



# Tamils Rehabilitation Organisation

Head Office: 254 Jaffna Road, Kilinochchi, Sri Lanka

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

TRO Headquarters  
Kilinochchi  
15 October 2008

Location	Number of Families	Number of Individuals
Vadamarachci East (now displaced to Mullaitivu)	1,942	7,640
Kilinochchi	18,143	66,707
Mullaitivu	39,248	155,887
<b>Total</b>	<b>59,333</b>	<b>230,234</b>

### Urgent Appeal

Tamils Rehabilitation Organization (TRO) Headquarters in Kilinochchi are calling:

1. For the Government of Sri Lanka (GoSL), namely the Sri Lanka military, to cease attacks on the A9 road in order to ensure the delivery of essential humanitarian assistance, especially food, medicine, fuel and building material, to the 230,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) in the Vanni. The A9 is the only road that is passable for large lorries during the heaviest periods of the monsoon, which began this past week.
2. Due to the vagaries of both the monsoon and the fighting between the GoSL and the LTTE, TRO also requests, on behalf of the IDPs, that at least one month stock (See Table 3) of food items be kept in the Vanni under the control of the Government Agents and/or the ICRC.

Bombing by the Sri Lanka Air Force (SLAF), shelling by the Sri Lanka Army (SLA) and attacks by the SLA Deep Penetration Units (DPUs) targeting bridges and roads have hampered the movement of humanitarian assistance and IDPs. The Peraaru bridge on the Mankulam – Oddusuddan Road, which was used by the 3 October UN/WFP food convoy was destroyed by the SLAF and SLA DPU on 10 October 2008. This resulted in the UN convoy scheduled for that day (10 Oct) being cancelled.



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Another bridge over the Kanakarayan River on the Puliyankulam – Nedunkerni road was also attacked this month and is now impassable. On 13 October, a convoy of lorries led by the Mullaitivu Government Agent was crossing the bridge when it collapsed due to an attack by the Sri Lanka military that occurred just prior to the convoy crossing and had compromised the bridge's structural integrity. This route had been negotiated with the GoSL after the first bridge's destruction had made the original route impassable.

There are currently no stocks of food, medicine, fuel, or other essential supplies available in the Vanni. Commercial shops and co-operative societies have exhausted their supplies, as have all NGOs and Government Departments. In such a context it is vital that a food convoy reach the IDPs. The Sri Lanka military's attacks on these 2 bridges at this time seemed designed to prevent food reaching the IDPs.

While the GoSL, the UN and international humanitarian organizations debate, discuss, and negotiate humanitarian access to the Vanni, the limiting of which is a violation of International Humanitarian Law, the situation in the Vanni has become critical and local officials and local NGOs, such as TRO, are struggling to provide the necessary humanitarian assistance.

## **Food/Convoy Details & Actual Needs**

The humanitarian situation in the Vanni is critical. The Northern monsoon rains began this past week (6-13 Oct) and the lack of any food convoy by the UN/WFP since 3 October 2008 has led to a further worsening of the humanitarian crisis in the Vanni.

Over 230,000 IDPs, 26,000 of whom are students, who have been displaced by the current GoSL offensive have been forced to take shelter from the monsoon rain under trees (up to 50% of the IDPs), and in schools, churches and other public buildings due to a lack of temporary shelters. The UN and international NGOs had begun construction of some shelters prior to their being ordered to leave the area by the GoSL but were not able to complete them. As a result, TRO and other local NGOs have attempted to fill the gap but have faced severe difficulties due to the GoSL's restrictions on the transportation of building materials, tents, and tarpaulins. Funding shortages and a lack of cash on hand at local banks have also hampered these efforts.

The food situation is critical, as the GoSL has not allowed any UN food convoys into the Vanni since 3 October. The UN Inter-Agency Standing Committee Country Team Situation Report # 147, 2-9 October



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2008 ([IASC Report](#)) states that, “**The 653MT** of rice, wheat flour, pulses and oil, which was distributed amongst IDPs following the WFP Food convoy on 03 October, **will meet the needs of the approximately 200,000 Vanni IDPs for 6 days.**” This was the only UN convoy allowed in since the UN and iNGOs exited the Vanni on 15 September 2008.

Extrapolating from this statement the vast gap between the actual needs of the IDPs and the amount of food allowed by the GoSL is apparent. The needs for **230,000** persons (the actual number of IDPs quoted by the UN see Table 1 - [IASC Report](#)) for 6 days would be 751 Metric Tons (MT) or 3,755 MT for 30 days (**Table 3**). Once again using UN figures of 653 MT travelling in 51 lorries (average 13 MT per lorry) in the 3 October convoy, approximately 289 lorries would need to cross the Omanthai Checkpoint to deliver the 3,755 MT needed for 30 days. This would require 58-lorry convoys 5 times per month (5 X 6 = 30) or an average of 10 lorries per day (Table 3). These numbers are only for the IDP population and do not include the needs for the non-IDP, resident population.

**Table 2: UN/WFP Convoy of 3 Oct for 200,000 IDPs**

Number of IDPs & Days Supply will last	MT	Lorries needed to transport this amount of food	MT per Lorry	Type
200,000 IDPs - 6 day supply	653	51	13	Actually sent
200,000 IDPs - 30 day needs	3,265	251	13	Needs

**Table 3: Needs for the Actual number of IDPs - 230,000 IDPs (UN/GA figures)**

Number of IDPs & Days Supply will last	MT	Lorries needed to transport this amount of food	MT per Lorry	Type
<b>6 day needs for 230,000 IDPs</b>	<b>751</b>	<b>58</b>	13	Needs
<b>30 day needs 230,000 IDPs</b>	<b>3,755</b>	<b>289</b>	13	Needs

## Hospitals/Medicine

Kilinochchi Hospital has for the most part relocated to safer areas to the East of the A9, though some patients and departments were not able to relocate due to the patients' status and thus remain at the



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Kilinochchi Town location with limited staff. The majority of the hospital has relocated to a sub-hospital at Tharmapuram and a school in Visuvamadu on the A35. The relocated hospital has over 300 “inpatients” and 800-1200 outpatients visit daily.

Due to a lack of fuel resulting from the MoD restrictions and embargos, ambulance services, the ICU, and cold chains for vaccines cannot be maintained. Additionally, the inability to travel on the A9, due to the aforementioned attacks, has resulted in a number of deaths of critically ill patients when they were not allowed to proceed due to the ICRC not being able to guarantee safe transport to or crossing of the Omanthai Checkpoint. A premature baby died as a result of this delay.

The monsoon rains and a lack of clean water have lead to a sharp increase in the number of cases of diarrhoea and water borne diseases as well as skin diseases and rashes. The lack of temporary shelters has exacerbated this and most of those presenting with these afflictions are those who are forced to take shelter under trees or makeshift shelters. The number of snakebites, 120 in 7 days, is also on the rise as a result of the monsoon rain and the flooding of the snakes' habitats.

## **Displaced TRO Projects, Childrens' Homes and Offices**

The following TRO Projects in the Kilinochchi Area have been displaced due to bombing and shelling by the GoSL:

Gurukulam Children's Home (ages 6-18) & Kulanthikal Infants Home (ages 05)	976 Girls
Ghandi Illam Children's Home (all ages)	275 boys
Santhosam Illam (for the Elderly)	
Happy Home (for Men with special needs)	45
Mother & Child Education & Nutrition Development Centre	160 mothers & children
Kumar Children's Day Care Centre	180 boys & girls aged 3-5)
Chandran International School (English Medium School Yrs. 3-10)	150 boys & girls
English Language College	55 men & women
TRO Management School (Business College) - Accountancy & AAT courses for post-"A" Level education	300 men & women
TRO Computer Centre (vocational training centre)	100 men & women



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Education Skills Development Centre (ESDC) - established by TRO & UNICEF for underage recruits from the LTTE	125 girls & boys
Kids Computer Park (for ages 3-6)	40
Vocational Training Centre (carpentry, masonry, etc.) - funded by Bridge Asia Japan (BAJ)	
Social-Economic Development Bank (Micro-credit bank)	20,000 persons have savings & credit/loans
IT Service Centre providing internet and computer services for business, departments and communities	