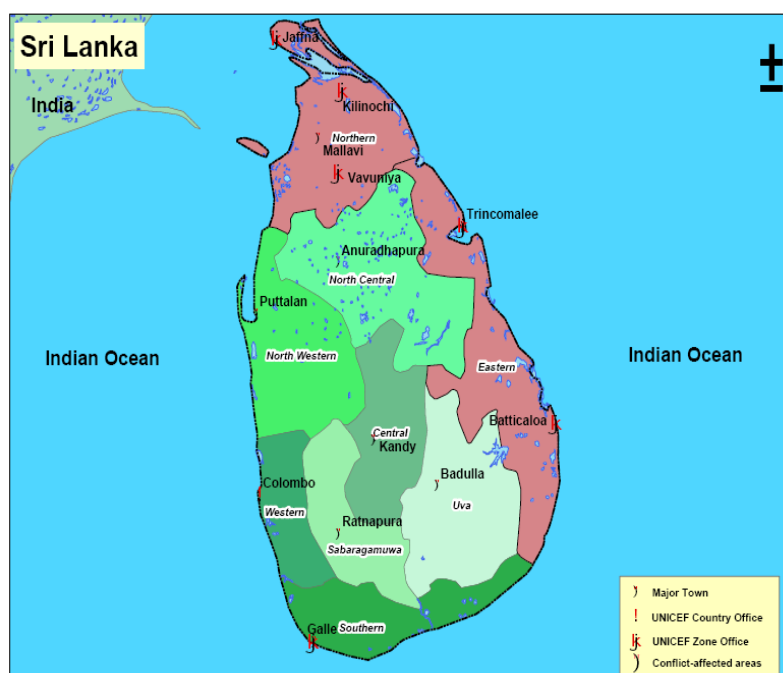


# UNICEF HUMANITARIAN ACTION

# SRI LANKA

## IN 2007



### CORE COUNTRY DATA

Population under 18 (thousands)	6054
U5 mortality rate	14
Infant mortality rate	12
Maternal mortality ratio*	43
Primary school enrolment ratio**	96.3
Primary school enrolment ratio for girls**	95.6
% U1 fully immunized (DPT3)	99
% population using improved drinking water sources	79
Estimated no. of people (all ages) living with HIV, 2005 (thousands)	5.0
% U5 suffering from moderate and severe underweight	29

Source: *The State of the World's Children 2007*

\*Family Health Bureau, Ministry of Health, 2003

\*\* Labour Force Survey, 2002

### Summary of UNICEF financial needs for 2007

Sector	US\$
Health	1,000,000
Nutrition	1,250,000
Water and environmental sanitation	2,500,000
Education	1,600,000
Child protection	1,500,000
Non-food relief items	1,800,000
<b>Total*</b>	<b>9,650,000</b>

\* The total includes a maximum recovery rate of 7 per cent. The actual recovery rate on contributions will be calculated in accordance with UNICEF Executive Board Decision 2006/7 dated 9 June 2006.

## 1. CRITICAL ISSUES FOR CHILDREN

Sri Lanka has been afflicted by a serious civil conflict between the Government of Sri Lanka (GoSL) and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) since 1983. The Ceasefire agreement (CFA) signed by the GoSL and the LTTE in February 2002 created high expectations and opportunities for internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees to return to their places of origin or to resettle in new locations. However, since the end of 2005, the security situation in the country, particularly in the northern and eastern districts has been deteriorating. The escalating conflict in the northern and eastern parts of Sri Lanka is resulting in grave humanitarian consequences including a significant number of civilian casualties, including children. The violence has so far killed over 1,000 people since the beginning of the year. Nineteen humanitarian workers have been murdered in the East and North of Sri Lanka. On 14 August, more than 100 adolescent school girls were killed or injured during a Sri Lanka Air Force bombing raid. The critical situation has caused massive displacement resulting in over 200,000 newly displaced persons since April 2006, with the overall figure of IDPs since the onset of the conflict estimated at 450,000. The displaced persons have settled in over 170 locations, mostly schools and public buildings, as well as with family and friends. An additional 16,000 people have sought refuge in India.

The security situation remains tense and volatile in Jaffna, Trincomalee, Kilinochchi, Mullaitivu, Batticaloa, Vavuniya, Mannar and Ampara districts due to the ongoing military operations. The humanitarian access to assist the civilian population in vulnerable areas has been greatly impeded due to the prevailing security situation and lack of clearance from the authorities. The A9 road from Jaffna to Kilinochchi has remained closed since 12 August, making movement of humanitarian supplies to Jaffna extremely difficult. UN staff remain in Jaffna to assist with the emergency, but movement of UN personnel and supplies have been limited to a UN-chartered plane scheduled on a fortnightly basis.

Food and other items are in extreme shortage in conflict areas due to access restrictions for suppliers and civilians. There is a continued need for sanitation and hygiene related interventions in IDP concentration points. The imminent monsoon requires rapid action as many of the IDP sites provide inadequate shelter and are prone to flooding. The recruitment of children by the LTTE continues to be a major violation to children's rights in Sri Lanka with an average of 45 cases per month reported in 2006. Recruitment attributed to the Karuna Faction has also become significant, with 107 cases reported for the period of June to September 2006.

## 2. KEY ACTIONS AND ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2006

UNICEF, in close collaboration with sister UN agencies, the ICRC, international and national NGOs and government partners, has continued to respond to the humanitarian needs of the Sri Lankan conflict-affected population. (Although UNICEF has been supporting the conflict-affected areas throughout the year, the key achievements mentioned in the text mainly refer to actions undertaken since the escalation of violence in August 2006.) It has mainly focused on the priority areas of health, nutrition, water and sanitation, education and child protection.

UNICEF is continuously distributing non-food relief items in order to provide basic support for the conflict-affected households and actively promotes the access of IDPs to quality health and nutrition services. In some conflict-affected areas, UNICEF has supported the resumption of routine vaccination activities. UNICEF is further supporting health promotion through community-level health promoters in IDP locations and supplies de-worming tablets for pregnant women and vitamin A supplementation in all IDP areas.

UNICEF is the lead agency for education and is actively supporting the Ministry of Education in coordination committees among participating partners at national, zonal and district levels.

UNICEF is setting up temporary learning spaces and providing tarpaulins and mats to enable classes to take place outside of school buildings. School-in-a-box kits, blackboards, uniforms, schoolbags and stationery are distributed in order to accelerate the integration of conflict-affected children into learning environments.

Based on lessons learnt from the tsunami crisis, the water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) emergency preparedness and response plan was immediately initiated. Action was taken to facilitate effective sector coordination and an appropriate response, ensuring access to safe water and adequate sanitation services in camps, and the delivery of WASH emergency supplies to the accessible affected population without delays. UNICEF is currently constructing emergency temporary toilets at IDP locations and providing safe water to displaced people through support for water dowsers and supply of water tanks. UNICEF is further supporting waste management activities and providing water quality monitoring training and instruments for water quality testing. Rehabilitation of toilet and bathing spaces is ongoing in IDP camps. Tarpaulins have been distributed to ensure the privacy, dignity and security of women and girls. Emergency hygiene promotion activities are conducted by health animators, particularly with children in the schools where IDPs are temporarily located in Kilinochchi, Trincomalee, Jaffna, Mullaitivu and Batticaloa districts.

UNICEF complements UNHCR's overall protection lead by providing coordination in child protection through district-led coordination of child protection agencies linked to national coordination. UNICEF is further collaborating with the Government in the rapid registration of separated and unaccompanied children at IDP sites in Jaffna, Kilinochchi and Batticaloa, with the aim of reunifying the children with family members or to find a safe temporary caretaker. In Trincomalee a total of 51 separated and 7 unaccompanied children were registered.

Regarding the tsunami response, UNICEF had moved from emergency assistance to recovery and reconstruction by trying innovative approaches in health, nutrition, water, sanitation and hygiene as well as cognitive and psychosocial development. UNICEF's support further includes the construction and rehabilitation of 35 health centres and hospitals, the rehabilitation of three major water supply projects, the construction of 35 child-friendly schools and the repair and construction of 60 social-care centres. This response spans across 10 tsunami-affected districts, but the work in the northern and eastern districts has been increasingly thwarted by the growing violence in the country. Construction met with significant delays and postponements from transportation and hiring difficulties. Limited or lack of access to many of the conflict-affected areas has further hampered programme implementation.

### **3. PLANNED HUMANITARIAN ACTION FOR 2007**

#### **Coordination and partnership**

A UN Common Humanitarian Action Plan (CHAP) was developed and launched on 30 August 2006 involving the UN agencies and a wide variety of NGO partners. An extension for 2007 is currently under preparation. A country-level Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) meets regularly to coordinate the humanitarian response and address common problems with access and protection. Humanitarian response at the district level is led by the Government Agent and coordination meetings with the key agencies are held regularly. UNICEF also leads or is an active member of sector coordination groups that meet regularly at the national and district level.

#### **Regular programme**

The UNICEF Sri Lanka Programme has included a focus on children affected by armed conflict in the past years. All sector programmes include a significant if not predominant component for immediate emergency response and medium-term projects addressing issues arising from the conflict that are impacting on children's lives. In 2007, the UNICEF-supported tsunami recovery programme will continuously cover 10 affected districts rebuilding stronger and safer infrastructure and services for children and communities. Tsunami funds will further be used at a national and provincial level to build up capacity and work on policies and also to strengthen emergency preparedness/response.

### **Health (US\$ 1,000,000)**

Some 200,000 displaced persons, including 34,000 under-five children, 7,000 pregnant women and 14,000 lactating mothers, will benefit from the following key activities:

- Procure and distribute refrigerators, cold boxes and vaccine carriers for vaccine storage and distribution in order to re-establish routine immunization services for 34,000 under-five children and 7,000 pregnant women;
- Procure and distribute essential medical supplies and emergency obstetric care and newborn care equipment to cover the basic medical needs of 200,000 IDPs;
- Procure and distribute vitamin A and worm treatment medicines to 34,000 under-five children and 14,000 lactating mothers;
- Supply emergency health kits and first aid kits;
- Promote health through community-level health promoters in IDP locations;
- Train health service providers and community-level health promoters;
- Provide technical assistance to support government capacity to coordinate health emergency response at the field level.

### **Nutrition (US\$ 1,250,000)**

In order to maintain or improve the nutritional status of displaced children's and women's nutritional status, the following key activities will be undertaken:

- Initiate and maintain nutrition surveillance in all IDP locations;
- Establish mother/baby-friendly spaces for breastfeeding mothers in 14 IDP locations;
- Supply fortified supplementary food/biscuits for under-five children and pregnant women;
- Support printing of behavioural change communication materials and nutrition promotion;
- Strengthen capacity for treatment of severe malnutrition and ensure availability of supplies;
- Provide technical assistance to support coordination and implementation.

### **Water and environmental sanitation (US\$ 2,500,000)**

Families affected by the conflict will be provided with adequate water, sanitation and hygiene facilities and information. Some 30,000 conflict-affected IDP families, including 75,000 children and 40,000 women, will be reached through the following key activities:

- Ensure the availability of a minimum safe water supply, taking into account the privacy, dignity and security of women and girls, through the installation of emergency water supply systems and transport of water by trucks;
- Provide bleach, chlorine or purification tablets including detailed user and safety instruction in local languages;
- Provide jerrycans, family hygiene kits and disseminate key hygiene messages on the dangers of cholera and other water- and excreta-related diseases;
- Facilitate safe excreta and solid waste disposal with the construction of emergency temporary toilets and garbage structures;
- Ensure effective communication of hygiene messages and information to affected families;
- Provide technical assistance to support coordination and implementation.

### **Education (US\$ 1,600,000)**

Education is a fundamental right of every child. In emergencies, UNICEF is committed to getting all children – with a special focus on girls – back to school. In emergencies, schooling is a means of restoring a sense of normalcy to the lives of children and can help them overcome psychological and other forms of distress. Education offers a regular routine, opportunities for self-expression and the chance to engage with peers – all vital elements of normalcy for children whose lives have been disrupted by conflict and displacement. A total of 50,000 children affected by the conflict and children in host communities will be supported to resume schooling through the following key activities:

- Provide temporary child-friendly teaching/learning spaces and learning materials (education kits), uniforms and schoolbags;

- Provide teacher training for 2,000 teachers on emergency education response;
- Support the Ministry of Education in coordination committees among participating partners at national, zonal and district levels.

#### **Child protection (US\$ 1,500,000)**

Conflict and displacement present particular threats for children, such as separation from their families, recruitment by fighting forces and exposure to targeted violence or landmines/unexploded ordnance (UXO). At the same time, pre-existing threats – such as sexual and gender-based violence, labour exploitation or malnutrition and disease – often increase. Through its activities, UNICEF is striving to prevent and respond to all forms of violence, abuse and exploitation committed against the conflict-affected children. UNICEF is continuously monitoring and reporting on underage recruitment and is currently working with the Government and other agencies to set up a mechanism for monitoring and reporting other child rights violations particularly in conflict areas. UNICEF has maintained a comprehensive database of underage recruitment since 2001, which is updated when the child's status changes. The database provides a record of known cases of recruitment and has proven to be an effective advocacy tool for the release of underage recruits.

Some 100,000 children in IDP and conflict-affected communities will be supported through the following key activities:

- Establish child-friendly spaces in IDP settings;
- Develop mass small media campaign on UXO awareness for displaced populations in order to mitigate the number of new mines/UXO casualties;
- Provide technical assistance to support coordination and implementation.

Children associated with armed groups in the East and North of Sri Lanka as well as those at risk of recruitment and other forms of violations are targeted through the following key activities:

- Reinforce community-based protection in target zones most at risk of child recruitment/abduction;
- Develop monitoring and reporting system in the eight conflict-affected districts of East and North of Sri Lanka on gross rights violations (such as killing or maiming of children; recruiting or using child soldiers; attacks against school or hospitals; rape or other grave sexual violence against children; abduction of children and denial of humanitarian access for children);
- Develop systems for the systematic verification, proper documentation and referrals of reported cases of gross violations at both national level and in the eight conflict-affected districts in the East and North of Sri Lanka;
- Ensure that child protection organizations at both district and national levels are trained on monitoring, reporting and responding to gross rights violations.

#### **Non-food relief items (US\$ 1,800,000)**

Some 30,000 conflict-affected IDP families will be reached to fulfil the essential non-food daily needs through the following key activities:

- Continue to assess non-food relief items (NFRI) needs;
- Procure and distribute NFRI such as hygiene kits, clothes, towels, jerrycans, sleeping mats, cooking pots, plastic sheeting and eating utensils, bed sheets, hurricane lanterns, basins, buckets, cups, plates, soap, sanitary pads, children's dresses, t-shirts and shorts, saris, sarongs, children's, men's and women's underwear and other essential items to IDP locations.
- Monitor distribution and use of NFRI.