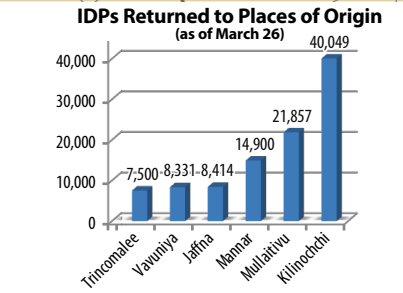
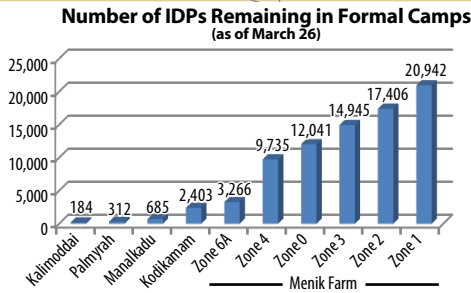
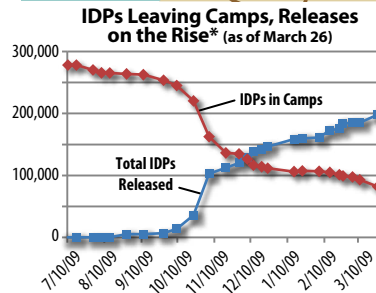


Sri Lanka: Camps Closing, but Many Still Displaced

- Jun-Jul 2009**
 - The Government of Sri Lanka (GoSL) begins releasing a small number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) to host families mainly in the Vavuniya area. Initially the elderly, separated children, pregnant women, and those with special needs are returned.
- Aug 2009**
 - A new round of releases takes place, largely without the support of humanitarian relief agencies. Around 4,500 IDPs are returned predominantly to Jaffna and areas to the east.
- Aug 2009**
 - An unusually strong monsoonal storm floods much of the Menik Farm area damaging shelters and contaminating water supplies due to overflowing latrines.
- Oct 2009**
 - The GoSL introduces an accelerated return program. Nearly 50,000 IDPs are returned to areas of the north and east throughout October.
- Jan 2010**
 - With a national turnout of 74.5%, President Rajapaksa is re-elected with a 57.88% majority. His main challenger, General Sarath Fonseka receives 40.15%. A lack of sufficient transportation, and issues over identification for the IDPs were major factors for low voter turnout in the north. Despite these conditions, Gen. Fonseka wins many of the conflict-affected districts in the north and east.
- Feb 2010**
 - Gen. Fonseka is taken into military custody over numerous charges including planning to stage a coup, politicking while in military service and threatening to provide war crimes evidence against the GoSL.
- Mar 2010**
 - UNHCR is forced to suspend its Rp.25,000 (\$220) relief grant for IDPs due to a lack of funding. The grant was designed to assist IDPs to rebuild or repair their homes upon return from the camps. Returns were halted on March 30 due to parliamentary elections.
- Apr 2010**
 - Parliamentary elections take place. President Rajapaksa's governing coalition wins a significant majority. Monitoring groups claim a majority of Tamil displaced in the north were denied voting rights, with turnout as low as 17% in Jaffna. IDP returns were scheduled to resume on April 10, but were put on hold until later in April.



*Return is defined as the movement of IDPs back to an area where they previously resided. Release constitutes the cumulative movement of IDPs to places of origin, host families, and institutions.