

This situation report covers the period from 27 to 28 April 2009. The next report will be issued on or around 29 April.

I. Highlights

- 30 metric tons of food were ferried yesterday by the ICRC to the conflict zone.
- ICRC was planning to evacuate 481 people from the conflict zone today and additional evacuations are planned for Wednesday 29 and Thursday 30 April. Since February, ICRC has evacuated by ferry 10,000 civilians from the Vanni, 50% of whom were injured.
- The Competent Authority (CA), appointed by the Government to coordinate all relief efforts on behalf displaced civilians, has announced that the authorities will not send any more IDPs to Menik Farm zone 2 for the next ten days.
- The CA has announced that work has started on clearing land in preparation of the opening of Menik Farm zone 4.
- The Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC), Mr. John Holmes, left Sri Lanka on 28 April following a two days visit to the island. Before leaving Sri Lanka, the ERC visited IDP camps in Vavuniya and met with the President.
- The ERC announced the allocation of a further US\$ 10 million dollars from the UN Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF).
- The ERC raised with the Government the issue of humanitarian personnel currently prevented from leaving IDP camps, despite repeated promises they will be released.

II. Access & Security

- Sri Lankan security forces continue their operations south of Valayanmadam. In his meeting with the President today, the ERC reiterated the need for more humanitarian access to the conflict zone to provide urgently needed food aid and medical supplies. "Given the fact that the LTTE has refused to let these people go, I hope that we will be given more access to the zone," said Mr. Holmes. "We believe that there are critical levels of hunger and large numbers of people needing medical treatment."
- The ERC said that he welcomed the GoSL's announcement about the scaling down of combat operations and no further use of heavy weapons, because that should reduce civilian casualties. However, he said that the key was implementation in full of the commitment to scale down combat operations and the use of heavy weapons, in the light of past experience. In this context he expressed great concern at initial reports of continued shelling.

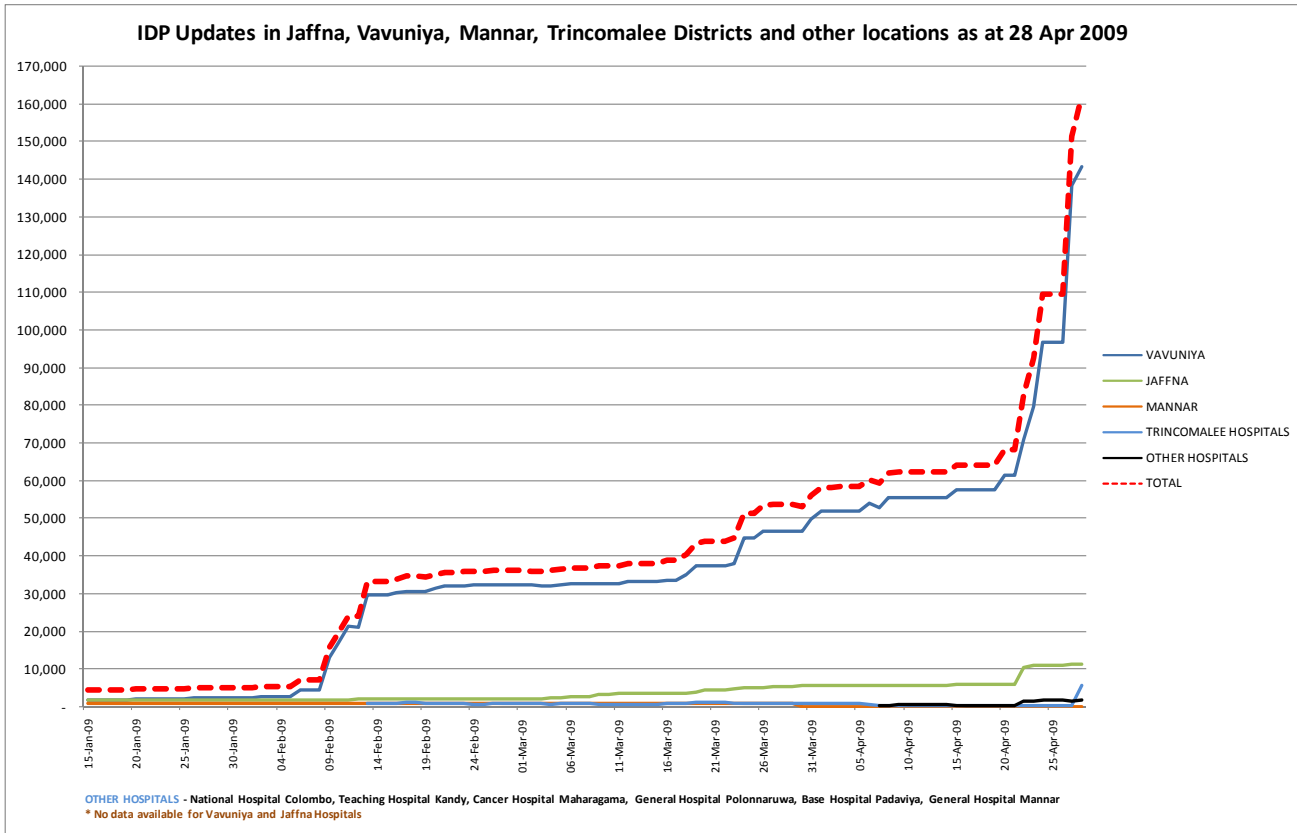


III. Situation Overview

- During the period 27 October 2008 to 28 April 2009, **161,765** persons have crossed to the government controlled areas from the conflict zone. This represents an increase of **10,534** IDPs since the last report on 27 April 2009 and an increase of over 90,000 people since 20 April 2009.
- **159,861** people are accommodated in temporary camps. This includes: 143,221¹ in Vavuniya, 52² in Mannar, 11,166³ in Jaffna and 5,422 in Trincomalee. In addition **1,904**⁴ IDPs (this figure includes injured and care givers) are in hospitals in various districts⁵ as of 27 April 2009.

¹ Source: Government, UNHCR (Vavuniya) and Divisional Secretary Vavuniya (DS VA)

- In Trincomalee District, the local authorities informed agencies that patients and care givers evacuated by ICRC and arriving in Pulmoddai will remain in the district and will no longer be transferred to Vavuniya as it was the case previously. The authorities have said that the site will be opened for 6 months only.



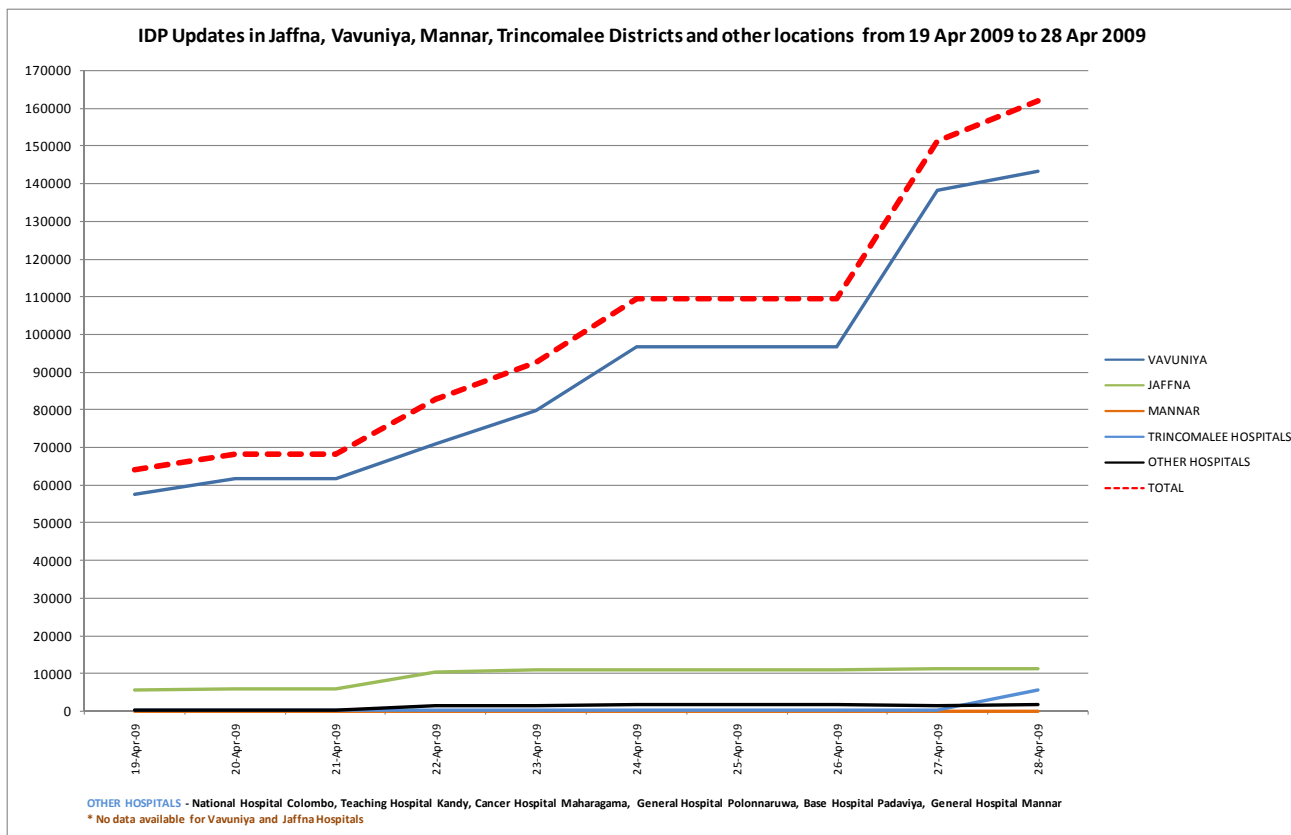
² Source: Assistant Project Director Office (PDA Office Kachcheri)

³ Source: UNHCR (Jaffna)

⁴ Source: Programme Coordinator (GH Trincomalee)

⁵ This includes General Hospital Trincomalee, Base Hospital Kanthalai, Peripheral Unit Thampalakamam, Field Hospital Pulmoddai, Base Hospital Padaviya, National Hospital Colombo, Teaching Hospital Kandy, Cancer Hospital Maharagama, General Hospital Polonnaruwa, General Hospital Mannar

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IV. Humanitarian Response

Shelter

- A UNHCR emergency airlift from its central stockpiles in Dubai carrying 2,850 family-sized tents landed in Colombo on 27 April. It is the first of two scheduled flights to deliver UNHCR tents to be used in the North.
- Solidar has started to place sign posts for each block in Menik Farm zone 2. Over the past five days there have been a number of reports of children and adults getting lost in the camp.
- Clearing operations of the proposed IDP site in Pulmoddai (Trincomalee District) have started with the support of the Army. UNHCR is working on site planning.
- Agencies agreed to provide 12'X12' (4mX4m) shelter for the IDPs who will be accommodated in Pulmoddai.
- In Trincomalee, the National Water Supply and Drainage Board (NWS& DB) has taken the responsibility of water provision and has deployed teams in Pulmoddai to erect water tanks.

Food

- On 27 April, the Air Force spokesman said the Air Force had airlifted 150 MT of essential food items including cooked food, bakery items, dairy milk, bottled water and instant foods to Kilinochchi
- 1,050 metric tons of food was diverted to Jaffna by WFP (including milk items provided by CHA) due to the security situation in the conflict zone and needs in Jaffna.
- In Pulmoddai (Trincomalee District) World Concern and the Organization for Eelam Refugees Rehabilitation (OfERR) are providing cooked meals to the IDPs. Together with WFP, they are calling on other agencies to be part of the food distribution.

WASH

- The WASH cluster projects that it will need to support 140,000 IDPs (taking into account the projected IDP influx and present overcrowding in sites) and decongestion of overcrowded IDP camps to allow for the upgrade of facilities and services from acute emergency assistance to emergency assistance.
- On 27 April, a UNICEF emergency airlift of nutritional supplies water treatment units for safe water, oral rehydration salts, and medical supplies landed in Colombo.

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- Agencies estimate that there is a need to plan acute emergency assistance for a further 60,000 to 100,000 IDPs who may yet arrive from the conflict zone.
- The WASH cluster estimates it will need to provide ongoing services and maintenance (e.g. garbage collection, waste disposal, bowsering) for the foreseeable future for 220,000 to 260,000 IDPs
- The WASH cluster has completed 320 pit latrine toilets at Menik Farm zone 2, approximately 1 toilet for 120 IDPs.

Protection

- Protection agencies have shared concerns with the CA on the lack of female police officers and female military personnel in Menik Farm zone 2. This is of particular concern with regard to the use of the river for bathing purposes. The authorities concurred and agreed to look into the issue.
- UNICEF has requested that DRC builds ten children assembly points to provide assistance for lost children.

V. Coordination

- Agencies continue to coordinate with the Competent Authority (CA) and the Government Agents in all areas.
- The Humanitarian Liaison Working Group (HLWG) met in New York on 27 and 28 April 2009 to discuss the humanitarian situation in Sri Lanka. On 28 April 2009, an Emergency Directors meeting was held. Participants discussed issues relating to funding, camp management, protection, access as well as the current operating environment for humanitarian agencies.

VI. Funding / CHAP

As of 27 April, the CHAP for 2009 remains 31% funded. Additional funding, particularly for the WASH, shelter, food, nutrition and education sectors, is urgently needed.

The ERC has announced the release of an additional \$10 million funding from the CERF, while the Humanitarian Team is finalizing an Emergency Appeal within the existing framework of Common Humanitarian Action Plan 2009.

The UNHCR High Commissioner has approved an increase of \$2 million in UNHCR's budget operations for Sri Lanka.

On 27 April Indian Ministry of External Affairs announced that the Indian Prime Minister has approved a grant of Rs. 1 billion (\$8,802,816) for humanitarian relief assistance to be provided to civilians who have been evacuated from the conflict zone.

All humanitarian partners including donors and recipient agencies are encouraged to inform FTS of cash and in-kind contributions by sending an email to: fts@reliefweb.int.

VII. Contacts

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