

Sri Lanka

31 May 2019

UNHCR Sri Lanka is seeking urgent support for over **1,000 refugees and asylum seekers displaced** following the 21 April attacks.

Refugees and asylum seekers have sought refuge in communal spaces which are **over-crowded and lack basic facilities**.

UNHCR is providing protection, food and medicine while working to identify more sustainable solutions.

KEY INDICATORS

1,610

UNHCR registered population as of 31 May 2019

781 refugees **829** asylum seekers

1,017

Displaced refugees and asylum seekers as of 31 May 2019

Location

Negombo mosque: **296**

Pasyala community centre: **609**

112

Displaced refugees and asylum seekers

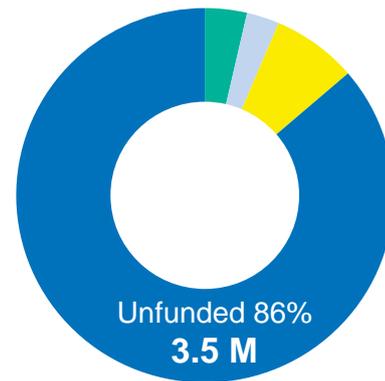
relocated to safe sites as of 31 May

FUNDING (AS OF 29 MAY)

USD 4.1 M

requested for Sri Lanka in 2019

Funded
14%
0.6 M



- Earmarked
- Softly earmarked
- Unearmarked

Overview of Emergency Needs

UNHCR is urgently seeking \$1.7 million to protect newly displaced refugees and asylum seekers following the 21 April attacks, to enable the affected persons of concern to live in dignity and safety until they are able to return to their prior residences or alternative solutions are found. UNHCR has identified the following priority interventions for immediate implementation:

- Provide **protection and temporary assistance** to persons of concern residing in temporary accommodation, including food, basic non-food items, health care, hygiene, and sanitation.
- Support the government to **identify and equip alternative sites**.
- Strengthen and expand **community outreach and community based protection activities**.
- Explore, identify, and accelerate access to **solutions including resettlement**, particularly for the most vulnerable.

Operational Context

On 21 April 2019, coordinated attacks targeting churches and hotels in several locations killed more than 250 people and injured more than 500. These attacks also had a significant impact on persons of concern to UNHCR, which number approximately 1,700 individuals, largely from Pakistan and Afghanistan. In the days following the attacks, more than a thousand refugees and asylum seekers were forced to leave their homes following harassment, protests, and threats. They sought shelter and safety in a mosque and police station in Negombo, site of the deadliest suicide attack, and at a community center in Pasyala, near Colombo, where more than 600 people are currently hosted. None of these sites, however, are equipped to accommodate such large numbers of people for any length of time. The Army and police are providing security in these locations, but the situation is tenuous as some members of the public are demanding that refugees leave.

Achievements and Impact

- UNHCR is working closely with government authorities to ensure the protection, safety and security of all persons of concern in Sri Lanka, particularly those who have been displaced after the attacks.
- UNHCR, partner agencies, and civil society are providing food, medicine, shelter and relief items to the displaced refugees and asylum seekers at the temporary sites, until appropriate solutions are identified. UNHCR is closely monitoring the situation to identify protection risks or gaps in assistance. To date, six UNHCR staff from the Regional Office in Bangkok have been deployed to support the response, and additional international and national staff are being recruited on a temporary basis.
- UNHCR, working closely with government authorities, organized the relocation of 112 people from the Negombo police station to a location identified by the government in Vavuniya. Police provided critical support during the relocation and along with the army are ensuring safety at the site. Following additional renovations and preparation, the site in Vavuniya will be able accommodate up to 150 persons.
- UNHCR has asked resettlement countries to expedite the processing of pending cases and to offer additional resettlement places in consideration of the urgent protection situation. Since 21 April, 116 refugees have departed for third country resettlement.
- UNHCR continues to work with the Government and partners to identify solutions for affected persons of concern who have sought temporary shelter in other communal locations.

External / Donors Relations

THANKS TO THE GOVERNMENT OF AUSTRALIA FOR PROVIDING AUD 300,000 FOR THE RESPONSE
THANKS TO DONORS OF SOFTLY EARMARKED FUNDS IN 2019

Private donors Australia | Canada | United States of America | Private donors

SPECIAL THANKS TO THE MAJOR DONORS OF UNEARMARKED FUNDS IN 2019

Sweden 90.4 million | Norway 44.5 million | Netherlands 37.5 million | United Kingdom 31.7 million | Germany 26.7 million | Private donors Spain 26.3 million | Denmark 24.4 million | Switzerland 15.1 million | Private donors Republic of Korea 13.8 million

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SRI LANKA
Secondary displacement of refugees and asylum seekers

as of 31 May 2019

