

# SRI LANKA



## | Operational highlights |

- As part of its emergency preparedness in the north of Sri Lanka, UNHCR established mechanisms to coordinate protection and the provision of shelter and non-food relief items. The Office also prepared to assist a large number of internally displaced persons (IDPs).
- UNHCR strengthened its protection activities in view of the deteriorating situation in the north, and provided guidance to the Government on international protection standards and other matters, including camp management.
- The Office was able to provide immediate physical protection by distributing non-food relief items to newly displaced IDPs, thereby preventing their onward displacement.
- UNHCR helped 20,800 IDPs to return to their places of origin in the east of Sri Lanka, bringing the total number

- of returned IDPs to some 180,000. The Office worked to reduce onward displacement by providing shelter and livelihood assistance to returnees. By implementing small-scale and short-term, quick-impact projects, UNHCR succeeded in supporting returns as well as promoting stability and building confidence between different ethnic groups.
- UNHCR's regular protection monitoring and timely interventions helped to ensure a higher level of physical safety for IDPs and returnees, as well as respect for their rights. The Office conducted a series of events to increase awareness of the rights of IDPs among government officials, the military, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), beneficiaries and host communities.

Fierce fighting caused the displacement of some 12,000 families in Mannar and Kilinochchi's Mulankavil area during the month of July 2008 alone.



UNHCR/DIXIE

## Working environment

The conflict in Sri Lanka continued to deteriorate in 2008, with scaled-up military activities in the north of the country. The Sri Lankan Army progressively gained control over areas previously controlled by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). This led to multiple displacements during the course of the year and saw some IDPs move into Government-controlled territory. However, access to IDPs in LTTE-controlled areas was severely restricted, hampering the delivery of protection and assistance to an estimated 150,000 persons.

In September, after the Government asked all humanitarian workers to leave the Vanni as their safety could not be guaranteed, UNHCR, other UN agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) moved from

Kilinochchi to Vavuniya. From the Vavuniya hub, the Office focused on contingency preparedness, including the stockpiling of shelter and relief materials. It also worked to coordinate protection and advocated for humanitarian access to IDPs.

The east of Sri Lanka was not entirely free from security incidents, but there was a significant reduction in the number of those involving persons of concern to UNHCR in return areas. Local government and provincial council elections contributed to a more stable environment. This provided an impetus to development activities and encouraged the Government to complete a significant portion of return programmes.

In a relatively stable environment, as compared to the north, UNHCR was able to monitor protection, intervene where necessary and provide reintegration assistance.

### Persons of concern

Type of population	Origin	Total	Of whom assisted by UNHCR	Per cent female	Per cent under 18
Refugees	Various	270	270	39	39
Asylum-seekers	Pakistan	380	380	47	40
	Various	10	10	56	22
Returnees (refugees)	From India	1,700	1,700	-	-
	Various	10	10	-	-
IDPs		504,800	504,800	50	-
Returnees (IDPs)		20,800	20,800	50	
<b>Total</b>		<b>527,970</b>	<b>527,970</b>		



## | Achievements and impact |

### ● *Main objectives*

In 2008, UNHCR's main objectives were to ensure the protection of all conflict-affected IDPs; provide emergency assistance; lessen further displacement; and pursue appropriate durable solutions.

### ● *Protection and solutions*

Violence and human rights abuses, including extra-judicial killings, abductions, forced recruitment and harassment were reported throughout the year in the areas affected by the conflict. Forced population movements in the conflict zone in the north were also reported. UNHCR's monitoring and protection had an important preventive value and helped to ensure the safety and proper treatment of IDPs moving out of LTTE-controlled areas.

Numerous training and awareness-raising events sensitized national entities, NGOs and communities in the areas of IDP rights, children's rights, civil documentation, sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), and HIV and AIDS. Furthermore, NGOs working in IDP sites were trained to reduce the risk of SGBV. Building the capacity of camp management actors helped to identify the protection and assistance needs of IDPs.

Some 20,800 IDPs found durable solutions by returning to their homes in the eastern districts of Batticaloa and Trincomalee in 2008. The Office continued to advocate on refugee issues, including the country's accession to the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol.

The Government held a National Consultation on the Status of Internally Displaced Persons (due to conflict) to develop a national policy on the search for durable solutions for IDPs in protracted displacement.

### ● *Activities and assistance*

**Community services:** UNHCR maintained welfare centres and implemented community services projects, including those aimed at preventing SGBV and HIV and AIDS. It worked to reduce communal tension and to increase the protection and security of women, children and other persons with specific needs. More than 400 people benefited from camp management training and some 600 received coaching support in 38 locations. Tree-planting campaigns and cash-for-work projects were also carried out.

By implementing some 80 quick-impact projects, one third of which focused on economic recovery, the Office provided much-needed support to returnees and host communities. Some 200 refugees received monthly subsistence allowances, and approximately 100 individuals received health care. More than 500 women were granted loans, enabling them to initiate income-generation activities.

**Domestic needs and household support:** UNHCR coordinated and distributed some 264,000 non-food relief items, including tents, mosquito nets, plastic sheets and hygiene materials, to IDPs and returnees.

**Legal assistance:** UNHCR led the efforts of the IDP Protection Working Group and advocated with the Government to follow guidelines on the treatment of IDPs from the LTTE-controlled areas in the north. The Office monitored abuses against IDPs and intervened on their

behalf when necessary to seek redress. More than 2,000 protection monitoring missions were conducted in 2008.

UNHCR's protection coordination role helped to ensure the physical safety of IDPs; improve IDPs' and returnees' access to various legal services; and raise the quality of registration. Some 9,100 cases were assisted with civil documentation. Awareness-raising events on protection, human rights, HIV and AIDS and sexual violence benefited more than 13,000 people, including IDPs, host community members, government officials and military personnel.

**Operational support (to agencies):** UNHCR increased the operational capacity of implementing partners by providing them with training on protection, programme and financial management. Partners were also provided with additional staff through the UN Volunteers programme.

**Sanitation:** In Jaffna, UNHCR constructed toilets, tube wells and open wells in welfare centers and returnee areas. In Vavuniya, UNHCR constructed tube wells in identified contingency sites to complement shelter activities. Existing wells were rehabilitated in and around the contingency sites in order to ensure that the minimum standards under emergency camp situations are maintained. Moreover, new toilets were constructed and existing ones rehabilitated in the identified contingency sites in Vavuniya. In Trincomalee, UNHCR constructed toilets and dug septic tanks.

UNHCR distributed hygiene kits to IDPs in Jaffna, Vavuniya and Mannar. The Office also set up solar-powered lighting around bathing and toilet areas in IDP sites in Jaffna, Vavuniya, Mannar, Batticaloa and Trincomalee in order to ensure the safety of women using these facilities at night.

**Shelter and other infrastructure:** UNHCR continued to coordinate the inter-agency response through the Shelter Coordination Cell. This provided technical guidance and developed policy guidelines regarding shelter assistance, the decommissioning of sites, emergency preparedness and contingency planning, besides site preparation in the North. UNHCR also constructed 500 emergency shelters and made available 3,800 emergency shelter kits. Some 270 transitional shelters and 230 semi-permanent shelters were also built, and more than 1,600 houses and shelters were repaired and upgraded.

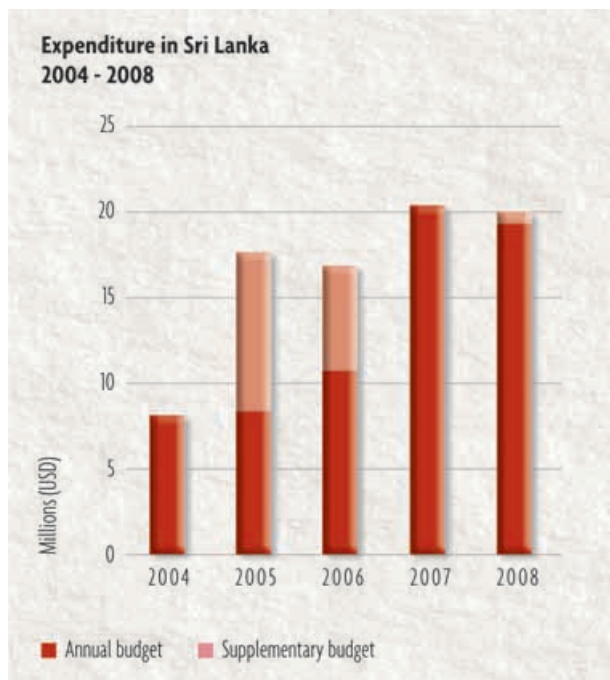
The Office distributed 500 house repair kits, and some 530 families benefited from labour support in repairing their homes.

**Transport and logistics:** Upgraded warehouse capacity in Batticaloa and Vavuniya and a fleet of trucks allowed timely delivery of assistance to IDPs.

**Water:** More than 20 wells were constructed or repaired, ensuring clean water for some 8,300 people.

### ● *Constraints*

The conflict in the north of Sri Lanka challenged UNHCR's operation in 2008. Increased military activity and security measures, the frequent closure of crossing points into some areas, curfews, the presence of land mines and time-consuming clearance procedures hampered UNHCR's activities. Lack of access to the population trapped in the



LTTE-controlled areas in the Vanni was one of the largest constraints faced not only by UNHCR but the entire humanitarian community in Sri Lanka. The repatriation of Sri Lankan refugees from India was also challenged by the military activities.

### Financial information

UNHCR participated in the 2008 Common Humanitarian Action Plan (CHAP). The total financial requirements of USD 18.7 million reflected the needs on the ground, and were met with a generous response from donors. The financial requirements for 2008 were fully met, enabling UNHCR to continue with its annual programme activities for 2008 as well as to increase its emergency response capacity.

### Organization and implementation

In 2008, UNHCR had seven field offices in Sri Lanka, including the Representation Office in Colombo. The operation was implemented by 128 staff members, including two JPOs, 28 international staff and 98 national employees. Additional workforce arrangements, mainly through the deployment of UNVs and others, were also made in order to respond adequately to the operational challenges.

### Working with others

UNHCR was the lead agency for inter-agency coordination in the areas of protection, emergency shelter, non-food items and camp management. It worked with the other members of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee to develop the CHAP, which was endorsed by the Sri Lankan Government. The Office maintained its partnership with the Government,

particularly the Ministry of Disaster Management and Human Rights, the Ministry of Resettlement and Disaster Relief Services, and the Ministry of Nation Building and Estate Infrastructure Development. To implement its programmes, UNHCR established partnerships with 14 national and international partners, chosen on the basis of their operational capacity and experience in specific areas.

### Overall assessment

The year 2008 witnessed many new displacements in the north and small-scale returns in the east. UNHCR adapted its operations to the continuously changing environment, shifting needed resources and response capacity as needed. The Office's ability to deliver timely protection and assistance in the Vanni was affected by intensive military operations.

UNHCR's objectives for 2008 have largely been met through its daily protection activities and the coordinated involvement of other agencies. The Office ensured the provision and harmonization of the overall response in emergency shelter, non-food relief items and management of displacement sites. Full funding of the operation enabled UNHCR to maintain an adequate level of operational involvement.

At the same time, the search for durable solutions continued, including relocation or local settlement of IDPs displaced prior to 2006 who have not been able to return to their homes. A national consultation was held to look into these matters, but this process has not yet gained momentum due to the prevailing situation in the country.

Partners
<b>Implementing partners</b>
<p><b>Government:</b> Ministry of Disaster Management and Human Rights, Ministry of Nation Building and Estate Infrastructure Development, Ministry of Resettlement and Disaster Relief Services</p> <p><b>NGOs:</b> Alternative Dispute Resolution Institute, Campaign for Development and Solidarity, Center for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights, Center on Housing Rights and Evictions, Danish Refugee Council, Eastern Rehabilitation Organization, Jaffna Social Action Centre, Muslim Aid, Norwegian People's Aid, Norwegian Refugee Council, Organization for Eelam Refugee Rehabilitation Ceylon, Rural Development Foundation, Samaritan's Purse, Sewa Lanka Foundation, Social Economic Development Organization of Trincomalee, Sri Lanka Red Cross Society, The Refugee Rehabilitation Organization, United Methodist Committee on Relief, Voluntary Organisation for Vulnerable Community Development, World Vision International</p> <p><b>Others:</b> Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka, ILO, UN-HABITAT, UNOPS</p>
<b>Operational partners</b>
<p><b>Government:</b> Ministry of Disaster Management and Human Rights, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Nation Building and Estate Infrastructure Development, Ministry of Resettlement and Disaster Relief Services</p> <p><b>NGOs:</b> Centre for Policy Alternatives, Consortium of Humanitarian Agencies, Foundation for Coexistence, Legal Aid Foundation</p> <p><b>Others:</b> Asian Development Bank, <i>Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit</i>, FAO, ILO, JICA, OCHA, OHCHR, UNDP, UNDSS, UNFPA, UN-HABITAT, UNICEF, UNV, World Bank</p>

### Budget, income and expenditure in Sri Lanka (USD)

	Final budget	Income from contributions	Other funds available	Total funds available <sup>1</sup>	Total expenditure
Annual budget	20,853,512	17,256,093	2,293,229	19,549,323	19,600,639
Water and sanitation SB	616,200	313,425	262,964	576,388	523,080
<b>Total</b>	<b>21,469,712</b>	<b>17,569,518</b>	<b>2,556,193</b>	<b>20,125,711</b>	<b>20,123,719</b>

Note: Supplementary programmes do not include seven per cent support costs that are recovered from contributions to meet indirect costs for UNHCR. Income from contributions includes contributions earmarked at the country level. Other funds available include transfers from unearmarked and broadly earmarked contributions, opening balance and adjustments.

<sup>1</sup> Total funds available include currency adjustments.

### Financial report for UNHCR's operations in Sri Lanka (USD)

Expenditure breakdown	Current year's projects			Prior years' project
	Annual programme budget	Supplementary programme budget	Total	Annual and supplementary budgets
Protection, monitoring and coordination	4,958,782	0	4,958,782	0
Community services	1,641,051	0	1,641,051	298,824
Domestic needs and household support	3,061,912	0	3,061,912	0
Legal assistance	1,846,196	0	1,846,196	31,465
Operational support (to agencies)	582,304	0	582,304	0
Sanitation	0	270,357	270,357	0
Shelter and infrastructure	2,484,766	0	2,484,766	697,844
Transport and logistics	568,151	0	568,151	21,069
Water	0	48,879	48,879	0
Instalments to implementing partners	1,553,563	203,844	1,757,407	(1,049,202)
<b>Subtotal operational activities</b>	<b>16,696,725</b>	<b>523,080</b>	<b>17,219,805</b>	<b>0</b>
Programme support	2,903,914	0	2,903,914	0
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>19,600,639</b>	<b>523,080</b>	<b>20,123,719</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Cancellation on previous years' expenditure</b>				<b>(41,894)</b>
<b>Instalments with implementing partners</b>				
Payments made	7,135,945	388,619	7,524,564	
Reporting received	(5,582,382)	(184,775)	(5,767,157)	
<b>Balance</b>	<b>1,553,563</b>	<b>203,844</b>	<b>1,757,407</b>	
Outstanding 1st January				1,415,449
Reporting received				(1,049,202)
Refunded to UNHCR				(243,391)
Currency adjustment				0
<b>Outstanding 31st December</b>				<b>122,856</b>