

INFORMATION BULLETIN



International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
Fédération Internationale des Sociétés de la Croix-Rouge et du Croissant-Rouge
Federación Internacional de Sociedades de la Cruz Roja y de la Media Luna Roja
الاتحاد الدولي لجمعيات الصليب الأحمر والهلال الأحمر

SRI LANKA: CIVILIAN DISPLACEMENT

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The Federation's mission is to improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity. It is the world's largest humanitarian organization and its millions of volunteers are active in 185 countries.

In Brief

This Bulletin is being issued for information only, and reflects the situation and the information available at this time. The Federation is not seeking funding or other assistance from donors for this operation at this time.

Clashes between the Sri Lankan armed forces and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), in north and east Sri Lanka, have led to the displacement of more than 207,000 civilians fleeing their homes in the affected areas. The majority of internally displaced persons are from areas in Jaffna, Trincomalee and Batticaloa, where fighting has intensified since the end of July 2006. The Federation and its partnering national societies are working together with the Sri Lanka Red Cross Society (SLRCS) and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to conduct humanitarian relief efforts across the affected areas.

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The Situation

Clashes between the Sri Lankan armed forces and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) have sparked a significant displacement of civilians in conflict affected areas in the north and east of the country. UNHCR estimates more than 207,000 civilians (see table 1) have fled their homes and are displaced across 12 of Sri Lanka's 26 districts. The majority of internally displaced persons (IDPs) are from areas in Jaffna, Trincomalee and Batticaloa, where fighting has intensified since the end of July 2006. IDPs are staying with relatives or in temporary shelters that have sprung up in schools, public buildings and places of worship in safer areas.

Access to IDPs remains difficult, complicating humanitarian efforts to reach vulnerable populations in need of clean water, food and other essential household items.



A Red Cross convoy carries relief goods from Trincomalee for distribution at temporary camps in Kantale.

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (the Federation) and its partnering national societies are working together with the Sri Lanka Red Cross Society (SLRCS)¹ and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to conduct humanitarian relief efforts across north and east Sri Lanka. ICRC has the lead role amongst Red Cross Red Crescent partners in these areas.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

Emergency relief

Working in collaboration with SLRCS, which has a network of 26 branches across Sri Lanka, the Federation and its partners – including Austrian, Swiss, British, Canadian, Danish, French, German Red Cross and the Hong Kong branch of the China Red Cross – have mobilised non food relief items from three strategically placed warehouses located in Galle, Colombo and Ampara (see table 2). SLRCS has also provided cooked food to civilians sheltering in temporary accommodation.

A site for a fourth warehouse has been identified in Anuradhapura, close to affected districts. The warehouse is expected to be fully functional by the beginning of September and will facilitate distribution of goods to IDPs. The Federation has started procurement of an additional 14,500 hygiene kits to replenish its stocks and support further ICRC distributions. Additional non food relief items are on standby in Batticaloa where British Red Cross has contingency stocks².

Table 1. IDP displacement as of 22 August 2006

District	Current no. of IDPs	
	Families	Persons
Jaffna	12,222	47,070
Killinochchi	8,575	35,357
Mullaitivu	2,722	10,080
Mannar	2,496	8,460
Vavuniya	2,045	9,560
Trincomalee	12,561	48,810
Batticaloa	10,205	37,738
Ampara	364	1,353
Anuradhapura	744	2,978
Puttalam	498	2,101
Gampaha	75	338
Kurunegala	186	757

Source: www.unhcr.lk UNHCR, Government agents.
Note: figures are not final and are subject to change.

Table 2. International Federation and partners non-food relief items mobilised for distribution by SLRCS branches and ICRC

District	hygiene kits	kitchen sets	water jerry cans (15 lts)	water jerry cans (20 lts)	women's clothing (sarees)	sarongs	tarpaulin sheets	plastic sheeting (family size)	sleeping mats	bed sheets	lanterns	baby parcels	candles (pieces)	matches	female under skirt	body bags
Trincomalee	-	-	-	-	3716	3711	-	-	4000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Batticaloa	3000	-	2000	-	2000	2000	2000	-	4000	2000	-	-	-	-	4000	-
Matale	7	-	-	-	7	7	-	7	-	-	7	-	-	-	-	-
Kurunegala	133	133	-	-	133	133	-	133	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Gampaha	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Jaffna	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ampara	-	-	-	-	214	248	-	-	-	-	-	100	2112	264	-	-
Kilinochchi	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Vavuniya	-	-	-	-	500	500	-	500	-	-	-	-	-	-	500	-
Gampaha	30	30	30	-	130	130	30	-	100	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Distribution by ICRC	7000	-	-	5000	-	-	-	-	4000	-	-	2000	-	-	-	2100
Total	10170	163	2030	5000	6700	6729	2030	640	12100	2000	7	2100	2112	264	4500	2100

¹ For a full description of the national society profile, see www.ifrc.org and www.redcross.lk

² British Red Cross contingency stocks in Batticaloa: Bed sheets 400; hygiene kits 700; plastic sleeping mats 1900; kitchen sets 800; hurricane lamps 700; baby sets 700; tarpaulins 50; rope 1000; tents 140; jerry cans 1650; diesel 3100L.

Meanwhile, the Federation and its partners are providing valuable logistical support to enable distributions of food and non food items. German Red Cross and the Hong Kong branch of China Red Cross are assisting logistics for a World Food Programme dry ration distribution from Batticaloa town to Vaharai, for upwards of 4,000 families. SLRCS is working with ICRC to distribute relief goods to IDPs through an extensive volunteer network active across conflict affected areas, and SLRCS/ Federation equipment, including trucks, fuel and HF/VHF radio is further supporting the relief operation. Volunteers and staff from branches and national Red Cross societies that have had a presence in the affected districts since the Tsunami, are also assisting with assessments, monitoring and registering of IDPs.

The SLRCS and its international partners are also providing invaluable support to the ongoing operation. National Disaster Response Teams (see box 1) were deployed from 8 – 17 August to Trincomalee and Batticaloa districts to assist SLRCS branches to conduct needs assessments among displaced populations in schools and other temporary camps. In line with recommendations drawn from these assessments, Red Cross disaster preparedness stocks were mobilised to areas affected.

Box 1. National Disaster Response Teams (NDRTs)

NDRTs are a cost-effective national disaster response support system staffed entirely by trained, multi-skilled members of a national Red Cross or Red Crescent Society.

When a disaster strikes, a trained NDRT may get involved in response assessments. As well as covering core relief functions of food, water, health and shelter, NDRTs can also support interventions in food security, nutrition, construction and other specialised areas.

In Sri Lanka, 35 Sri Lanka Red Cross staff and volunteers from across the island participated in NDRT training at the end of July 2006. Trained participants used their newly acquired knowledge to conduct needs assessments in Batticaloa and Trincomalee and respond effectively to IDP and local population needs in affected areas.

Health and care

The Federation, SLRCS and its partners are providing medical support to IDPs and residents in affected areas. In Trincomalee, staff at the local SLRCS branch are operating mobile clinics and have helped to provide temporary toilets for IDPs in temporary camps. In Batticaloa the SLRCS branch has played a key role promoting health awareness in the temporary camps in Vaharai where a team from the Italian Red Cross has

been installing water and sanitation systems. An Italian Red Cross medical team, located in the area after the 2004 tsunami, is now operating with SLRCS in Vaharai, in Batticaloa district, to provide treatment to upwards of 200 patients every day through mobile clinics and a medical point set up at hospital. Without this service, the local population would have to make a three hour journey to Batticaloa town or Valaichennai to receive medical assistance. In Mullaitivu, a German Red Cross medical team is providing medical services at a hospital in Puthukkudiyiruppu and in Jaffna the SLRCS has been particularly active, running 2 mobile clinics (supported by the Austrian/Swiss Red Cross) which are providing health services to communities in far-flung parts of the district. In Jaffna the SLRCS are also providing a badly needed ambulance service to ferry sick and wounded people to hospital.

Coordination

Coordination is the key to ensuring an effective relief operation that reaches people most in need. Existing coordination mechanisms between ICRC, the Federation, SLRCS and partners at the field level have been strengthened and a supplementary coordination and information sharing system has been established in Colombo,

In Sri Lanka, a hygiene parcel, with locally sourced materials, costs just over CHF15 (around US\$12 excluding transport costs). The Federation is currently procuring 14,500 hygiene parcels for distribution and stockpiling in case of future emergencies.



washing powder	x 1	shampoo	x 2
soap, body soap	x 5	razor, disposable	x 5
tooth paste	x 5	hygienic pads, normal	x 8
tooth brush	x 5	bath towel	x 1
baby powder	x 1	nail clipper, w/file	x 1
comb, plastic	x 3		

to facilitate information sharing between all components of the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement. The emphasis remains on delivering humanitarian assistance including continuation of post-tsunami recovery and rehabilitation operations wherever possible.

Contingency plans are under development in the event that increasing numbers of IDPs move from the north and east to the south and west of the country. SLRCS branches in Matale, Kurunegala, Ampara and Vavuniya have been assessing IDP needs in border areas over the past week, with branch staff in Anuradhapura working with ICRC to construct temporary shelters for IDPs and SLRCS volunteers involved in maintenance of a temporary camp in Gampaha. Members of SLRCS national and branch disaster response teams are to be kept on standby over the next 3 weeks on a round the clock basis for rapid deployment. A contingency fund is being set up to respond to support assessments and small operational costs and joint stock planning exercises are in progress between Red Cross Red Crescent Movement partners in the country.

Contingency planning is under way to address post tsunami recovery programmes in affected areas that have stalled as a result of the ongoing conflict. Construction programmes in particular are suffering significant delays, as security-related movement restrictions prevent access to construction sites for staff, contractors and construction materials.

The International Federation undertakes activities that are aligned with its Global Agenda, which sets out four broad goals to achieve the Federation's mission to "improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity".

Global Agenda Goals:

- *Reduce the numbers of deaths, injuries and impact from disasters.*
- *Reduce the number of deaths, illnesses and impact from diseases and public health emergencies.*
- *Increase local community, civil society and Red Cross Red Crescent capacity to address the most urgent situations of vulnerability.*
- *Reduce intolerance, discrimination and social exclusion and promote respect for diversity and human dignity.*

All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the [Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations \(NGO's\) in Disaster Relief](#) and is committed to the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response \(Sphere\)](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

For longer-term programmes in this or other countries or regions, please refer to the Federation's Annual Appeal. For support to or for further information concerning Federation programmes or operations in this or other countries, or for national society profiles, please also access the Federation's website at <http://www.ifrc.org>

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