

Bulletin 5, Sri Lanka

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Container being placed at the Kilinochchi base.



IOM financed tractor in use by the government for food distribution.



Building at the Mallavi base with a recently built new roof.

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Highlights:

- Two Inter Agency logistics bases are now operational in the Vanni: Mallavi and Kilinochchi. New bases will be set up where this is justified by the pattern of IDP returns.
- MoD clearance is no longer needed to cross Medawachchiya checkpoint. Offloading of cargo trucks still takes place on occasion at both Medawachchiya and Omanthai.

Context:

Following the conflict between the Government of Sri Lanka (GoSL) and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), **large IDP movements** to camps/welfare villages took place. **Return and resettlement** movements are now in full swing. Returns to Jaffna have been completed; the bulk of IDPs is now returned to the Vanni, including older caseloads. Operations focus on supporting both the returnees and the IDP population still in camps. **Demining efforts** are ongoing and, step by step, more locations and routes in the Vanni are cleared. However, many return locations are still off-limits.

Operational Updates:

1. Operations into the Vanni

A second Inter Agency Logistics base has been set up in **Kilinochchi**. Four 20 foot containers have already been placed here. A minimum of two Mobile Storage Units (MSUs) will be erected as soon as weather conditions allow it. Agencies can apply for storage space at either the Kilinochchi or **Mallavi** logistics base via the Storage Request Form posted on www.logcluster.org/lk08a. In addition to the logistics bases, **storage containers** are being deployed to return areas which are not in the vicinity of one of the bases, such as Poonakary and Pooneryn. Depending upon the development of the return pattern, further logistics bases will be set up.

2. Access

The government has announced that all restrictions on use of **the A9 to Jaffna** have been lifted as of December 20. However, the latest information received from UNSSS indicates that Ministry of Defence clearance is still needed for humanitarian organisations to travel up to Jaffna. Commercial cargo trucks for which Ministry of Defence (MoD) clearance has been granted to travel the A9 to Jaffna are not offloaded at **Omanthai**. Other trucks might be offloaded as a random checking measure. A fee of 7,000 rupees needs to be paid at Anuradhapura to be allowed to drive commercial trucks up to Jaffna. Access for humanitarian cargo vehicles to use this route has not been granted yet, though they can be used inside the Vanni.

MoD clearance is no longer needed to cross the **checkpoint at Medawachchiya**; registration is still required. Offloading of cargo trucks is reported to still take place.

3. Update WFP Special Operation

To reflect the progression from an **emergency to a recovery** situation, the logistics support given by the Special Operation (SO) is changing. From January onwards, only **transport** into the Vanni will be provided free of charge. All other transport will be on a cost recovery basis to avoid competition with the commercial sector. **Storage capacity** is also adjusted to the changing situation. The Trincomalee base is being dismantled as it was underutilised and commercial options are available in the area. The base will be cleared by end of December. The Menik Farm Interim Storage Site (MFISS) is expected to be closed mid February 2010 as the number of IDPs is reducing. Any residual caseload can be supported directly from the Vavuniya hub.

4. Update IOM Transport Assistance

Funding for IOM's **cargo** transport assistance is running low. New funding is sought for 2010. The project for transport of IDPs is still funded and running.

Infrastructure developments:

Over the past few months, many announcements on infrastructure development have surfaced in Sri Lankan media. In the long term, these developments might **facilitate humanitarian logistics operations**. Amongst the projects announced are: reconstruction of the railway through the Vanni up to the Jaffna peninsula, renovation of several harbors, including Kankesanthurai in Jaffna and the port of Hambantota, rehabilitation of airstrips and roads, and development of a second international airport at Hambantota. An extract of these news items has been posted on www.logcluster.org/lk08a.