Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka’s 30-year civil war took a serious toll on health-care services, water and sanitation facilities, education systems and protective safety nets for women and children living in Northern and Eastern Provinces. There is a massive effort at recovery under way, with each step both a promise for the future and a reminder of the past. Many of those who are able to return to their homes find their movements – and their livelihoods – circumscribed by fields littered with unexploded ordnance and landmines. Many children are able to attend school, but find they need to catch up from a severe schooling deficit wrought by years of violence and periodic displacement. Approximately 42,000 women find themselves alone as head of the household, often causing significant economic stress and a detrimental impact on the quality of care for children.

The humanitarian need of those who remain displaced is particularly acute. In the last months of fighting, more than 280,000 people were displaced due to the conflict, and around 100,000 are still threatened by poor nutrition and health care, insufficient sanitation and education, and unexploded ordnance and landmines. An additional 300,000 people displaced over the course of the conflict – some since 1990 – also remain in need of solutions. The great humanitarian challenge is to help Sri Lankans safely and completely return to their homes.

By December 2010, an estimated 325,800 people, or 102,000 families, had returned to their places of origin. During the conflict, thousands of Sri Lankans also fled to India and are now ready to return to their homeland. Of the more than 100,000 refugees in India, about 72,000 are living in 112 refugee camps in the state of Tamil Nadu in southern India, with about 34,000 living outside the camps.

The pace of return for internally displaced persons has been hampered by the high residual contamination of unexploded ordnance and landmines. Even those who have returned to their own land are unable to be fully self-reliant due to limited access to land that has been demined. The scale of reconstruction has been impressive, but the level of social-services infrastructure destruction – including schools, health centres, homes and civil administration buildings – was high. There are enormous shortfalls in providing sufficient services to those who have returned.

UNICEF is requesting US$9,825,000 to carry out its planned activities in Sri Lanka in 2011, half of the amount requested in 2010 due to the rapidly changing context.

Full and prompt funding by donors is crucial to ensure the well-being of children and women in a country marked by a long-standing civil war. In 2011, UNICEF will work with the Government of Sri Lanka, other UN agencies and NGO partners, and communities to respond to the needs of the 362,000 children and 214,000 women. UNICEF’s response will be determined by the pace of the resettlement process in Northern Province. Its focus will be on ensuring adequate access to safe drinking water, appropriate sanitation and hygiene, quality basic education, health and nutrition as well as building a stronger protective environment for children, both in temporary IDP sites and in returnee communities. UNICEF is working with authorities and partners to ensure that support for lasting recovery is present in all sectors of the humanitarian response.

CRITICAL ISSUES FOR CHILDREN AND WOMEN

Due to persistent mine contamination in areas of origin, the internally displaced people who remain in camps and those with host families are highly dependent on humanitarian aid. Returnees require a scaling up of basic social services to support the firm re-establishment of their lives. Much infrastructure was destroyed during the conflict, and children and families lost most of their belongings during multiple displacements. Some basic goods and support have been provided, but many essential services need to be restored; schools and health centres, for example, require repairs and essential supplies. And to prevent the outbreak of waterborne-related diseases, safe water and hygienic means of excreta disposal need to be provided to the resettled population.
Of particular concern in the post-conflict context is the high number of households headed by women alone. According to government figures, there are 42,000 female-headed households in the north, which often causes significant economic stress and may have a detrimental impact on the quality of care for children. In order to ease the economic burden on families, more children are seeking jobs, dropping out of school and/or getting married.

Many children are behind in terms of learning achievement. Some children have missed out on education altogether or require additional support to reach the same starting point as their peers in other parts of the country. Approximately 2,000 children live in institutions because their families require support and assistance to take them back. Children who remain in IDP sites still require safe play environments, temporary learning spaces and specific assistance to continue their education until they can return home. Water and sanitation services inside camps are also necessary until eventual resettlement.

**KEY ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2010**

In 2010, UNICEF estimated that US$20,082,000 was needed to fund its humanitarian work in Sri Lanka. As of October 2010, a total of US$10,781,415 had been received, or 54 per cent. In cooperation with the Government of Sri Lanka, as well as national and international partners, UNICEF was able to respond to the humanitarian needs of more than 230,000 returnees and 85,000 internally displaced persons, including more than 130,000 children, through the provision of health and nutrition, water and sanitation, education and protection services.

In 2010, nutrition aid focused on ensuring adequate management of acute malnutrition, which was carried out through the nutrition rehabilitation programme in both IDP sites and resettlement areas of all districts in the north. As cluster lead, UNICEF coordinated the nutrition response, working closely with the Government, UN agencies and NGOs. UNICEF helped develop the capacity of health workers and ensured supply of anthropometric equipment, therapeutic milk (F-75 and F-100), ready-to-use therapeutic Plumpy’nut and supplementary food, oral rehydration solution and multiple micronutrient supplements. Children under age 5 suffering from severe acute malnutrition were referred to the therapeutic feeding centres in Cheddikulam and Vavuniya hospitals. Prevalence of global acute malnutrition has dropped to 13.5 per cent in IDP sites primarily due to treatment of moderate and severe acute malnutrition in the camps. Complicated cases of severe acute malnutrition were referred to therapeutic feeding centres for treatment. UNICEF also supported the construction and equipping of health facilities in Kilinochchi, Mallaitivu, Mannar and Vavuniya.

The UNICEF-led WASH cluster ensured provision of safe water and adequate sanitation and hygiene for 280,000 internally displaced people, surpassing Sphere standards.
UNICEF supported the provision of water trucking, distribution of hygiene kits and provision of monthly hygiene promotion activities as well as care and maintenance of a water pipeline system, water storage tanks and latrines in IDP sites. In addition, UNICEF provided support for the rehabilitation or construction of 32 latrines benefiting 160 people, thus providing them with a hygienic and dignified way of excreta disposal, a safe and healthy environment, and less exposure to mines.

UNICEF supported the Department of Probation and Child Care Services in aiding vulnerable children. As of September 2010, 483 institutionalized children were reunited with families, and institutionalization was prevented in 1,145 cases through reunification packages, livelihood and other support to family care. In addition, in 2010, all children formerly associated with armed forces of groups were released and reunited with their families or placed in interim care while awaiting family tracing.

Mine-risk education continued in five districts in Northern Province and three in Eastern Province, in cooperation with national NGOs, the Humanitarian Demining Unit mine-risk education teams and the ministry of education. By October 2010, mine-risk education had reached an estimated 333,983 individuals in awareness-raising activities.

The education cluster, co-led by UNICEF, distributed essential learning supplies and equipment for approximately 75,000 returnee and host schoolchildren in Northern Province as well as for the more than 5,000 students remaining in IDP camps. Communities supported construction of temporary learning spaces during the protracted school rehabilitation phase.

PLANNED HUMANITARIAN ACTION FOR 2011

UNICEF is leading the WASH and nutrition clusters as well as the child protection sub-cluster and is the co-lead of the education cluster with Save the Children. In 2011, UNICEF will continue to work with the Government of Sri Lanka, other UN agencies, local and international NGOs, and host communities in addressing the needs of 362,000 children and 214,000 women. It will focus on the return and resettlement process in Northern Province, while continuing to provide basic services to temporarily displaced persons remaining in camps and host communities. To reduce vulnerabilities among the estimated 580,000 internally displaced people as well as host communities and resettled families in northern Sri Lanka – and in alignment with its Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action – UNICEF will work with partners to provide emergency relief in the areas of health and nutrition; water, sanitation and hygiene; education; and child protection. UNICEF will also work with partners to ensure improved coordination of humanitarian action and with the Government to develop national capacity for emergency preparedness and disaster risk reduction.

NUTRITION (US$1,660,000)

UNICEF will continue to support the treatment and prevention of global acute malnutrition and will work with the Government of Sri Lanka to achieve key results.

- The UNICEF-led nutrition cluster will develop a joint nutrition surveillance system to be introduced in conflict-affected areas.
- The nutrition rehabilitation programme will continue to provide up to 30,000 children under age 5 with therapeutic and supplementary feeding for 12 months for treatment of severe and moderate acute malnutrition.
- More than 30,000 people in areas of resettlement, including adolescents, pregnant and lactating women and children under 5, will be reached through the Integrated Nutrition Programme providing a comprehensive nutrition package (infant and young child feeding, therapeutic feeding, management of severe and moderate acute malnutrition, and awareness-raising on nutrition issues).
HEALTH (US$2,300,000)

UNICEF will continue to provide essential health-care services, including both preventive and curative services, in resettlement areas and will work with the Government to build stronger and more resilient national systems for basic services.

- An estimated 10,000 children and 2,500 women in resettlement areas will have expanded access to essential health services with sustained coverage through five outreach mobile clinics equipped with essential drugs and equipment.
- An estimated 90,000 returnees will benefit from refurbishment of damaged health-care facilities and provision of equipment to maternal and paediatric units in returnee locations.
- Capacity building will be offered to health-care providers on emergency obstetric care, essential newborn care and life support, and immunization.
- Health and nutrition awareness-raising activities will be conducted to promote healthy practices that help prevent undernutrition and the spread of disease.

WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE (WASH) (US$995,000)

UNICEF will provide reliable access to safe water supplies and proper sanitation and hygiene facilities for up to 150,000 conflict-affected persons in areas of return as well as IDP sites.

- Access to safe water supply will be ensured for 150,000 persons in resettlement areas as well as in IDP sites through the cooperation and linkages between the UNICEF-led WASH cluster and early recovery actors.
- Some 150,000 internally displaced persons and returnees will have access to sufficient safe water supplies through the immediate construction and durable rehabilitation of 750 water-supply systems, consisting of dug wells, tube wells/boreholes and rainwater-harvesting tanks in IDP sites, schools, temporary learning spaces and health-care facilities.
- The privacy and security of women and girls will be ensured through access to adapted sanitary facilities meeting Sphere standards through the repair and maintenance of emergency toilets and washing spaces for 25,000 in IDP sites and the provision of both permanent and temporary toilets with accompanying hygiene promotion for vulnerable returnee families and children. Sanitation in schools will also be provided in resettlement areas.

CHILD PROTECTION (US$800,000)

The UNICEF-led child protection sub-cluster will improve national capacity to monitor, document and report violations of child rights and to support community-based reintegration services as needed. Mine risk education will continue to be implemented with partners.

In collaboration with the Government of Sri Lanka and community-based systems, 250 protection structures, including child-friendly spaces and children’s clubs, will be established in IDP sites and return communities, reaching an estimated 25,000 children.

- 20,000 vulnerable children, including orphaned/separated as well as war-injured and disabled children, will be supported to find a long-lasting family and community environment or will be referred to available service providers as appropriate.
- With the aim of minimizing the risks of accidents from hidden mines and other explosive devices, all community members returning to a former conflict-affected area will benefit from community- and school-based mine-risk education. Advocacy against the use of landmines and other indiscriminate weapons will be carried out.
- Vulnerable families will receive cash assistance and self-employment grants.
- 2,000 young people, including children formerly associated with armed groups, will be reached through vocational training, on-the-job training and economic empowerment.

EDUCATION (US$3,970,000)

UNICEF and Save the Children will co-lead the education cluster to expand educational access and quality for all children.

- Formal education will be re-established for returnee children through rehabilitation of at least 30 permanent schools damaged by the conflict, benefiting approximately 6,000 children.
- Temporary learning spaces will be established and maintained, based on needs, in areas of return and in host communities while schools are repaired and rehabilitated.
- Learning and teaching kits and other educational supplies will be provided to schools on a needs basis.
- A crash teacher-training programme will reach approximately 500 inexperienced primary teachers in Northern Province, providing an introduction to basic classroom pedagogy, child development and effective classroom management.
- An Accelerated Learning Programme will be implemented with the support of the ministry of education to reintegrate and retain up to 100,000 children who have fallen behind in their education due to conflict and displacement. Teachers will be trained on how to conduct the Accelerated Learning Programme for their students.
**ASIA-PACIFIC: SRI LANKA**

**CLUSTER COORDINATION (US$100,000)**

To enable an effective and efficient coordinated response to improve the prospects of people affected by emergencies, all cluster coordination costs need to be adequately funded. These costs include a team for coordination and information management, along with administrative and operational support, to undertake a number of key actions and outputs. These include coordinating the collective response to maximize synergy and minimize duplication of efforts; identifying priority needs of affected communities based on experience and the results of rapid impact assessments; and developing a common strategic operational framework and response strategy that meets priority needs. In addition, UNICEF as cluster lead expects to put in place an effective monitoring mechanism that tracks progress and identifies gaps in the type of services being provided and in their geographical scope, and also articulates impact and outcomes through periodic progress reports. Information will be disseminated in a timely way and used in decision-making and planning.

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**UNICEF EMERGENCY FUNDING REQUIREMENTS FOR 2011**

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<th>By sector</th>
<th>US$</th>
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2. Ibid.
4. These funding requirements are part of the Joint Plan for Assistance (JPA) for Northern Province in 2011, launched in-country on 1 February 2011.
5. A six-month Flash Appeal was launched on 18 January 2011 in response to devastating floods and landslides. The UNICEF requirement of US$9,903,600 through the Flash Appeal is in addition to the Humanitarian Action for Children requirement.
7. Source: Department of Probation and Child Care Services, Government of Sri Lanka, statistics 2008–2009 and administrative reports, social protection cluster tracking sheets, zonal office monthly reports and other documents compiled for the UNICEF Country Programme Mid-Term Review.