



IDP crisis in Sri Lanka

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Sustained advocacy pays dividends - time to honour funding pledges

WorldVision Lanka appealed for urgent funding from donors who had previously pledged to support the return and resettlement process of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in northern Sri Lanka as the long awaited move gathered pace.

“We have been advocating for returns to happen as soon as possible and now that it is finally taking place, it is time for those who pledged to support the return to honour those commitments,” said World Vision Lanka’s National Director, Suresh Bartlett.

“WorldVision is urgently seeking a minimum of USD 2 million to support the return of the IDPs back to their homes and helping them to rebuild their lives. We have been supporting the emergency relief phase and would like to play a key role in the return phase,” he added.

In the last week of October 2009, there was a significant increase in the numbers of people released from the camps to their original homes or other locations within their home districts. These areas included Jaffna, Vavuniya, the Mannar rice bowl, and regions of Mullaitivu and Kilinochchi. Nearly 100,000 people have now been released from the camps and around 2000 persons are being resettled daily.

“We all have a moral responsibility to assist these fractured communities – especially the children - to heal and to rebuild their lives and have a real chance of creating a future for themselves once again. We should not allow the situation to ever return to the era of bitter mistrust and conflict.” said Bartlett.

When the war with the LTTE ended in May 2009, over 280,000 persons from the north were housed in displacement camps posing a huge challenge to the Government and aid agencies to support them. In June, the Government announced it would resettle 80% of the IDPs still in displacement camps in a special 180-day resettlement programme.

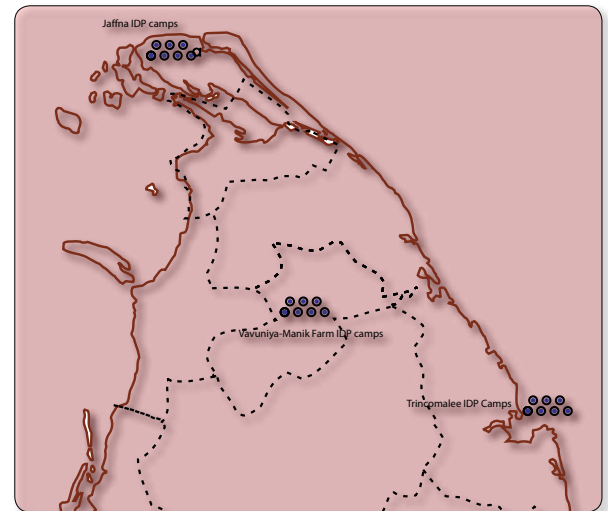
Resettlement has been slow due to screening processes, clearance of landmines and unexploded ordnance and the lack of basic infrastructure to support the setting up of livelihoods for returnees.

The momentum however escalated in October as the Government began a resettlement programme which has seen around 2000 persons being released every day.

WorldVision has been assisting those in the camps with water, food, shelter, non-food relief items as well as nutrition, education and psychosocial programmes for children. WorldVision has also set up Child Friendly Spaces and Temporary Learning Shelters for over 3500 children.

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Crisis in Sri Lanka



Key Facts

- Nearly 120,000 people have now been released from the camps and around 2000 persons are being resettled daily.
- WVW has had a presence in the north for the last 15 years and is in a position to play a key role in the return and resettlement programme.
- WVW will support livelihood asset recovery and complementary sectors of shelter, water, sanitation, child protection, and local capacities for peace.
- Since May this year, World Vision has trucked more than 12 million litres of water to the camps, distributed over 150,000 packets of cooked food and supplied 95 metric tonnes of complementary food to the communal kitchens.

Objectives:

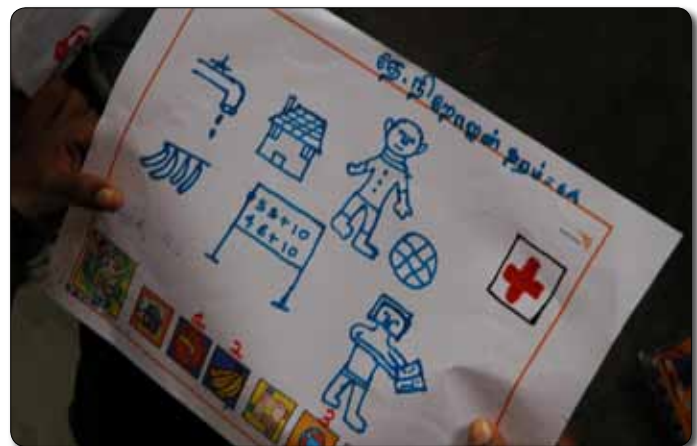
WVL will intentionally seek to achieve the following outcomes through its protection initiatives

- Returnees are equitably integrated and included in community rehabilitation, recreational and cultural programs
- Return communities and other stakeholders are aware of human rights and their legitimate protection under these rights
- To provide conflict affected families especially children and youth with the necessary resources to enable them to live with dignity upon return to their villages

To achieve these outcomes, WVL will engage in the following activities with other partners

Activities

- Integration into existing rehabilitation activities – local level advocacy to ensure that returnees are able to access village resources for education, livelihoods and well being
- Conflict sensitivity – awareness building among community administrators on the sensitivity of integrating displaced people into new and existing community and social structures to reduce the impact of change and transition for returnees and host communities.
- Rights based training and awareness – community programmes highlighting basic human rights, particularly women's and children's rights.
- Peace building community programmes – participatory activities including all community stakeholders to open dialogue, information sharing and awareness to increase local capacities for peace.
- Protection main-streaming – awareness programmes and training on protection issues pertaining to gender, disability, elderly, environment, and other cross cutting issues to the return community, local government administrators and other rehabilitation actors.
- Construction and equipping of Child Friendly Spaces
- Training of community mobilisers and pre-school teachers on protection and basic psychosocial issues
- Awareness programmes and activities on child rights, leadership, land mines, etc



Child Friendly Spaces (CFS) offer a safe, secure environment for young children to play and interact with their peers and essentially be children again. Temporary Learning Shelters (TLS) provide facilities for emergency schooling for children.



Programme Overview

WVL has developed resettlement and rehabilitation programmes that are specific to post-conflict situations where resettled communities remain fragile following long periods of displacement and loss of economic assets.

World Vision's Area Rehabilitation Programmes (ARPs) are specifically designed for communities that have been adversely affected by conflict and disaster. The ARP model focuses mainly on rebuilding livelihoods, water resources, health and education.

WVL has worked in difficult locations in the North and East for several years and has vast experience in child protection and livelihoods related programming at grass-root level.

WVL's long established offices in Jaffna, Vavuniya, Batticaloa and formerly in Mulangavil and Killinochchi work closely with local government structures, the community and other stakeholders to ensure coordination, avoid duplication of scarce resources and equity for all.

As IDPs in the North return home, WVL will provide livelihood asset recovery which addresses the needs of those who have lost the means to support themselves and their families financially.

A range of support packages will be provided through a flexible combination of staged cash grants, vouchers, or direct provision of assets.

These are designed around typical livelihoods in the North and East, such as fishing, paddy cultivation, livestock rearing, brick making and other home-based income generating activities.

Families will be encouraged to adopt a complementary livelihood activity to safeguard themselves from external shocks that could be caused by unpredictable weather conditions.

In addition to ensuring some level of food security, this tried and tested approach will also provide the opportunity for two members within each household (the husband and wife in most cases) to engage in productive activity.

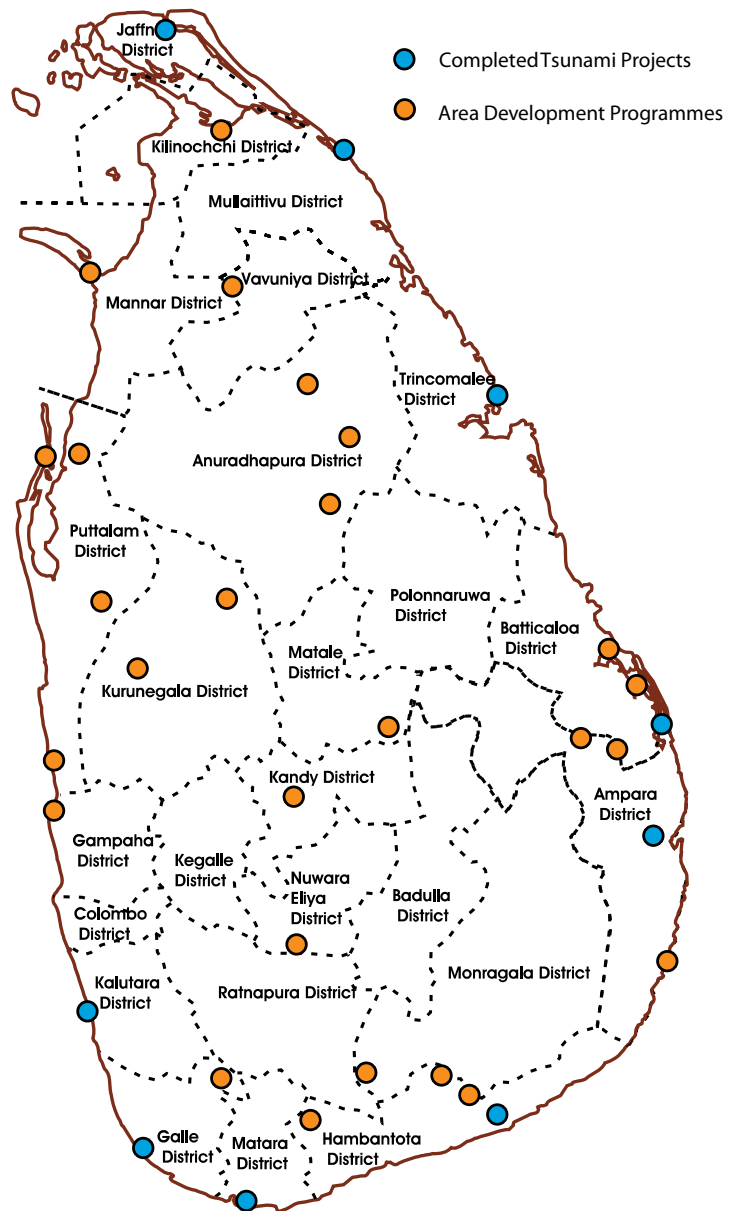
The programme aims to provide a US\$475 package to be prioritized and distributed as per each household's livelihood needs. WVL proposes to assist 6,000 families (24,000 returnees) within a period of one year and will work in multiple return locations in Jaffna, Vavuniya, Mullaithivu, Killinochchi, Mannar, Batticaloa and Trincomalee.

World Vision is implementing 3-year ARPs in Chankanai and Chavakachcheri in Jaffna and Vaharai, Echalampattu, Kiran, and Eravupattu in the East.



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WVL Programmes



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For further information on World Vision's efforts to respond to the IDP crisis in Sri Lanka:

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