



RIJ

国際難民支援会

Building a
Future for
Refugees

S r i L a n k a



Reasons for Displacement:

Between 1983 and 2009, civil conflict waged between the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) and the Sinhalese government.

Intense fighting between the LTTE and the government caused massive displacement in the country. While many people fled to another place within Sri Lanka, others sought refuge abroad, primarily in Tamil Nadu, India.

Refugee and IDP Communities:

Since the end of the civil war, Sri Lanka has seen a steady improvement in security, and the majority of Sri Lanka's IDP's have returned home. However, there remain serious challenges that hinder returnees in rebuilding their lives and prevent many IDP's and refugees from returning in the first place. In the northern and eastern

parts of Sri Lanka, some areas have not yet been fully demined, the presence of the military is strong, and basic infrastructures and services have not been fully rebuilt or developed. Also, Sri Lanka has not developed a comprehensive land rights policy, resulting in a difficult housing situation for many returnees. On top, more than 100,000 returnees in the northern parts of the country lack the National Identity Card required for access to multiple public services as well as government assistance.

To increase the number of returnees, the Sri Lankan government has asked other countries to return asylum-seekers, which puts the refugees at risk of detention and torture by the Sri Lankan navy or security and intelligence service. Of those who do return, many have to obtain permission from the navy or police to maintain their livelihood, such as fishermen who need passes to go out to the sea on a daily basis.

Assistance:

- RIJ funded a project that provided preschool teacher training to returnee refugees. Through this support, 89 teachers achieved their diplomas
- World Vision International has extensive Area Development Programs with over 45 projects
- The EU, UNICEF, and the Sri Lankan government worked together on a project for the improvement of access to public services for communities affected by conflict



Number of refugees:
511 residing in Sri Lanka;
121,996 originating from Sri Lanka;
[source: UNHCR]

Number of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs):
90,000
[source: IDMC]

History:

1956—Solomon Bandaranike elected, institutes Sinhala as the official language resulting in widespread violence from Tamils

1972—the name of the country is officially changed to Sri Lanka and Buddhism is made the main religion, continuing the efforts to isolate the Tamil minority

1983—civil conflict breaks out between the Sri Lankan government and the LTTE

1990—thousands of Muslims are forced out of the northern areas by the LTTE

1991-2008—heavy casualties on both sides as fighting continues through bombs and other attacks

2009—civil war officially ends

2011—The Tamil National Alliance wins majority of local councils in the former war zones

2013—UN Human Rights Commissioner Navi Pillay says democracy and laws were not being followed by the government; Sri Lanka hosts the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting, which discusses issues of human rights in the country

2015—Government overturned with the surprise election of Maithripala Sirisena of the New Democratic Front