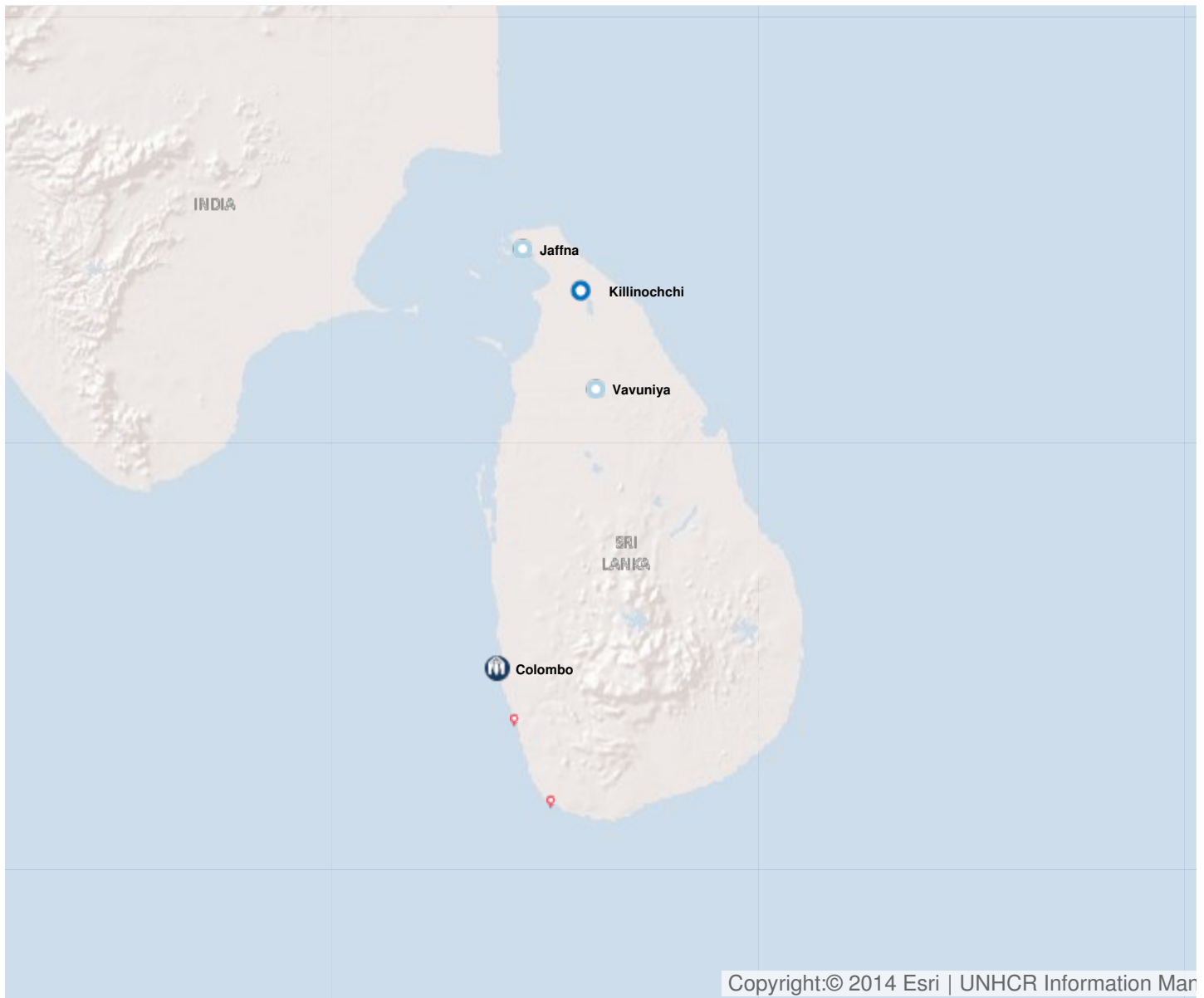


## 2017 Planning summary

Downloaded on 2/12/2016

### Operation: Sri Lanka

#### Location



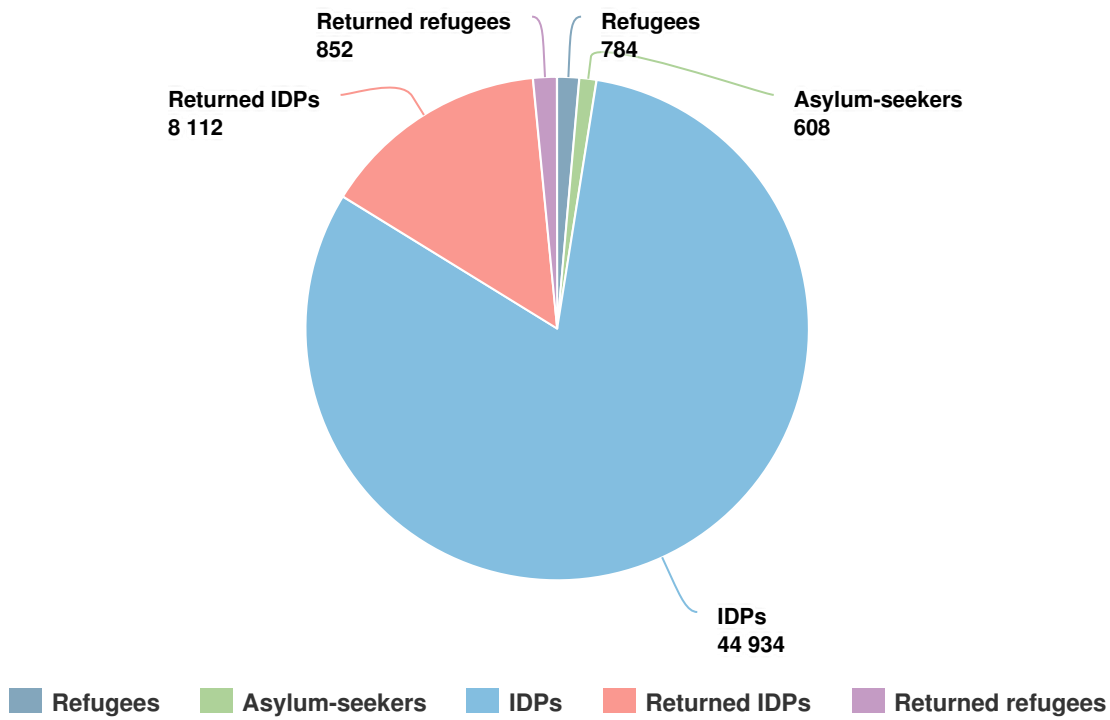
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Latest update of camps and office locations **21 Nov 2016**. By clicking on the icons on the map, additional information is displayed.

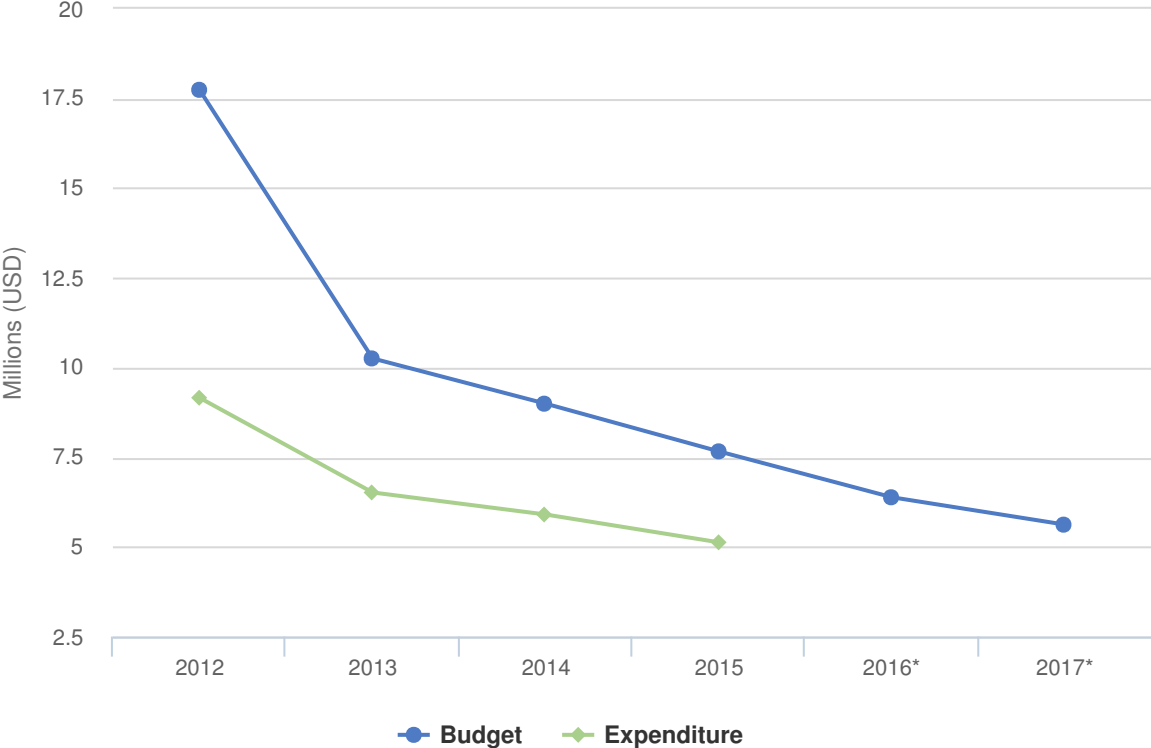
# People of Concern

INCREASE IN  
**67%** **2015**

<b>2015</b>	55,290
<b>2014</b>	33,170
<b>2013</b>	85,554



# Budgets and Expenditure for Sri Lanka



## Working environment

In 2017, Sri Lanka is expected to advance the positive political transition that commenced with the 2015 presidential elections. Renewed engagement with the international community brought about several gains for the country on international and regional levels. Refugee protection and asylum space have been gradually improving since 2014. With resettlement being the only available durable solution from Sri Lanka, it is likely to attract more asylum-seekers. UNHCR expects near 710 new asylum claims in 2017.

Assuming that the current positive engagement of the Government prevail, increased return of refugees and the internally displaced can be expected in 2017. Nevertheless investment by development actors and others may not be adequate in return areas and may affect the sustainability of return. The Government continues to demonstrate its commitment towards finding durable solutions and greater reconciliation among communities, especially those affected by the conflict. Positive signs, such as release/return of land; reduced military involvement in civilian affairs; improvements in livelihoods, social development, housing, civil documentation; closer ties with India and opening of a refugee return dialogue; reconciliation, peace building and good governance are illustrative of the overall environment and likely to continue in 2017.

Sri Lanka made progress in granting citizenship to those previously stateless by amending the citizenship legislation in 2009. Despite the Government's efforts in reducing statelessness through legislative changes, some stateless people remain. It is expected that around 25% of the refugees returning from India may be at risk of statelessness. Also there remain some Tamils of Indian Origin living on the tea plantations who may be at risk of statelessness due to lack the necessary documentation. UNHCR has undertaken an assessment of the prevailing statelessness challenges in order to reshape its engagement accordingly, including its advocacy for Sri Lanka's accession to Statelessness instruments in 2017.

The Government has released 3,755 acres of land (including areas previously held under High Security and Economic Zones) for returnees enabling resettlement and exploring alternative ways to provide permanent housing to IDPs.

## Key priorities

In 2017 UNHCR's operation in Sri Lanka will focus on:

- Enhancing protection space and durable solutions for asylum-seekers and refugees.
- Facilitating the return of 1,500 Sri Lankan refugees from India.
- Continuing support to address risks of statelessness, through an analysis of the nationality laws of Sri Lanka with the purpose of identifying gaps between the national legislation and the provisions of the Statelessness Conventions.
- Building capacity for refugee status determination and durable solutions, and seeking more active engagement of the Government.

The overall funding for Sri Lanka have gradually decreased over the past years, with concomitant effects on the capacities of the UNHCR operation. Of the 4,000 returnees planned in 2017, only 1,500 people will be assisted with transportation, reintegration and cash grants. UNHCR will be unable to reach its comprehensive target of 90% reduction in those at risk of statelessness in the plantation districts and among returnees from India. The operation also requires resources to provide material assistance to the most vulnerable asylum seekers, transportation support to primary school children.

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