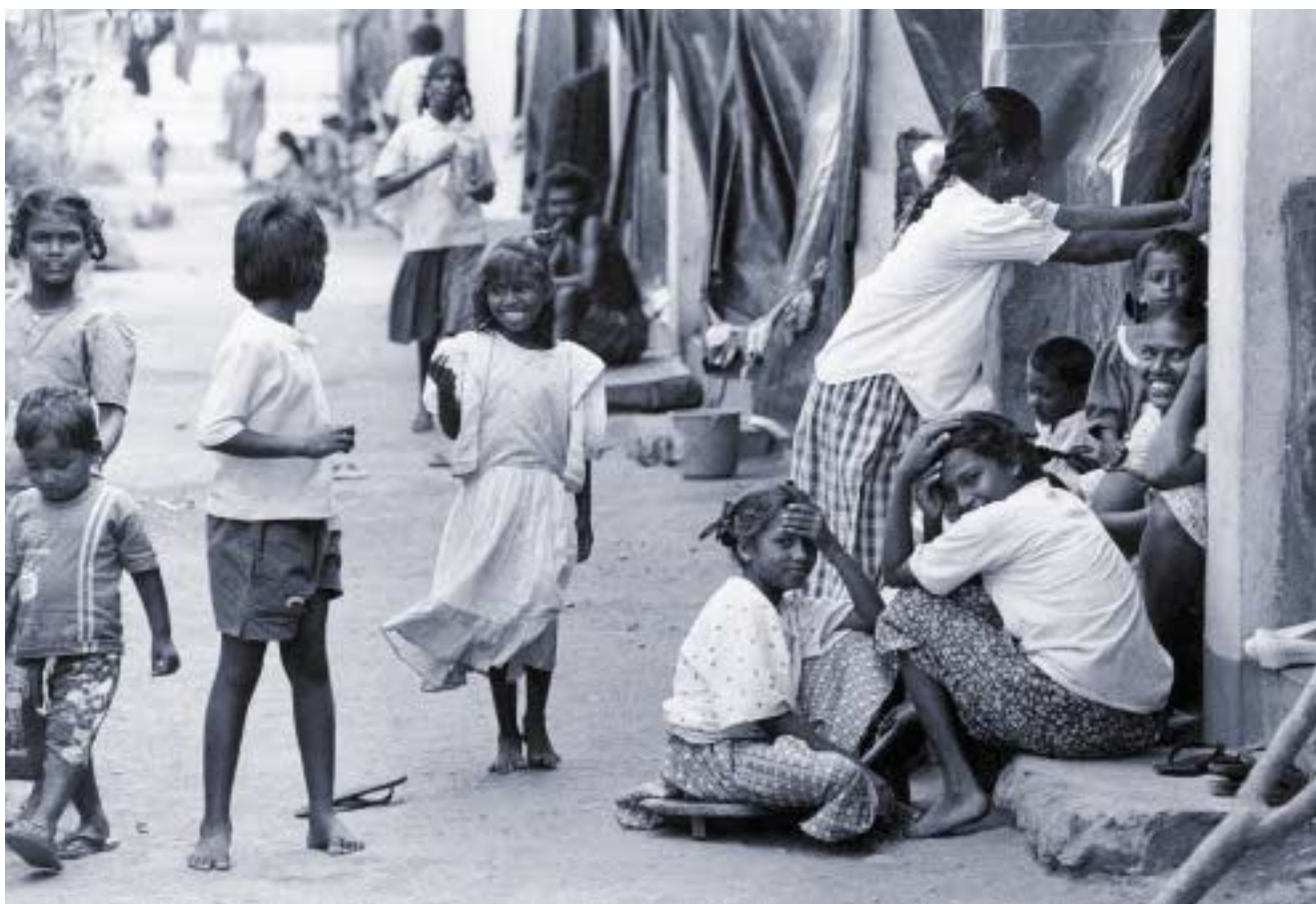
UNHCR's overarching aim is to alleviate the effect of the conflict in Sri Lanka on the displaced civilian population and contribute to solutions. Emergency protection and humanitarian assistance will encourage the restoration of their basic rights and security and enhance their opportunities for economic and social development.

UNHCR's presence in both the Government-controlled and LTTE-dominated areas of the country as well as its partnerships with all concerned (Government, UN agencies, ICRC, NGOs) enables the organisation to ensure that assistance is complementary to the Government's, that standards are appropriate, and duplication is avoided.

## ORGANISATION AND IMPLEMENTATION

#### Management Structure

In 2000, UNHCR in Sri Lanka will work with 62 staff (13 international and 49 national). Two Junior Professional Officers will be deployed to provide additional support. In addition, six United Nations





volunteers are a key element in UNHCR's field presence. The Branch Office in Colombo is responsible for overall management of the programme, as well as liaison with the Government, diplomatic missions and NGOs. In 1999, a progressive decentralisation and delegation of responsibilities to field offices was implemented to increase responsiveness. Activities on the ground are coordinated through UNHCR's field offices located in the north (Jaffna, Mallavi, Mannar/T'Madhu and Vavuniya), and in the east at Trincomalee.

### Coordination

UNHCR was requested by the Secretary-General in 1991 to expand protection and assistance to returnees to include the internally displaced. This request was reiterated in 1997.

UNHCR will maintain active partnerships with all agencies working with IDPs in the north and north-east, including UN agencies (UNDP, UNICEF, and WFP), ICRC, the World Bank and the relevant ministries of the Sri Lankan Government. UNHCR's primary implementing partner in the Sri Lankan Government is the Resettlement and Rehabilitation Authority of the North. NGOs will continue to play a prominent role in UNHCR's operations in Sri Lanka.

UNHCR works closely with ICRC to provide humanitarian assistance in all areas of operations. Areas of responsibility are divided between ICRC, UNHCR and NGOs according to the expertise and resources of each agency. During the early phases of displacement, UNHCR's focus on return and rehabilitation provides an important complement to the role of ICRC and others. Subsequently, it helps set out priorities for more development-oriented activities.

### Offices

Colombo  
Jaffna  
Mannar/ T'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 Shamadana Sangamaya*  
*Médecins Sans Frontières - France*  
*Médecins Sans Frontières - Holland*  
OXFAM  
Rural Development Foundation  
Sewa Lanka Foundation  
Sri Lanka Red Cross Society - Trincomalee Branch  
World University Services of Canada  
Zoa Refugee Care Netherlands

### Budget (USD)

Activities and Services	Annual Programme
Protection, Monitoring and Coordination	1,319,989
Community Services	231,480
Crop Production	
Domestic Needs/ Household Support	534,875
Education	175,673
Fisheries	394,150
Forestry	159,100
Health/Nutrition	12,000
Income Generation	192,942
Legal Assistance	253,075
Livestock	19,530
Operational Support (to Agencies)	95,000
Sanitation	718,080
Shelter/Other Infrastructure	32,440
Transport/Logistics	210,200
Water (non-agricultural)	337,055
	229,100
<b>Total Operations</b>	<b>4,914,689</b>
<b>Programme Support</b>	<b>751,974</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,666,663</b>