



**BUREAU FOR DEMOCRACY, CONFLICT, AND HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE (DCHA)
OFFICE OF U.S. FOREIGN DISASTER ASSISTANCE (OFDA)**

Sri Lanka – Complex Emergency

Fact Sheet #1, Fiscal Year (FY) 2009

February 2, 2009

Note: The last fact sheet was dated September 30, 2008.

BACKGROUND AND KEY DEVELOPMENTS

- Fighting between Government of Sri Lanka (GOSL) forces and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) has intensified since the GOSL formally withdrew from the 2002 ceasefire agreement with the LTTE on January 16, 2008. Since late 2008, the GOSL has made significant territorial gains against the LTTE in northern Sri Lanka.
- As fighting further intensified in mid-January 2009, the U.N. warned that hundreds of thousands of civilians were trapped in areas of heavy fighting. On January 27, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) reported that at least 250,000 civilians were caught in a 150-square mile area in the northern districts of Kilinochchi and Mullaitivu—also known as the Vanni—between the GOSL military and LTTE forces.
- On January 21, the GOSL announced a 22-square mile safe zone in the Vanni for internally displaced persons (IDPs) and civilians caught in GOSL–LTTE fighting. However, U.N. agencies and international media sources have reported GOSL shelling of IDP populations in the same area. To date, U.N. and ICRC estimate that hundreds of casualties have resulted from recent violence, although numbers have not been confirmed.
- Humanitarian access in northern Sri Lanka has decreased significantly in recent months, according to the U.N. Additionally, a USAID/OFDA regional advisor in Sri Lanka reports no humanitarian access in the Vanni since January 25, when a government offensive resulted in a GOSL takeover of LTTE stronghold Mullaitivu town.

NUMBERS AT A GLANCE	SOURCE	
IDPs displaced from the Vanni to GOSL-controlled territory since November 2008	5,000	OCHA ¹ – January 26, 2009
IDPs trapped in the Vanni due to GOSL-LTTE fighting	250,000-300,000	ICRC – January 27, 2009
IDPs displaced from the Vanni in September 2008	185,810	OCHA – September 26, 2008
Total IDPs displaced from northern districts since September 2007	221,660	OCHA – September 26, 2008
IDPs displaced nationwide between April 2006 and August 2008²	247,862	UNHCR ³ – August 31, 2008

HUMANITARIAN FUNDING PROVIDED FOR THE COMPLEX EMERGENCY IN FY 2008 AND FY 2009

USAID/OFDA Assistance to Sri Lanka	\$5,929,323
USAID/FFP⁴ Assistance to Sri Lanka	\$32,741,300
State/PRM⁵ Assistance to Sri Lanka	\$1,990,000
Total USAID and State Humanitarian Assistance to Sri Lanka	\$40,660,623

CURRENT SITUATION

- A USAID/OFDA regional advisor in Sri Lanka indicated that although the GOSL reports sufficient food and non-food resources to cover immediate needs, lack of access to affected populations has severely impeded assistance efforts.
- On January 27, ICRC reported that intensified fighting has overwhelmed medical facilities in the Vanni and indicated that the majority of the civilian population in the region remained in need of protection, medical care, and basic assistance.

¹ U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)

² This number does not include the more than 300,000 people displaced nationwide by conflict prior to the 2002 ceasefire, the more than 26,000 people remaining displaced nationwide by the December 2004 tsunami, or the more than 20,000 refugees in Tamil Nadu, India. This number is the total current number of IDPs displaced in Sri Lanka between April 2006 and August 2008, excluding populations that have been displaced since April 2006 but have returned to areas of origin.

³ Office of the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

⁴ USAID's Office of Food for Peace (USAID/FFP)

⁵ U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (State/PRM)

Humanitarian Access

- Humanitarian access to vulnerable and conflict-affected individuals in northern Sri Lanka remains a critical issue. Access to populations in the Vanni decreased significantly following a September 5, 2008, GOSL directive to U.N. agencies and non-governmental organizations to pull all international staff from the area and relocate operations to government-controlled Vavuniya town.
- The GOSL currently requires compliance with government guidelines that mandate official GOSL authorization to access conflict-affected areas. The USAID/OFDA regional advisor attributes additional limitations in providing assistance to requisite negotiations for access between humanitarian organizations and the LTTE and GOSL.
- Since early October, ICRC has been the only international aid agency permitted by the GOSL and LTTE to operate and remain in the Vanni.

Protection

- According to OCHA, since late November, only an estimated 5,000 people have moved from zones held by the LTTE to government-controlled areas.
- The GOSL has accused the LTTE of using civilians in the Vanni as human shields. According to international media, the LTTE has claimed that local populations require LTTE protection, due to a fear of GOSL retribution for familial connections with the LTTE and LTTE-required participation in training exercises.
- On February 1, the sole functioning hospital in northern Vanni was hit by shell fire, resulting in nine deaths and multiple injuries, according to the ICRC. The U.N. subsequently reported that responsibility for the attack remained undetermined.
- On January 29, the ICRC escorted 226 patients from LTTE-controlled areas in need of urgent medical treatment to Vavuniya Hospital in GOSL-controlled Vavuniya.
- On January 26, U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki-moon called upon the LTTE and GOSL to ensure the protection and well-being of civilians in northern Sri Lanka, including humanitarian aid workers. The U.N. also reported ongoing discussions with the LTTE after a January 22 statement by the U.N. Country Team in Sri Lanka criticized the LTTE for not granting local staff and dependents safe passage from conflict-affected areas.
- In FY 2008 and to date in FY 2009, USAID/OFDA has contributed more than \$2.1 million to the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) and the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) to implement protection programming for IDPs and returnees in Batticaloa, Mannar, Trincomalee, and Vavuniya districts.

Food Assistance

- On January 29, the U.N. World Food Program (WFP) confirmed the arrival of 13 trucks in 15-truck convoy carrying 150 metric tons (MT) of WFP food assistance to the Vanni. The previous delivery of WFP assistance occurred on January 16 and comprised 800 MT of food.
- According to the U.N., since early October, 519 trucks have transported more than 8,000 MT of WFP food assistance to northern Sri Lanka, in addition to water, sanitation, and hygiene materials, school supplies, clothing, and household goods provided by the U.N. Children's Fund (UNICEF) and UNHCR.
- In FY 2008, USAID/OFDA provided more than \$1.2 million to WFP for logistics support and relief commodities benefiting approximately 200,000 vulnerable people throughout northern Sri Lanka.
- In FY 2008, USAID/FFP provided 36,260 MT of P.L. 480 Title II emergency food assistance, valued at more than \$32.7 million, to WFP to support IDPs and vulnerable individuals, particularly populations located in conflict-affected areas.

USAID AND STATE HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

- On October 21, 2008, U.S. Ambassador Robert O. Blake redeclared a disaster in Sri Lanka due to increased conflict and resulting displacement, requesting USAID/OFDA support for FY 2009.
- In FY 2008 and to date in FY 2009, USAID/OFDA has provided more than \$5.9 million for IDP and returnee assistance, including support for health, logistics, protection, disaster risk reduction, agriculture and food security, economy and market systems, shelter and settlements, humanitarian coordination and information management, and water, sanitation, and hygiene activities.
- In FY 2008 and to date in FY 2009, USAID/FFP has provided P.L. 480 Title II emergency food assistance valued at more than \$32.7 million to WFP to support IDPs and vulnerable populations.
- In FY 2008 and to date in FY 2009, State/PRM has contributed more than \$1.9 million to the 2008 Common Humanitarian Action Plan for Sri Lanka, developed by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Country Team, providing for IDP assistance activities organized by UNHCR. State/PRM also provided more than \$4.5 million to UNHCR to support regional programs that protect and assist refugees and IDPs in India, Nepal, and Sri Lanka. In

addition, State/PRM contributed more than \$23.6 million to ICRC for activities in South Asia, including assistance to conflict victims in Sri Lanka.

**USAID AND STATE HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE PROVIDED TO SRI LANKA
FOR THE COMPLEX EMERGENCY IN FY 2008 AND FY 2009**

FY 2009			
<i>Implementing Partner</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Amount</i>
USAID/OFDA ASSISTANCE¹			
UMCOR	Umbrella Award for Small Grants in Health, Protection, Risk Reduction, Agriculture and Food Security, Economy and Market Systems, Shelter and Settlements, Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene	Batticaloa, Jaffna, Kilinochchi, Mannar, Mullaitivu, Trincomalee, and Vavuniya Districts	\$500,541
TOTAL USAID/OFDA TO SRI LANKA TO DATE IN FY 2009			\$500,541
FY 2008			
<i>Implementing Partner</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Amount</i>
USAID/OFDA ASSISTANCE¹			
Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development (ACTED)	Agriculture and Food Security, Economy and Market Systems, Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene	Batticaloa District	\$599,999
International Organization for Migration (IOM)	Economy and Market Systems	Batticaloa, Jaffna, Kilinochchi, Mannar, Trincomalee, and Vavuniya Districts	\$605,000
Internews	Humanitarian Coordination and Information Management	North, North-Central, and Eastern Provinces	\$826,851
NRC	Protection	Batticaloa, Trincomalee, and Vavuniya Districts	\$614,991
UMCOR	Umbrella Award for Small Grants in Health, Protection, Risk Reduction, Agriculture and Food Security, Economy and Market Systems, Shelter and Settlements, Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene	Batticaloa, Jaffna, Kilinochchi, Mannar, Mullaitivu, Trincomalee, and Vavuniya Districts	\$1,000,000
WFP	Logistics, Emergency Relief Supplies	Countrywide	\$1,250,000
USAID	Administration and Logistics	Countrywide	\$31,941
TOTAL USAID/OFDA ASSISTANCE TO SRI LANKA IN FY 2008			\$5,428,782
USAID/FFP ASSISTANCE²			
WFP	36,260 MT of P.L. 480 Title II Emergency Food Assistance	Countrywide	\$32,741,300
TOTAL USAID/FFP ASSISTANCE TO SRI LANKA IN FY 2008			\$32,741,300
STATE/PRM ASSISTANCE³			
UNHCR	IDP Assistance	Countrywide	\$1,990,000
TOTAL STATE/PRM ASSISTANCE TO SRI LANKA IN FY 2008			\$1,990,000
TOTAL USAID AND STATE HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO SRI LANKA FOR COMPLEX EMERGENCY IN FY 2008			\$40,160,082
FY 2008 AND FY 2009 USG⁴ HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE PROVIDED TO DATE			
USAID/OFDA			\$5,929,323
USAID/FFP			\$32,741,300
STATE/PRM			\$1,990,000

TOTAL FY 2008 AND FY 2009 USG HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO SRI LANKA FOR COMPLEX EMERGENCY

\$40,660,623

¹ USAID/OFDA funding represents anticipated or actual obligated amounts as of February 2, 2009.

² Estimated value of food assistance.

³ This figure does not include State/PRM regional support for UNHCR and ICRC, valued at more than \$4.5 million and \$23.6 million, respectively.

⁴ U.S. Government (USG)

PUBLIC DONATION INFORMATION

- The most effective way people can assist relief efforts is by making cash contributions to humanitarian organizations that are conducting relief operations. Information on organizations responding to the humanitarian situation in Sri Lanka can be found at www.reliefweb.int.
- USAID encourages cash donations because they allow aid professionals to procure the exact items needed (often in the affected region); reduce the burden on scarce resources (such as transportation routes, staff time, and warehouse space); can be transferred very quickly and without transportation costs; support the economy of the disaster-stricken region; and ensure culturally, dietary, and environmentally appropriate assistance.
- More information can be found at:
 - USAID: www.usaid.gov – Keyword: Donations
 - The Center for International Disaster Information: www.cidi.org or (703) 276-1914
 - Information on relief activities of the humanitarian community can be found at www.reliefweb.int