



ICRC

NEWSLETTER

JULY-SEPTEMBER 2014

SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES IN NEED

Economic security and water and sanitation for the vulnerable

Dear Reader,

Conflicts destroy livelihoods and infrastructure which provide water and sanitation to communities. Throughout the world, the ICRC strives to enable access to clean water and sanitation and ensure economic security for people affected by conflict so they can either restore or start a livelihood.

In Sri Lanka today, the ICRC supports vulnerable households and communities in the former conflict areas to become economically independent through sustainable income generation activities and provides them clean water and sanitation by cleaning wells and repairing or constructing pipe networks and toilets.

When households have been affected by conflict, it is difficult for them to support their families economically during the recovery phase.

With regard to this, the Report of the Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission (LLRC) notes, “these immediate needs include economic assistance by way of providing them with means of livelihood and other income generating means so that

they could reduce the immense economic hardships and poverty under which they and their families are living at present” (para 5.112).

The ICRC’s response during the recovery phase to those made vulnerable by the conflict was the piloting of a Micro Economic Initiatives (MEI) programme for women-headed households, people with disabilities and extremely vulnerable households in the Vavuniya district in 2011. The MEI is a programme in which each beneficiary identifies and designs the livelihood for which he or she needs assistance to implement, thereby employing a bottom-up needs-based approach. The success of the programme resulted in its geographical expansion to the Mullaitivu district in 2012. This programme was implemented in partnership with the Sri Lanka Red Cross Society and the local District and Divisional Secretariats.

The ICRC continued supporting these vulnerable households in 2013 by targeting a higher number of beneficiaries and including released rehabilitees in its target population.

This year, the ICRC started a Community Based Livelihood Support Programme (CBLSP) to support vulnerable communities in the Mullaitivu and Kilinochchi districts to establish or consolidate an income generating activity.

The ICRC’s economic security programmes are closely linked to its water and sanitation initiatives.

In Sri Lanka, the ICRC restores wells contaminated as a result of monsoonal flooding, and renovates and builds pipe networks, overhead water tanks, and toilets in rural communities for returnee populations to have access to clean water and sanitation. The ICRC has also been carrying out small-scale infrastructure development and renovation in a number of prisons to provide detainees adequate living conditions.

The ICRC Delegation in Sri Lanka



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RESTORING, REGENERATING, REINTEGRATING: LIVELIHOOD SUPPORT FOR THE ECONOMICALLY VULNERABLE



Joanna Atkinson/ICRC

Reaping a plentiful harvest.

Worldwide, the ICRC defines economic security as the ability of an individual, household or community to meet its essential needs and unavoidable expenses in a sustainable manner according to its cultural standards by ensuring an improvement in living conditions, the quality and quantity of food consumption, and the ability to execute food production.

In Sri Lanka, the ICRC aims to provide economic security to the civilian population affected by the past conflict. This form of assistance has been carried out on an individual-household basis through Micro Economic Initiatives (MEI) programmes, benefitting released detainees (rehabilitees), women-headed households, persons disabled as a result of the past conflict, and extremely (economically) vulnerable households.

Head of the ICRC's Economic Security unit in Colombo, M Kamil says, "As a distinctive feature of our approach, we identify the most vulnerable households and enable them to start a livelihood project in order to improve their income, so they are able to meet their basic essential needs. We also ensure sustainability through regular monitoring."

The most common source of income for such populations is agriculture, livestock rearing,

fishing, and small businesses such as grocery stores, hardware and/or bicycle stores, a stall in a local market selling assorted goods or local produce, salons, and even mobile phone shops.

Launched in 2011, the aim of the ICRC's MEI programme was to assist 328 families in the Vavuniya district. It is an income generating programme implemented using a bottom-up needs-based approach, whereby each beneficiary identifies and designs the livelihood for which he or she needs assistance to implement. The ICRC provides this assistance in the form of a cash grant of approximately LKR 50,000.

Over 2012-2013, the programme supported 650 families in the Mullaitivu district, implemented in partnership with the Mullaitivu branch of the Sri Lanka Red Cross Society (SLRCS), and 152 released rehabilitees in the Mullaitivu, Kilinochchi, and Vavuniya districts.

This year, the ICRC's MEI programme is being implemented in line with the Sri Lankan government's Divineguma programme, which selects the most vulnerable civilian populations by considering their existing livelihood strategies, location, demographic profiles, and market linkages.

To date, a total of 1,573 families have benefitted from the MEI programme, as shown in the breakdown below.

	2012	2013	2014
Agriculture	80	206	106
Livestock	190	345	161
Fishing	53	13	15
Small businesses	5	238	161

	2012	2013	2014
Persons with disabilities	21%	26%	7%
Women-headed households	67%	53%	28%
Extremely economically vulnerable households	12%	2%	10%
Rehabilitees	0	19%	55%

A further measure of the success of these programmes is that around 80% of its beneficiaries are able to cover their essential needs with their earnings, in addition to being able to fulfil other responsibilities such as pay for their children's education, repair their houses, and even save for family functions such as weddings.

THE HEAD OF THE HOME



Dayalini at work.

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Francis Aloysius Dayalini (34) sits at her sewing machine, surrounded by her colourful creations. Resettled in her native village in the Maritimé pattu division of the Mullaitivu district following the past conflict, Dayalini, the eldest of two sisters and a brother, is the sole breadwinner of the family. With the cash grant she received from the ICRC, Dayalini purchased a sewing machine and material, establishing a tailoring business that caters to the women and children in her village. Come Tamil New Year, Thai Pongal, Deepavali and other significant festivals, Dayalini's home is abuzz with customers giving her their measurements and designs or fitting on the finished product. "I earn a lot during the festive seasons," she says. This, in addition to a daily income, allows her to save for the marriages of her two younger sisters, fulfilling her role as the head of the household in every way.

LEAVING THE PAST BEHIND



Putting his skills to good use.

Fuad Mohamed Hafeen/ICRC

Mariyathas Premdas (32), a released rehabilité, is better known as Prem the hairdresser in his village of Iranaipallai, Mullaitivu. He lives with his elderly parents and runs the family business – a salon, which he has been able to expand and develop with the cash grant he received from the ICRC. Prem upgraded his salon with chairs, mirrors, trimmers and other essential equipment, and is constantly busy these days. Conveniently and strategically located 1.5km from the Puthukkudiyiruppu junction, he receives 10-15 customers on a daily basis. The conflict now behind him, Prem's focus is on developing the business as well as his skills. "I have a desire to further develop my skills in hairdressing," he explains, as he saves money towards this from his monthly income.

TAKING SMALL STEPS FORWARD



The start of a new work day.

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In the quiet, picturesque village of Welioya, Attanayake Mudiyanalage Galkethanegedara Chandrika, her husband and two children aged seven and two and a half years, live on the income of their modest vegetable patch, which produces onions, beetroot, eggplant and chillies. When the family moved to Welioya, Chandrika and her husband did not have the capacity to start an income generating activity without external support, but had adequate skills, knowledge and experience to launch their own livelihood project. Qualifying as an extremely economically vulnerable household, the couple received a cash grant from the ICRC to establish their vegetable patch. Their income is now sufficient to meet their daily needs and expenses, and Chandrika's husband also works as a labourer 5-10 days a month to supplement their income.

Acknowledging the hard work ahead of them, Chandrika says, "We cannot increase our income immediately; we want to continue our agricultural work and hope to earn more by taking small steps forward".

STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES THROUGH LIVELIHOOD ASSISTANCE IN THE MULLAITIVU AND KILINOCHCHI DISTRICTS

This year, in addition to the MEI programme, the ICRC is carrying out a Community Based Livelihood Support Programme (CBLSP) to improve the livelihoods of the most vulnerable as a result of the past conflict, as well as returnee communities in the Northern Province. Through a needs-based assessment conducted in six villages in the Kilinochchi and Mullaitivu districts, a need for economic sector-based intervention was identified. As such, the CBLSP is designed to meet sector-specific needs primarily in the fisheries, agriculture,

livestock, and small business livelihood sectors, benefitting multiple households within a community.

“Working in coordination with the government authorities, we have been able to respond to communities affected by the past conflict. This sectorial livelihood intervention is carried out through existing community-based organisations, thereby ensuring ownership of the project and guaranteeing its sustainability in the long term,” explains Kamil.

In September, the ICRC distributed onion seeds, paddy seeds, and fishing boats and engines to 248 households in the villages of Mullivaikkal and Mathalan in the Mullaitivu district, to regenerate livelihoods in the agriculture and fisheries sectors. Further distributions are scheduled to take place before the end of this year.

Since 2011, a total of 2,143 individuals have benefitted from the MEI and CBLSP programmes, which the ICRC expects to extend to the Mannar and Vavuniya districts next year.



Onion and paddy seeds piled for distribution in Mullivaikkal.



Boats and boat engines to regenerate livelihoods in the fisheries sector.

WATER AND SANITATION: MEETING FUNDAMENTAL NEEDS



Water: the most basic of needs.

Following the conflict in Sri Lanka, the ICRC's water and sanitation initiatives have been directed towards providing returnee populations, primarily in the country's Eastern and Northern Provinces, access to clean water and sanitation. It also carries out water and sanitation projects in places of detention, in addition to renovating prison wards. "The ICRC works in coordination with local authorities to ensure the projects are sustainable in the long run," explains Imthiyas Kaleel, the head of ICRC's Water and Habitat department in Sri Lanka.

SUSTAINABLE LIVING CONDITIONS IN PLACES OF DETENTION

The ICRC works towards ensuring a sustainable living environment in a number of prisons by contributing to infrastructure rehabilitation of prison wards and the construction of toilets and kitchens, installation of solar panels, and the improvement of ventilation systems.

During the latter part of this year, the ICRC fixed a solar water heating system in the Batticaloa Remand Prison, which provides energy for cooking purposes, and fans in the Negombo Remand Prison. Over 500 detainees have benefited from both initiatives.

Further, the ICRC restored two wards in the Anuradhapura Remand Prison and one ward in the Batticaloa Remand Prison. In the latter, the bathrooms were refurbished with tile flooring, plastic water tanks with pipe networks were installed, and tools were donated to improve the prison's maintenance system, which serves to mitigate any consequences of overcrowding and maintain the prison's engineering facilities. Up to 990 detainees have benefited from both initiatives.

In the Mahara Prison, the ICRC constructed two blocks of toilets, which include 24 toilet stalls, eight urinals, four water tanks, and two septic and soakage systems, benefiting up to 2,100 detainees.



Construction of toilet blocks in Mahara Prison.



Construction of a kitchen in the Batticaloa Remand Prison.

WATER AND SANITATION FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS



Pipe networks in Arumugam Vidyalayam, Mullaitivu.

The ICRC provides schools in the Northern Province overhead water tanks with pipe networks, and toilets, improving their sanitation and access to clean water. Between July and

September, a total of 4,249 children in the Kilinochchi district have benefitted from the construction of overhead water tanks with pipe networks and toilets in their schools. They now enjoy access to

sufficient clean drinking water and sanitation facilities, and their schools promote the knowledge and practice of personal hygiene as a part of the daily curriculum.



An overhead water tank and toilets in Arumugam Vidyalayam, Mullaitivu.

PROVIDING ACCESS TO CLEAN WATER FOR VULNERABLE CIVILIAN POPULATIONS



A handpump providing clean drinking water to a community in the Kilinochchi district.

In the Eastern and Northern Provinces, the ICRC provides returnee civilian populations access to clean water by renovating and constructing handpumps and open dug wells. This has provided civilians in the Batticaloa, Kilinochchi, and Mullaitivu districts access to water sufficient to meet their household and livelihood requirements.

Between July and September, the ICRC has built and restored a total of 38 community handpumps and open dug wells in these districts, affording an individual 60 litres of water a day. It has also constructed two and renovated eight open dug wells in the Kiran division in Batticaloa, which provided 1,050 civilians access to sufficient water. In addition, the ICRC has installed

up to 12 handpumps in 10 villages in the Kandawalai and Karachchi divisions in the Kilinochchi district, benefitting 600 civilians, and 16 handpumps in 14 villages in the Manthai East, Maritiméattu, Puthukkudiyiruppu, and Welioya divisions in the Mullaitivu district, benefitting 800 civilians.



Renovating an open dug well in the Batticaloa district.

FACTOID

ICRC ACTIVITIES: JULY-SEPTEMBER 2014

PROMOTION OF INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW (IHL)

- jointly organized the Teacher Training Workshop on IHL with the Faculty of Law, University of Colombo, with 23 participants from national universities, the Ministry of External Affairs, and the Attorney General's department;
- held the national round of the Henry Dunant Memorial Moot Court Competition with the participation of five teams from national universities and institutes;
- provided training on community-oriented public order management for over 650 members of the police, and on IHL for over 800 military personnel to be deployed on UN peacekeeping missions in Haiti, South Sudan and the Central African Republic;
- conducted a one-day programme on IHL for 39 officers following the UN Potential Observers Staff Officer Course at the Institute of Peace Support Operations Sri Lanka (IPSOTSL), Kukuleganga;
- conducted a two-day seminar on IHL for 117 military officers from countries including China, Pakistan, Sudan, Malaysia, Bangladesh, Maldives, Indonesia, Nepal, Oman, Rwanda, Senegal and Vietnam at the Defence Services Command and Staff College, Batalanda;
- conducted a one-day programme on IHL and the Rules of Engagement for 40 commanding officers and second in commands at the Security Forces Headquarters in the Vanni and West;
- conducted a five-day IHL Advanced Refresher Course for eight IHL Instructors from the Army, Navy, and Air Force at IPSOTSL, Kukuleganga.

SUSTAINING LIVELIHOODS AND PROVIDING ACCESS TO SANITATION AND SAFE DRINKING WATER

- provided cash grants to 251 released rehabilitees;
- through the Micro Economic Initiatives programme, supported 200 households headed by women and persons with disabilities in 11 villages in the Mullaitivu district and four villages in the Kilinochchi district, and through the Community Based Livelihood Support programme, three villages in the Mullaitivu district;
- is repairing two wards, which includes the reconstruction of a roof, in the Anuradhapura Remand Prison, benefiting 990 detainees;
- constructed two and renovated eight open dug wells in the Kiran DS division in Batticaloa to ultimately provide safe drinking water to over 1,000 individuals;
- is improving sanitation and access to safe drinking water for over 7,000 school children in the Kilinochchi and Mullaitivu districts by constructing 32 toilets and eight overhead water tanks;
- is improving access to safe drinking water for 1,400 individuals in the Kilinochchi and Mullaitivu districts by renovating 28 handpumps;
- is constructing two blocks of toilets, which includes 24 toilets, eight urinals and four water tanks in the Mahara Prison, benefiting 2,100 detainees;
- is repairing a ward, which includes the reconstruction of a roof, in the Batticaloa Remand Prison, benefiting 425 detainees.

SUPPORT TO THE SRI LANKA RED CROSS SOCIETY

- trained eight Red Cross branch dissemination teams in Hambantota, Kegalle, Gampaha, Puttalam, Kilinochchi, Mullaitivu, Polonnaruwa and Ratnapura, amounting to 110 volunteers;
- continued to provide the National Society with financial, technical and material support for its Restoring Family Links services, and the re-establishment of the Society's branches in Killinochchi and Mullaitivu;
- provided support for two first aid instructor courses, with 50 advanced first aiders in attendance, and contributed to World First Aid Day celebrations in Colombo.

DETAINEE WELFARE

- monitored the treatment of 524 people held in detention facilities and in rehabilitation;
- carried out 20 detention visits in 13 places of detention under the Ministry of Rehabilitation and Prison Reforms and the Ministry of Law and Order;
- paid allowances to the families of 434 detainees to enable them to visit their relatives in detention, while 1,845 families exchanged news via Red Cross Messages or oral messages over the phone;
- provided ad hoc assistance in the form of cleaning materials, hygiene and recreational items to more than 3,432 detainees.



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