CHAPTER -V
CHAPTER V

Rehabilitation and Reintegration of IDPs

Internal displacement has become endemic in several countries as a result of armed conflicts, internal strife or systematic violation of human rights. Internal displacement is the cause of much suffering, involving break-up of families, cutting off of social and cultural ties, and termination of stable employment relationships. It precludes or forecloses for youngster's formal educational opportunities. It deprives infants, expectant mothers and the sick of access to food, adequate shelter or vital health services. It also makes the displaced population especially vulnerable to acts of violence such as attacks on camps, disappearances or rape. Sri Lanka is one such country where there is large-scale internal displacement. The present chapter deals with the rehabilitation programmes undertaken by the international humanitarian relief agencies in Sri Lanka for the internally displaced persons (IDPs).

Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)

The term "internally displaced persons" means persons who flee armed conflict or other disturbances but who remain inside their country. Having crossed no international frontier, they are not considered refugees by international law, but in common usage are nonetheless regarded as such. Persons to whom neither the definition of "refugee" applies or who do not come under the protection of the UNHCR are sometimes also referred to as displaced persons, even when they are
outside their country.¹

Francis M. Deng, in the *Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement*² defined IDPs as "persons or groups of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict situations or to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized State border".³

Though the guiding principles on internal displacement are not binding, they are consistent with international human rights⁴, humanitarian law,⁵ and refugee law.⁶ They identify the rights and guarantee the needed protection to IDPs in all phases of displacement and offer protection against arbitrary displacement. They provide protection and assistance during displacement, and lay down the principles for safe return, resettlement and reintegration, applicable to state and non-state actors.

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² A series of principles that articulate standards for protection, assistance, and solutions for internally displaced persons. The guiding principles were presented to the Commission on Human Rights by the Representative of the Secretary General for Internally Displaced Persons in April 1998. They reflect and are consistent with human rights law, humanitarian law, and refugee law, and provide guidance to states, other authorities, and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations faced with issues of internal displacement.
³ http://www.info.org.lb/migrationnetwork/definitionofidp.html
⁴ The body of customary international law, human rights instruments, and national law that recognizes and protects human rights. Refugee law and human rights law complement each other.
⁵ The body of law, regulations, and principles that govern situations of international or non-international armed conflict.
⁶ The body of customary international law and various international, regional and national instruments that establish standards for refugees' protection. The cornerstone of refugee law is the 1951 Convention on the Status of Refugees.
The Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement affirm the basic rights of the internally displaced and emphasize the responsibility of governments to protect their citizens. If governments fail to do so, they should allow the international community to do so.7

There are three distinct phases of internal displacement:8 pre-displacement, displacement, and post-displacement. Principle 6 of internal displacement, referring to the pre-displacement phase, notes: “Every human being shall have the right to be protected against being arbitrarily displaced from his or her home or place of habitual residence.”

Principle 15 refers to the displacement period. It affirms that internally displaced persons have (a) the right to seek safety in another part of the country, (b) the right to leave their country; (c) the right to seek asylum in another country, and (d) the right to be protected against forcible return to or resettlement in any place where their life, safety, liberty and or health would be at risk.

Principle 28(1), pertaining to the post-displacement period, affirms that "Competent authorities have the primary duty and responsibility to establish conditions, as well as provide the means, which allow internally displaced persons to return voluntarily, in safety and with dignity, to their homes or places of habitual residence, or to resettle voluntarily in another part of the country. Such authorities

8 Involuntary movement of people inside their own country. This movement may be due to a variety of reasons, including natural or human-made disasters, armed conflict, or situations of generalized violence.
shall endeavour to facilitate the reintegration of returned or resettled internally displaced persons.  

The international community has responded to the plight of IDPs sympathetically and undertaken operational action by providing protection and also assistance to the victims of violence. This concern has also been manifested in large-scale humanitarian campaigns conducted by intergovernmental organizations, particularly by the office of the UNHCR, and by many non-governmental agencies. The ICRC, for its part, has carried on intensive activities on behalf of displaced persons as a result of war or internal disturbances and striven to care for all victims of such situations, which are still the major cause of displacement. The National Red Cross (NRC) and Red Crescent Societies (RCS) and their International Federation have also worked to help IDPs in various conditions.

**IDPs in Sri Lanka**

In Sri Lanka the pattern of internal displacement has been particularly severe and also of long duration. As a result of the armed conflict, which is virtually a civil war between the security forces and the Tamil separatists every year, hundreds and thousands of persons have been displaced. The initial displacement occurred as a result of the anti-Tamil riots in the south of the country in 1958, 1977, 1978 and 1983.

Since 1983 the armed conflict led to further deterioration in the humanitarian

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situation in the country. The conflict resulted in the loss of lives, created severe and permanent disability, destroyed personal and productive assets, impoverished people and buffeted them with psychological trauma entailing deep uncertainty and insecurity.

The pattern of displacement is not only due to the ethnic conflict but also due to escalated and constant military operations in the north and the east. Other causes of displacement are human rights violations by both parties to the conflict, which included forced displacement and child recruitment.

The sustained nature of the ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka since 1983 has created widespread displacement of people throughout the island. Nearly 800,000 were displaced internally at the time of the Ceasefire Agreement (CFA) in February 2002. Between early 2002 and June 2004, nearly 50 per cent of 370,000 of the IDPs had spontaneously returned to their home areas in the north and east of the country. According to UNHCR the number of IDPs, needing humanitarian attention in Sri Lanka by 1 January 2004 was 386,100.

Though the displacement has affected the whole country, numerically, by their concentration in the conflict-affected areas, the Tamils are the worst affected. It is estimated that 78 per cent of the displaced are Tamils, 13% are Muslims and 8% Sinhalese.

It is estimated that 90 per cent of the population is displaced in the LTTE-controlled Wanni.\textsuperscript{14} According to the Killinochchi Government Agent (GA), 91.75 per cent are displaced in Killinochchi district.\textsuperscript{15} A substantial number of persons also have been displaced in Government-controlled Northern areas of Vavuniya, Jaffna and Mannar. Table 5.1 presents data about registered IDPs in the North-East.

**Table 5.1: Registered IDPs in the North-East**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Non-displaced</th>
<th>Locally displaced</th>
<th>Displaced from other districts</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Northern Districts: Uncleared areas</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kilinochchi</td>
<td>27,510</td>
<td>53,291</td>
<td>67,244</td>
<td>148,045</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mullaitivu</td>
<td>51,133</td>
<td>28,218</td>
<td>84,854</td>
<td>164,205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mannar</td>
<td>3,696</td>
<td>11,748</td>
<td>19,677</td>
<td>35,121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vavuniya</td>
<td>244</td>
<td>9,251</td>
<td>461</td>
<td>9,920</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub total</td>
<td>82,583</td>
<td>102,472</td>
<td>172,236</td>
<td>357,291</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Districts: Cleared areas</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mannar</td>
<td>43,984</td>
<td>8,527</td>
<td>11,156</td>
<td>63,667</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vavuniya</td>
<td>74,876</td>
<td>19,288</td>
<td>42,040</td>
<td>136,204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jaffna</td>
<td>456,347</td>
<td>85,655</td>
<td></td>
<td>542,002</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Eastern Province**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Displaced Families</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Batticaloa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trincomalee</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


\textsuperscript{14} In this study Wanni refers to the LTTE-controlled parts of Northern districts as well as Vavuniya district.

\textsuperscript{15} "Over 90% of Killinochchi Population displaced", cited in *Northeastern Herald*, 4-10 October 2002.

Sri Lanka’s Resettlement Policy

Resettlement policy of the Sri Lankan government had undergone major shifts in its approaches and operations. Earlier, the state and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) working with IDPs focused on provisioning of relief and assistance with a belief that the displacement is a short-term phenomenon and has to be addressed with short-term additional provisions. The state’s scheme of assistance was thus termed as Emergency Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Programme (ERRP) envisaging its short-term features of operations for the displaced population.

The shift in approach happened during 1994-95 when the government focused more on a permanent and empowerment-oriented solutions. Elaborating on this comprehensiveness the government’s policy on displacement notes:

“Relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction aims at bringing the population affected by ethnic violence and terrorist activities back to productive life by providing basic amenities to live with dignity, paying compensation for the loss and damage sustained and to create a physically, economically, and socially sustainable environment for their progress. In this context relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction will be treated as an exercise integrated with the development process”.

International Norms for IDPs

The existence of the IDPs in Sri Lanka is inextricably related to the refugee issue. IDPs have to compromise on their fundamental rights and freedom and also on their economic and political opportunities. Unlike refugees, IDPs have no internationally acknowledged norms of protection except for those that are concerned with the principal fundamental human rights. The human rights law guarantees a wide spectrum of rights such as civil, political, social, economic and cultural rights.
Other international legal instruments consist of the “right not to be displaced”, which the UNHCR has articulated as the “right to remain”.

The relief, resettlement and rehabilitation activities in the state work according to the policies and guidelines laid down by the national and international bodies. Their activities are anticipated to offer protection of rights and relief to those adversely affected by the ethnic conflict, and also to reinstate them with at least a basic, minimum standard of living.

The Ministry of Relief, Resettlement and Rehabilitation (MRRR) with the aid and support of the international organizations co-ordinates all such services. UNHCR is one of the most significant bodies among these international organizations, which since 1987 has extended its services to the IDPs apart from refugees.

**International Response and Role**

The international community is concerned about the increasing number of displaced people. The plight of this vulnerable population has acquired importance in contemporary times as large numbers of people are uprooted by internal conflicts and violence. However, there is no single agency or an international treaty that focuses on internal displacement. As a result, the international response to IDPs has been selective, uneven and inadequate in many cases. Most of the IDPs neither receive humanitarian assistance nor protection at all.

The international community has shown a great concern in recent period to the situations of internal displacement, especially where governments fail or are unable to meet their needs. In order to provide more sustained and comprehensive

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protection and assistance to this vulnerable group the present international community is exploring ways to uplift the IDPs. Many humanitarian, human rights organizations, INGOs and many development organizations have come forward to aid and assist the displaced within the limits of their mandates.

Though there is much talk about the Sri Lankan ethnic conflict at the international level, there is not much available data about the activities and involvement of humanitarian agencies. UN agencies, local and international NGOs and the donor community are providing aid and assistance to the displaced persons in the country.¹⁹ Among such organizations are the UNHCR, ICRC, CARE and OXFAM.

In particular, the ICRC and UNHCR in Sri Lanka have expanded their operational areas and activities to respond to the plight of the internally displaced. These organizations have shown maximum flexibility by interpreting their mandates to respond to the situations of displacement. In some cases, on the request of the UN Secretary General or the General Assembly they undertook the activities in their offices while in some cases they have extensively covered the IDPs in need, especially those who are either victims of the armed conflict or women and children. Even in other cases, they have broadly interpreted their constitutions to include IDPs or the IDPs may be an explicit part of their mandate.

Though in general, the IDPs are not covered by the Refugee Convention or by the UNHCR’s Statute, the UNHCR is concerned about the IDPs because the causes

and consequences of their forced plight are closely linked to that of refugees. Its involvement with this group has usually been in the context of the refugees' voluntary repatriation, where return movements of the refugees and rehabilitation programmes were included. Since the early 1970s UNHCR has been actively involved with the IDPs. It is involved in UN humanitarian operations on the request of either the UN General Assembly or the Secretary General. In recent years the scope of its activities on behalf of IDPs has increased to a considerable extent.

UNHCR in Sri Lanka is fully committed to strengthen co-operation and coordination with other humanitarian organizations within and outside the UN system, government and other civil society groups. As a part of its activities in Sri Lanka UNHCR has also provided protection and immediate relief, support and assistance to returnees, and to the communities to which they were returning.

Approximately one quarter of the IDPs in the country are housed in some 420 government welfare centres (cf. Table 2.8, Chapter 2). Some are with relatives and friends. Together with its partner organizations, the Government of Sri Lanka, other UN organizations donors, NGOs and civil society groups, UNHCR has done the best possible to provide needed relief to the displaced in the conflict-affected areas.

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Table 5.2 gives an idea about the immediate needs of the returned IDPs.

**Extract from rapid return assessment survey**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Items</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Jaffna</th>
<th>Kilinochchi</th>
<th>Mannar</th>
<th>Mullaitivu</th>
<th>Trincomalee</th>
<th>Vanuniya</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of GSOs surveyed</td>
<td>217</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of IDP families surveyed</td>
<td>23,669</td>
<td>9,861</td>
<td>6,027</td>
<td>2,518</td>
<td>4,311</td>
<td>404</td>
<td>548</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Individual IDPs surveyed</td>
<td>94,203</td>
<td>37,251</td>
<td>25,188</td>
<td>10,444</td>
<td>17,662</td>
<td>1,582</td>
<td>2,076</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of vulnerable IDPs surveyed</td>
<td>363,34</td>
<td>12,668</td>
<td>7,448</td>
<td>11,436</td>
<td>4258</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>385</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vulnerable % of IDP population</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>110%*</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>18.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average level of damage (%)</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>81.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of IDPs with access to medical care</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>14.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of IDPs with access to primary education</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>45.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of IDPs with access to secondary education</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>29.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of IDPs with access to potable water</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>87.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of IDPs with adequate sanitation</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of IDPs affected by mines/UXO</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>29.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* More than 100% because more people have actually returned to this district than original official figures showed.
Between July 2002 and July 2003 the Government of Sri Lanka and the United Nations adopted a joint strategy to meet the pressing needs of the returned IDPs, with special reference to families as well as individuals. The total number of the IDP families surveyed in the six districts of the North-East (Jaffna, Kilinochchi, Mannar, Mullaitivue, Trincomalee and Vavuniya) were 23,669. in the districts of. The highest number of IDP families, vulnerable IDPs and individuals were from Jaffna. The vulnerable IDP population as a proportion of the IDP population was the highest in Mannar. The level of damage to the returned IDPs was more in Mullaitivu district, accounting for 95 per cent. However, their access to medical care and primary education was more than in other districts. IDPs in the district of Trincomalee had more access to secondary education and potable water. Jaffna’s IDP population has adequate sanitation (49 per cent). It was only one per cent in Kilinochchi, and none in the others. Jaffna district was the worst affected by mines.

Objectives of UNHCR operations in Sri Lanka

UNHCR is one of the most significant bodies among the international organizations in providing refugee relief in Sri Lanka. Since 1987, it has extended its services to the IDPs, apart from refugees, in the conflict-affected regions. The main objectives of UNHCR are:

— To promote and protect rights of IDPs, refugees and returnees, especially targeting traumatized and vulnerable individuals and other groups at risk,

UNHCR, UNHCR Helps Protect: Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) (Colombo: UNHCR, 2003), p. 2.

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with special emphasis on freedom of movement, security and property rights.

— To address the immediate humanitarian needs of spontaneous returnees through the provision of non food relief items, emergency shelter and other activities.

— To improve the policies regarding the conditions for refugees, IDPs, returnees and victims of the conflict through capacity building among government institutions and national NGOs.

— To stabilize the population, by supporting the current drive towards a peaceful settlement of the conflict and helping to build a platform for economic recovery.

Overall UNHCR Activities and Assistance

Community services: These include construction of community centres, access to pre-school and playground facilities to children, training in community leadership and joint decision-making, mediation of disputes, as well as arranging provisions for women to combat sexual or gender-based violence (SGBV).

Domestic needs/household support: Distribution of household necessities and non-food relief packages, including plastic sheeting and others.

Education: Construction and augmentation of primary schools, organizing vocational training courses for youngsters.

Fisheries: Supplying fishing equipment to IDPs in order to help them to
increase their family income.

*Health and nutrition:* Providing access to primary and reproductive health care, conducting awareness programmes on HIV and AIDS, setting up Mobile Health Clinics (MHCs) and Primary Health Centres (PHCs).

*Income generation:* Providing training and assistance to set up small business and other income generation activities such as farming, fishing and skilled occupations.

*Legal assistance:* Undertaking projects with the objective of protecting the rights of IDPs and returnees and enhancing their access to justice, referring cases to government human rights commission on issues related to arrest, disappearances, property disputes, access to food rations from the government and child recruitment, conducting human rights awareness programmes in the media, welfare centres in districts of Jaffna, Vavuniya, Mannar and Trincomalee. Apart from this advocacy issues and human rights protection is also undertaken.

*Sanitation:* Construction and repairing of latrines in welfare centres and return areas.

*Shelter and other infrastructure:* Construction of temporary and semi-permanent shelters for families in returned villages, providing temporary shelter materials and repairing roads.

*Transport/Logistics:* Maintenance of lorries to provide humanitarian aid to priority returnee areas, delivering and distribution of non-food items, medicines and
needed equipment to returning IDPs, transporting equipment and project supplies to other NGOs.

Water: Constructing and repairing tube wells and open wells to improve access to potable water in both welfare centres and returned areas

Operational support to agencies: Operational support and funding to other implementation contractual partners involved in assisting and protection programmes.

Table 5.3 gives figures for the finance invested by UNHCR for its overall activities and assistance during 2003.

Table 5.3: UNHCR Financial Report for 2003

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expenditure break down</th>
<th>Current year projects</th>
<th>Prior year projects (US $)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Annual programme budget (US $)</td>
<td>Supplementary programme budget (US $)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Services</td>
<td>1,10,500</td>
<td>2,47,427</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domestic needs/household support</td>
<td>1,89,868</td>
<td>14,06,084</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>98,141</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fisheries</td>
<td>38,995</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health/Nutrition</td>
<td>61,823</td>
<td>2,04,773</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income Generation</td>
<td>1,70,326</td>
<td>1,79,398</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal Assistance</td>
<td>3,28,437</td>
<td>5,12,763</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operational support to agencies</td>
<td>4,87,867</td>
<td>6,89,951</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sanitation</td>
<td>39,478</td>
<td>94,155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shelter/infrastructure</td>
<td>67,698</td>
<td>7,70,714</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport/Logistics</td>
<td>2,33,307</td>
<td>1,66,004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water</td>
<td>34,460</td>
<td>14,83,336</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protection, monitoring and co-ordination</td>
<td>17,60,151</td>
<td>3,93,433</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>36,21,051</td>
<td>61,48,038</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: UNHCR Global Report 2004
The financial report of the UNHCR Global Report, 2003, shows the expenditure divided according to its activities and assistance. A total amount of US$36,21,051 was taken for its annual budget. US$61,48,038 was added as a supplementary budget for UNHCR programmes, making a total budget of US$97,69,089. Prior to 2003 UNHCR’s expenditure on its projects was US$9,27,835. During 2003 US$98,141 and US$38,995 was allotted to educational services and fisheries, respectively. Before 2003 US$26,127 and US$1,281 was spent on these items. The highest amount of US$17,60,151 was allocated for protection, monitoring, and co-ordination projects. US$148,336 was allocated to water services in the supplementary budget, and US$34,460 was invested on this item in the annual budget. Before 2003 US$42,867 was spent on community services. US$11,77,818 was spent for operational support to agencies in the annual budget. In supplementary programme budget US$14,06,084 was allocated for domestic needs and household support activities. US$349,724 was allotted to income generation; earlier it was US$243,441 only. A total amount of US$8,41,200 was spent on legal assistance. On transport and logistic services US$399,311 was spent. US$266,596 was allocated to health services.

UNHCR undertook projects and activities related to the Protection items and Capacity Building and Co-ordination projects. It also undertook Advocacy and information management on IDPs, voluntary repatriation issues, monitoring returns areas, well-being of IDPs and addressing protection needs of groups at risk, to meet the needs of returnees. It invested US$40,00,000 for protection and durable solutions of IDPs and refugees and US$65,000 for the care and maintenance of refugees in Sri
Lanka. UNHCR spent US$6,00,000 on advocacy, US$3,00,000 on the well-being of IDPs, US$1,00,000 on capacity building and US$1,50,000 on voluntary repatriation. During this time it spent US$7,50,000 on food items and non-food items family package; US$10,50,000 on emergency shelter and US$18,00,000 on capacity building and coordination programmes. US$2,44,900 was spent to strengthen government coordination and information management capacity at central and local level. Table 5.4 summarizes the expenditure incurred by UNHCR in Sri Lanka during 2002-3.

Table 5.4: UNHCR Expenditure in Sri Lanka during 2002-3 (US$)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project/Activity</th>
<th>Amount spent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Protection and durable solutions of IDPs</td>
<td>40,00,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Care and maintenance of refugees</td>
<td>65,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocacy</td>
<td>6,00,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDPs Well-being</td>
<td>3,00,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capacity Building</td>
<td>1,00,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voluntary repatriation</td>
<td>1,50,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family package</td>
<td>7,50,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergency shelter</td>
<td>10,50,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capacity building and Co-ordination</td>
<td>18,00,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government co-ordination and information management</td>
<td>2,44,900</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
UNHCR projects in Sri Lanka have the following characteristics:

1. They aim towards restoration of self-sufficiency by directly focusing on the humanitarian needs of the most vulnerable and weak IDPs and their home communities.

2. They are directly derived from the operational objective for the relevant areas of need and should contribute to achieving the short-term goals of this joint strategy.

3. They are in accordance with the priorities and plans of the ministry responsible for each area of need in the Joint Strategy, as presented in the Government’s Quick Impact Project for Reconstruction and Rehabilitation of the North East Region, and in its overall Relief, Rehabilitation and Reconciliation (RRR) framework.

4. They are based upon the data collected and analysed through the Rapid Return Assessment Survey of the needs of the first 70,000 IDPs extrapolated to estimate the needs of an additional 250,000 IDPs returning during 2002. And all projects should result in measurable outputs with practical and visible impact as ‘peace dividends’.

5. They are able to deliver within the relevant agency’s current capacities and competencies.

6. They take an inter-agency approach, wherever required, and demonstrate the comparative advantages of the UN, working collectively, over other organizations or
countries acting alone.

7. They encompass and involve a wider set of national partners like the private sector, NGOs, community and religious groups, rather than only the government agencies so as to have a greater overall impact.

8. They work effectively in the key crosscutting themes identified in the UNDAF: combating gender discrimination, promoting environmental sustainability, employment opportunities, and enhancing respect for human rights.

9. They work towards the building of trust between ethnic groups and should not be influenced by any ethnic suggestion or religious discrimination.

10. They stress on an integrated approach wherein humanitarian assistance can lead naturally into more developmental activities to maximize benefits and impact for local communities.

11. They adopt an ‘area or location based development programming’ approach for the delivery of inputs to specific targeted areas/communities, where appropriate (like de-mining, income generation, education and health initiatives).

12. They have a proven track record in Sri Lanka, or have a successful stint in the peace-building process anywhere in the world.

13. They are capable of successful implementation even if the peace process suddenly takes off so that the IDPs do not come under any unfair conditions.
the IDP situation changes dramatically.23

Following are the projects undertaken by UNHCR in Sri Lanka.

*Non-food relief items*:24 The UNHCR and the Ministry of Rehabilitation, Resettlement and Refugees undertook the provision of the non-food relief items package project. It supplies non-food items to the conflict-affected areas in need. The main objective is to address the emergency humanitarian needs of IDPs and returnees. It is designed to benefit approximately 40,000 IDP families with 40,000 non-food relief items, family packs and emergency shelter materials. The budget for one year is US$ 22,53,000.

*IDP Advocacy:* The project in the area of protection is titled as “Advocacy on IDP and Voluntary Repatriation Issues”. It was directly implemented by the UNHCR along with the Ministry of Rehabilitation, Resettlement and Refugees, initially for a period of six months incurring a budget US$6,00,000. Its main objective is to advocate IDP and voluntary repatriation issues. The total number of targeted beneficiaries was 8,00,000 IDPs and 1,00,000 returnees.

The main motive behind the project is to advocate policy and public advocacy campaigns for the improved access to rights of IDPs and returnees, including fundamental human rights and improved legislation. Another objective is to strengthen information flow in IDPs and refugees by setting up database to monitor

\[\text{\footnotesize \textsuperscript{23} Extracted from the UNHCR Global Report, 2003.}\]

\[\text{\footnotesize \textsuperscript{24} UNHCR, Terms of Reference: Situation Analysis on Internal Displacement in Sri Lanka (Colombo: UNHCR, 2001), p. 43.}\]
returns, update IDP registration and carry out needs assessment.

Monitoring and Protection of Rights: This was initiated by the UNHCR with its implementing partner Danish Refugee Council (DRC), for six months. Its title is “Monitoring and Protection of IDPs and Returnees Areas”, focusing on protection and well-being of groups at risk. The total budget needed was US$500,000. Its main objective is to cater to the immediate protection needs of IDPs and refugees who were returning spontaneously to their places of origin and to safeguard their basic human rights, to help create conditions conducive to return of IDPs and refugees with particular attention to vulnerable groups.

The total number of targeted beneficiaries were 800,000 IDPs returning refugees and the existing population living in areas of returns. The main outcome of this project has been that a human rights protection network has been established in the main areas of returns, i.e. Jaffna, Trincomalee Vavuniya, Mannar, Mallavi, Killinochchi, and the Batticaloa, each with two protection officers working alongside UNHCR premises specially in these locations. A network of agencies dealing with protection of human rights was established. Information regarding human rights violations was exchanged and appropriate solutions were reached by all partners.

Capacity Building project: The project was initiated by UNHCR with its government counterpart Sri Lanka Human Rights Commission (SLHRC). Entitled “Capacity Building of Local Organizations”, the project is focused on the area of protection. It is directly implemented by UNCHR with a total budget of US$1,000,000.
for six months. Its main objective is to assist in building the capacity and knowledge base of agencies dealing with human rights issues in relation to IDPs and returnees, to benefit 800,000 IDPs and 100,000 returnees. Its main output is strengthened capacity of SLHRC, Legal Aid Association of the Bar Association of Sri Lanka and other human rights organizations, to deal with IDP and returns issues.

UNHCR Sri Lanka has initiated in collaboration with its NGO partners, a Situation Analysis on IDPs. A major component of the analysis uses the guiding principles on internal displacement as a standard to gauge the condition of IDPs in the country. The analysis will ultimately serve as an advocacy tool for disseminating the Guiding Principle and enhancing awareness about the plight of IDPs in Sri Lanka amongst Government, civil society donors, UN and other agencies. Its objectives are: to compile a comprehensive analysis on the present IDPs situation using the guiding principles on internal displacement, to overview the condition of the IDPs, including current national and international policy, a review of the local legal situation pertaining to the displaced, and an examination of the response of different international and local agencies as well as recommendations”.

ICRC and the IDPs

Considering the magnitude of displacement, it is a difficult task to reduce the arbitrary treatment of civilians and the excesses of violations committed against them. Humanitarian actions play an important role in curbing violence, and prevent

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25 Available at: www.ipu.org

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the situation from further deteriorating.

Nothing changed in the patterns of the Sri Lankan conflict, which has been continuing for years. This grim situation continued to stress the importance of the ICRC’s unique role and activities. The ICRC focuses on protection activities, working through the parties to the conflict to strengthen its actions to protect populations under their control and ensure that their basic needs are met.

The ICRC actively gets involved in cases where IDPs are exposed to violence related to conflict or disturbances. It works within its mandate and capacity that the relevant authorities or the security conditions would allow it. It addresses protection problems affecting IDPs, even any other civilians and goes beyond the zones where hostilities take place anywhere in the country.

IDPs come under the mandate of the ICRC, as they are a product of armed conflicts and disturbances. Most of the ICRC’s work for IDPs is carried out during the armed conflicts. The ICRC, first as a promoter and guardian of international humanitarian law (IHL) and second as an operational agency providing protection and assistance to victims of armed conflicts and internal disturbances, calls for a dual response to the problems of IDPs.27

The general protection and assistance activities of ICRC on behalf of the IDPs in Sri Lanka are briefly as follows:28

28 For detailed information, see Marion Haroff Tavel, “Action taken by the International Committee of the Red Cross in situations of internal violence”, International Review of the Red Cross, No. 294, May-June 1993, pp. 195-220.
• Protection of civilian population; respect for international humanitarian law and humanitarian principles;

• Visits to person deprived of their freedom;29

• Emergency medical assistance and rehabilitation (war surgery, orthopaedic, support for medical facilities, etc.);

• Assistance in public health programmes, particularly as regards the supply of drinking water;

• Emergency food aid and other assistance to cover basic needs (e.g. material to make shelters, hygiene products, the distribution of seed, and agricultural tools and fishing tackle, livestock vaccination).30

The ICRC tries to be a neutral intermediary during the conflict situation, and provides protection and assistance to the victims of international and non-international armed conflict and internal tensions. It gives priority to the needy, based on the principle of impartiality. In this respect, the ICRC considers the IDPs to be first and foremost civilians, who as such are to be protected by IHL.31

IDPs affected by armed conflict constitute one of the main displaced categories residing in the most life-threatening situations. Hence they often become an important target group for the ICRC’s activities. It is roughly estimated that the

29 The purpose of these visits is to verify the detention conditions and the treatment of detains. In 1994, the ICRC visited more than 99,000 persons held in 2,470 places of detention in 58 countries.

30 In 1994, the ICRC distributed 17,000 tonnes of supplies of all kinds in 45 countries.

ICRC assisted close to 5 million IDPs in 1999. In 2000, special programmes were directed to aid and assist IDPs in 31 countries throughout the world.32

The ICRC aims to provide protection to IDPs by complementing the services provided by the government and the humanitarian agencies. Its activities focus on providing food, water and sanitation to the displaced in the first stages of the emergency. The ICRC also undertakes activities to restore contact among family members separated by war or disturbances, or to facilitate their reunification.33

The ICRC supports the Sri Lanka Red Cross Society in its work to assist displaced persons in the north and east of the country through emergency food aid, the distribution of cooking utensils, clothing and materials to construct temporary shelters, and the repair of wells to provide safe drinking water. The ICRC, the Federation and the Sri Lanka Red Cross decided in 1990 to launch emergency aid programmes for them.

The ICRC has supported the National Society in its efforts to bring help as needed to IDPs in areas affected by conflict, while the Federation and the Norwegian Red Cross (NRC) have supported the National Society’s operations outside the conflict areas. The National Society has been able to distribute cooking utensils, clothing and construction materials for temporary shelters and to sink, repair and sanitize wells supplying drinking water for the IDPs. Emergency food stocks have been provided by the National Society to meet the immediate requirements of the

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32 Available at: www.icrc.org.
33 In 1994, the Central Tracing Agency delivered 7,721,50 Red Cross Messages to and from separated family members.
These programmes were designed by local branches of the National Society in close cooperation with the ICRC and the Federation based on detailed assessments of needs carried strictly in regard to emergency criteria. The ICRC finances the various projects, which are implemented directly by the National Society. In 1992, this aid amounted to almost half a million Swiss francs.

By offering support and to benefit the IDPs, the ICRC and the Federation increased the operational and development activities capacity of the SLRCS. Since summer 1990, hundreds of thousands of people have been forced to abandon their homes by the renewed hostilities between the Sri Lankan government and Tamil independence groups.

Some 800,000 people, many of whom were displaced, now live on the Jaffna peninsula, which has been cut off from the rest of the country. In the other four northern districts, 200,000 people are living in areas not controlled by the government. As a result of the conflict nearly 100,000 people have been displaced and over 60,000 are still living in camps within the conflict areas. Some 250,000 people fled to India. Every month, the government transports 8,000 to 9,000 tonnes of food, medicines and other vital supplies by ship to Jaffna and by road to the other northern districts travelling under ICRC protection.

The SLRCS had developed a degree of emergency preparedness to meet the needs of the newly displaced. The hospital in Jaffna is continuing its work under the protection of the ICRC, which negotiated and guaranteed its neutral status. ICRC
delegates work closely both with local medical officials and with the central authorities in Colombo to ensure that the hospital can function properly and is adequately supplied.

In non-conflict areas, the Federation has been providing support for the work of the SLRCS in favour of refugees and displaced persons in the form of food, shelter, clothing, household items, sanitation and medical services. The SLRCS, in collaboration with the Federation conducted a camp to evaluate the psychological and social needs of displaced children. Consequently, a programme was held for Sri Lanka Red Cross Mobile Health Services (SLRCMHS), to increase the awareness of such needs among displaced persons.

CARE

CARE the international relief and development agency, is increasing the scope of its emergency programmes to help displaced people in the country. It works island-wide, with all of Sri Lanka’s different ethnic groups to provide aid and assistance to the IDPs. It has been active in the country since 1956, when it began nutritional programmes for mothers, pre-school and school children.

Since May 2000, more than 12,000 displaced people have been receiving basic assistance from CARE, such as clothes, blankets, mats and cooking utensils. In the 1980s CARE began to branch out into other areas, including agriculture, Natural Resource Management (NRM) and promoting the development of small

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34 CARE’s keynote published on 7 August 2000, “CARE Steps for Emergency Assistance in Jaffna, Sri Lanka as Fighting Keeps People on the Move”.

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businesses for IDPs.

CARE is working in the districts of Point Pedro and Karaveddy in the North-East, Sandilipay and Chankanai in the North-West, Uduvil in the Centre and the Kayts and Velanai Islands off the west coast of the peninsula.

CARE is building emergency shelters for displaced families. Family shelters numbering 600 were built to accommodate more than 2000 people in about 50 communities on the peninsula. CARE is also improving the living conditions of displaced families by building new sanitation system and repairing existing facilities. Most of the new facilities will be installed around welfare centres. Approximately 400 latrines will be built to serve at least 8000 people.

CARE is planning ahead and seeking funds to supply more than 3000 displaced families with seeds and tools so that they can cultivate vegetables. Families will be given access to small plots of land in and around the welfare centres and communities where they are staying. Since CARE began its emergency programme in May 2000, more than 12000 displaced people have been receiving basics such as clothes, blankets, mats and cooking utensils.

Before the LTTE took over Jaffna town, reports from CARE and other international agencies indicated that there were at least 14,000 IDPs in Jaffna district. The LTTE took control of a crucial pass connecting the Jaffna peninsula to the rest of Sri Lanka in May 2000.35

The protracted civil war in Sri Lanka has caused enormous damage to infrastructure and the socio-economic and cultural fabric of the entire society in the North-East provinces. It affected the people living in border areas such as Anuradhapura and Polonaruwa. CARE started the Rehabilitation Assistance Project for the Internally Displaced (RAPID-II) in November 1999 for a period of two years to look after the needs of the displaced people. The basic idea of RAPID-II is to address the needs of IDP communities living south of the forward defence line of Sri Lanka. This project was implemented in Anuradhapura, Polonaruwa, Puttalam and Vavuinya districts.36

The project created an atmosphere for lucidity, cooperation, and unity both at district and divisional levels. RAPID-II works with conflict-affected communities in the government-controlled areas of these districts. It was designed to facilitate and assist to strengthen in capacity of war affected and vulnerable community to meet their basic needs. CARE also ventures to strengthen and improve the service delivery to the IDPs by providing confidence and resource needed for such build-up. By considering the community as a whole, CARE seeks to avoid raising tensions and to facilitate community cohesion. The project is expected to reach a total of 5300 households.

RAPID-II is an umbrella project. Under its auspices a wide range of small-scale community projects are implemented by local organizations. Projects range from water and sanitation schemes to agriculture and income generation.

36 "Rehabilitation Assistance Project for the Internally Displaced (RAPID-II)", A district report published by the CARE Sri Lanka branch March 2002.
CARE helps local organizations to develop, design, monitor and evaluate projects. All relevant training programmes emphasize the use of participatory methodologies and the principle of non-discrimination. Each local partner organization undertakes community needs assessment before developing a project. The project idea is reviewed by a steering committee comprising CARE staff and representatives of the government sectors. Project approval is based on various criteria and is a fully transparent process. Promoting transparency and accountability has been a significant achievement of the RAPID project. Once a community project is approved, CARE supports to local organizations to implement it and also monitors progress.

The umbrella project strategy allows RAPID II to reach a wide range of communities within a short period of time. A similar strategy is also used for CARE MICRO project, which works in LTTE-held areas to improve IDP services.

An underlying strategy of RAPID-II is to build the overall capacity of local partner organizations. The project conducts a series of training programmes aimed at strengthening the operating capacity and efficiency of local organizations. Training emphasizes the principles of good governance and inclusivity. It also covers gender issues. By working with and through local government organizations RAPID has helped to improve overall service provisions of IDPs and conflict affected communities.37

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37 A mid-term evaluation report prepared by the SHRD Consultants in June 2001 on RAPID-II PN 35 CARE-Sri Lanka.
OXFAM

Oxfam works in partnership with local organizations at the grassroots level for the poor people in their communities. It helps them to organize to solve problems of basic livelihoods, gain access to services, improve their security and assert themselves against discrimination. Oxfam seeks to help people to organize and to gain better access to improve their livelihoods and govern their own lives. It works with people affected by humanitarian disasters, with preventive measures, preparedness, as well as emergency relief. Improving livelihoods remains an important part of Oxfam’s work in Sri Lanka. It started working throughout the country, including the poverty-affected southern areas of Hambantota and Moneragala. It continues to concentrate on the people who suffer extreme poverty and others who were directly affected by the ongoing conflict, concentrating on basic amenities such as water and sanitation needs.

Conclusion

The Sri Lankan civil war has led to enormous social, economic and human costs. Many have lost their lives. Many have been displaced or have become vulnerable. Most of the IDPs in Sri Lanka have had an experience of getting displaced many number of times, and have been shifted from one welfare centre to another. Some have been living in such centres for up to ten years. The government of Sri Lanka has finally taken some steps to find solutions to the IDPs by initiating some schemes that vary from one district to another. Through NGOs some services have been provided to settle these displaced families.
International NGOs such as ICRC, CARE, UNHCR and OXFAM have been active in the conflict-affected areas to meet the increased needs of the victims of the conflict in spite of the restrictions laid on them by the state, and criticism levelled against them. They have not only worked to provide emergency relief and rehabilitation but have also striven to initiate income-generation activities to make the victims of conflict self-reliant.