

IMHO: May 09 Update #2 on Sri Lanka Efforts

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In This Issue

[Massive Relief & Rehabilitation Challenges](#)

[Temp Maternity Ward Opens](#)

[IDPs In Dire Need of Medications](#)

Quick Links: Recent Crisis Reports

[Crisis Report: April 30, 2009](#)

[Crisis Report: April 18, 2009](#)

[Crisis Report: March 17, 2009](#)

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As Violence Finally Subsides, the Relief & Rehabilitation Needs are Massive

As the stream of heightened violence that plagued Tamil civilians in the Northeast over the last several months has officially come to a close, the human toll of the war has yet to be fully understood. What we can be sure of is that this recent violence has been utterly devastating and inflicted an indescribable amount of pain and suffering on those who

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galleries\)](#)

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were forced to endure it. Moving beyond the devastation, we must now turn to relief and rehabilitation for those who survived. Quality of life in the internment camps and while in-transit has been incredibly poor, as camps are overcrowded; they lack adequate food, medicines, clean water, and proper sanitation; innumerable cases of severe mental and emotional trauma have yet to be addressed at all; and much more. But there is hope...

It is now a collective responsibility we all share to improve the quality of life in these camps. As aid agencies and local organizations join in the relief and rehabilitation effort and seek to gain unimpeded access to the IDP camps, the challenges are massive and daunting. Rest assured, with your help, IMHO will do everything possible to identify the most pressing needs and vulnerable peoples and do whatever is necessary to address the situation. At the immediate level, basic relief and healthcare (including counseling and mental health treatment) are needed the most. Soon after, a more concerted effort to address education, livelihoods, resettlement, and other aspects of rehabilitation will need to be tackled.

The vast majority of IDPs are now in Vavuniya. One of the biggest camps that presents perhaps the most challenging problems is Manick Farms, which is by far the most populous IDP camp and is divided into different sections. In Jaffna, most of the 12 welfare centers are located in the Kodikamam and Chavakachcheri areas. Another 12,000 IDPs entered camps in Jaffna in the final week of the violence. Many patients have recently been admitted to Kodikamam and Chavakachcheri Hospitals. These hospitals were left badly affected by the ongoing war which has now officially ended. Renovations and construction are important challenges now faced in bringing these hospitals (and others) up to their intended state, so that they may properly serve the people. None of the IDPs have, as of yet, been able to freely move around or leave the camps, making mobile clinics a necessity.

As another immediate measure there is need to construct temporary wards in these hospitals. With the help of the WHO a temporary ward in Chavakachcheri Hospital has been established. However, there is need for a second one at Chavakachcheri Hospital for the purpose of keeping separate male and female wards. Two similar are also needed for Kodikamam Hospital. The cost of each ward is estimated at about US\$25,000. Similar efforts have already been achieved at Vavuniya and Mannar Hospitals.

Temporary Ward for Pregnant Mothers & Newborn Babies Opened in Jaffna



With rebuilding efforts imminent, renovation of a maternity ward at the Varani Hospital in Jaffna was supported by IMHO in order to establish a postnatal care center for mothers and newborn children. The environment in the IDP camps is not conducive for giving care to mothers and newborns after delivery, nor is it a healthy place for a new baby to begin its life. So a request was made by the RDHS officials in the North to allow mothers and their relatives from IDP camps to stay in Jaffna for as many as 3 months following delivery. For those without families in Jaffna upon whom they can rely, a specialty temporary ward was established for exactly this purpose at the Varani Hospital. As the maternity ward of this hospital was not used for the last 5 years due to the conflict situation, renovations were urgently needed. For this purpose IMHO contributed \$5,000 through CHA.

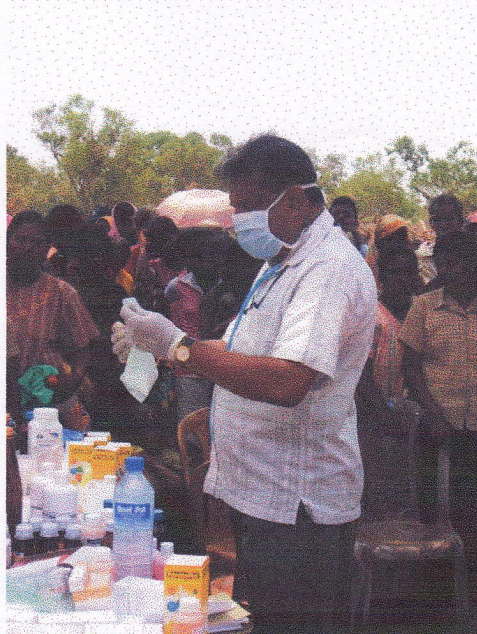
The renovation of this ward was completed and the postnatal care center was inaugurated on May 18, 2009. Special Guest, Mr. K. Ganesh, the government agent for Jaffna, was there to declare the center officially open. This center is intended to benefit 200 or so pregnant mothers and their new babies.

Crucial Medications Needed for Manick Farm IDP Camp & Cheddikulam Hospital

As part of our partnership with CHA in responding to the vast IDP needs, IMHO has sent many funds to purchase medicines for these persons, including \$9,000 for the IDPs in Jaffna most recently. We are also hoping to supply the Base Hospital in Cheddikulam with much needed medicines they have requested. This hospital is in the Vavuniya District

and is providing facilities and relief for IDPs from Mullaithivu & Kilinochchi now in the massive Manick Farms IDP Camp. The hospital is equipped with 131 beds, but has added hundreds of mattresses now to help cope with the current influx of IDPs seeking care.

With such a large increase in the number of patients seen per day, this hospital and others are in need of a number of medicines, including Amoxicillin (30-40% of infections can be treated with this), Paracetamol, Piriton, oral rehydration fluids, Erythromycin, Domperidone, Cephalexin, Augmentin, IV Cannula, Ciproflaxacin, Prednisolone, IV Ciproflaxacin, Biurtte, Augments, and Acyclouri. The most common illnesses amongst the IDP population include respiratory infection, diarrheal disease, skin conditions, a whole slew of psychosomatic complaints (including aches, pains, tiredness, and sleeping problems), and other ailments associated with malnutrition and dehydration. If you have access to any of the above-mentioned medicines through pharmaceuticals, NGOs, or other means, or you would like to support this effort, please contact us today.



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During this crucial time in Sri Lanka and around the world, as we face monumental challenges in providing better access to quality medical and health care for those most at-risk segments of society, we need YOUR HELP now more than ever. With **just \$15/month** you can meet the nutritional needs of 1 IDP (internal refugee). Please consider making a donation to IMHO today. You can **donate online via PayPal as a one-time or recurring donation** (the amount & frequency of which are up to you).

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