



*This report was issued by OCHA Sri Lanka and has been compiled with contributions from OCHA Field Office and humanitarian partners in Vavuniya. It covers the period from 18 to 21 August 2009.*

## **I. Situation Overview**

Heavy rains between 14 and 17 August resulted in the inundation of several zones in Menik Farm. The weekend's rains fit the normal weather pattern for this time of the year in Vavuniya District, where sporadic rains of short duration precede the actual monsoon rainfall.

Despite further intermittent rain during the week, Menik Farm officials confirm that flood waters have almost completely receded in all the zones. Humanitarian agencies continue interventions to address the impact of the floods on the camp's infrastructure, while drawing upon the experience to strengthen contingency plans ahead of the monsoon season.

Agencies say that the impact of and response to last weekend's have helped to identify challenges and expand ongoing preparations for potentially major floods during the monsoons. Expediting the completion of drainage systems in all zones is a crucial strategy in this regard. Shelters in areas, which continue to face a serious threat of floods even when all drainage systems are in place, will be relocated.

On 20 August, the Vavuniya Government Agent stated that an as yet undetermined number of IDPs within the camp will be moved to Zone 6A, in partial response to the extremely congested conditions. The Government's commitment to a permanent solution by releasing and resettling IDPs was reaffirmed.

Flood waters have now receded and assessments are being done to identify the full impact of these rains. The main Clusters impacted were Shelter, WASH and Food. The response of these Clusters to the recent floods are summarised below:

### Shelter

During the rains, nearly 20,000 people in Zones 2 and 4, were relocated to the Temporary Learning Spaces (TLS) in these zones. Shelter Cluster representatives were on hand to provide quick assistance by reroofing some TLSs and reinforcing the walls in other TLSs with plastic sheeting. The floors of the TLSs were also raised above the flood waters by adding layers of gravel.

Camp dwellers, who were compelled to seek shelter in the TLSs, have now returned to their tents. The floor and walls of many of the affected tents are still drenched. However, the tents are expected to dry out and are, essentially, not uninhabitable.

An ongoing assessment by shelter agencies across Menik Farm reveals that the majority of tents may not have sustained very serious damage. Agencies are currently engaged in repairs to the tents. Much of this work consists of tightening the pegs, which secure the tents to the ground, replacing broken tent poles or tightening the guy ropes holding up the tent fabric. However, few tents seemed to have been actually ripped open by the heavy rainfall and strong winds. The number of shelters being repaired or replaced is not available at present.

Some tents were damaged as IDPs started to dismantle them spontaneously as water levels rose. This was discouraged by Shelter Cluster representatives.

The Shelter and WASH Clusters are collaborating closely to determine which areas of Menik Farm will remain vulnerable to serious floods during the monsoon, even when all drainage systems are in place. The shelters in these areas will be then relocated to other sites in consultation with camp authorities. Menik Farm officials say that they are working on plans to relocate IDPs to public buildings, such as schools, as a final resort in case of a major flood situation.

### WASH

WASH agencies are prioritising the completion of all drainage arrangements across Menik Farm as a precondition to moving tents out of the most flood-prone blocks or zones (as explained above).

Camp authorities estimate that approximately 450 toilets in Zone 1, 80 toilets in Zone 3 and 200 toilets in Zone 4 were affected. (Data from the other zones is unavailable at this time). Much of the sewage, which overflowed from the latrines, has drained away at this point but some stagnant pools of contaminated water remain and require drainage. Agencies are in the process of repairing the damaged lids of septic tanks. Furthermore, bunds are being constructed around latrines in some areas to prevent flood water from seeping into the latrines.

The recent rains are found to have stirred up the sediment in the nearby Malwathu Oya, which provides part of the camp's water requirement. Since the intake pumps and filtering systems were unable to cope with the increased turbidity of the river water, the water supply to Zones 0, 1, 2 and 3 was interrupted for a 30-hour period from 16 August to 17 August. (However, water continued to be provided by bowsers and on-site tube wells).

The Cluster is piloting a project to install treatment facilities in some blocks of Zones 3 and 4, in order to reduce the need to bowser in water during the monsoons. Agencies are also considering a request by the National Water Supply and Drainage Board (NWS&DB) for mobile teams to address breakdown in the camp's water supply.

### Food

The inundation in Zone 4 created an emergency requiring speedy intervention by the Food Cluster. The Zone's food requirements until this point had been met by individual cooking. However, the IDPs stocks of dry rations were drenched. There were neither dry firewood supplies nor dry spaces, uncontaminated by sewage, to engage in cooking. Approximately 3,000 loaves of bread, 5,000 packets of biscuits and quantities of tea and sugar were delivered during the night of 17 August. In collaboration with the Shelter Cluster, around 17 communal kitchens were also renovated during the weekend. Food supply to the less-affected zones was ensured with fewer challenges. The roofs of nearly 100 communal kitchens were reinforced with tarpaulins in Zones 2, 3 and 4 as well. As of 19 August, the Cluster is providing one week's supply of food for communal cooking.

The Cluster is working on finalising contingency plans to meet food requirements during the monsoons.

## II. Contacts

<b>Vavuniya:</b>	
<p><b>Mr. Gerson Brandao</b> Humanitarian Affairs Officer Field <a href="mailto:brandaoazevedo@un.org">brandaoazevedo@un.org</a> Tel: +94 024 4922 044, +94 024 2224 873 Mobile: +94 (0)77 3501 373 Fax: +94 024 2224 873</p>	<p><b>Mr. Kengatharan Shandralingam</b> Field Coordination Assistant <a href="mailto:shandralingam@un.org">shandralingam@un.org</a> Tel: +94 024 4922 044, +94 024 2224 873 Mobile: +94 (0) 77 3501 373 Fax: +94 024 2224 873</p>
<b>Jaffna:</b>	<b>Trincomalee:</b>
<p><b>Mr. Sugirthan Alaganantham</b> Field Coordination Assistant <a href="mailto:alaganantham@un.org">alaganantham@un.org</a> Tel: +94 021 2228 836, +94 060 2210 074 Mobile: +94 (0) 773580922 Fax: +94 021 2228 836</p>	<p><b>Mr. K. Arulvaratharajaah</b> Field Coordination Assistant <a href="mailto:arul@un.org">arul@un.org</a> Tel: +94 026 2222 355/6, +94 026 4921 324 Mobile: +94 (0) 77 3580 063 Fax: +94 026 2222 355</p>
<b>Colombo:</b>	
<p><b>Mr. Vincent Hubin</b> Humanitarian Affairs Officer/ Head of IMU <a href="mailto:hubin@un.org">hubin@un.org</a> Tel: +94 011 2504 434/5 Ext. 109 Mobile: +94(0) 77 320 7499 Fax: +94 011 4528 690</p>	<p><b>Ms. Nicola Perera</b> Reports Associate <a href="mailto:pereran@un.org">pereran@un.org</a> Tel: +94 011 2504 434/5 Ext. 113 Mobile: +94(0) 77 518 9328 Fax: +94 011 4528 690</p>
<b>New York:</b>	<b>Geneva:</b>
<p><b>Mr. Masaki Watabe</b> Humanitarian Affairs Officer Asia and the Pacific Section <a href="mailto:watabem@un.org">watabem@un.org</a> Tel: +1 917 367 2832 Mobile: +1 917 324 8379</p> <p><b>Ms. Stephanie Bunker</b> Spokesperson <a href="mailto:bunker@un.org">bunker@un.org</a> Tel: +1 917 367 5126 Mobile: +1 917 892 1679</p>	<p><b>Mr. Anvar Munavvarov</b> Humanitarian Affairs Officer <a href="mailto:munavvarov@un.org">munavvarov@un.org</a> Tel: +41 22 917 2732 Mobile: +41 79 602 3598</p> <p><b>Ms. Elizabeth Byrs</b> Spokesperson <a href="mailto:byrs@un.org">byrs@un.org</a> Tel: +41 22 917 2563 Mobile: +41 79 763 4570</p>
For more information, please visit: <a href="http://www.hpsl.lk">www.hpsl.lk</a>   <a href="http://ochaonline.un.org/srilanka">http://ochaonline.un.org/srilanka</a>	