



# Jaffna Food Security Bulletin

## September 2008

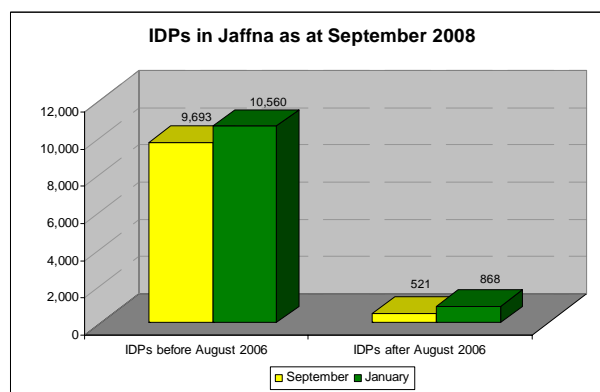


### Summary

- Situation of food supply satisfactory. The essential food items including rice, sugar, flour, dhal are still sold by private traders at high cost in the open market. With the arrival of sufficient food items the price trend is coming down.
- All commodities have to be brought into the peninsula by ship, resulting in high prices.
- Sufficient stock of the decision by the Government to increase shipping capacity for food assistance, particularly WFP food shipment and agricultural inputs, as well as to control selling prices by private traders should help reduce prices.
- Farmers have started cultivating in line with the crop calendar but, due to increased fuel prices and limited availability of agricultural inputs, at a lower level than pre-isolation but higher than 2006. Availability of agricultural inputs is much less than the estimated requirement.

### Background/Economy

- Jaffna district is divided in to 15 DS Divisions, and 435 GN Divisions. At Present 165,583 families consisting of 546,453 members are registered in Jaffna District<sup>1</sup>.
- As at September 2008 there are 9693 IDPs displaced before 2006 live in 69 welfare centres which is 8% less than compared to January 2008 and 521 IDPs displaced after 2006 live in 6 welfare centres. In January this was 868.
- In September 24836 IDP families living with either friends or relatives where as it was 29812 in January.
- There is a slight decrease the number of IDPs compared to January 2008.



- According to whole sale traders, Existing number of retail traders not enough to distribute their food commodities which they bring from Colombo. Due to this reason the prices of commodities are varying place to place. (Most of the retail traders gave up their business due to the security reason)<sup>2</sup>
- Traders are expecting food shortage may occur in coming months because people are trying to buy more food items for their future consumption. (people are expecting heavy war and food pipeline brake to Jaffna)
- Most of the retail traders have stock for less than one month. The reason they are unable to store more food items is security and financial shortage.

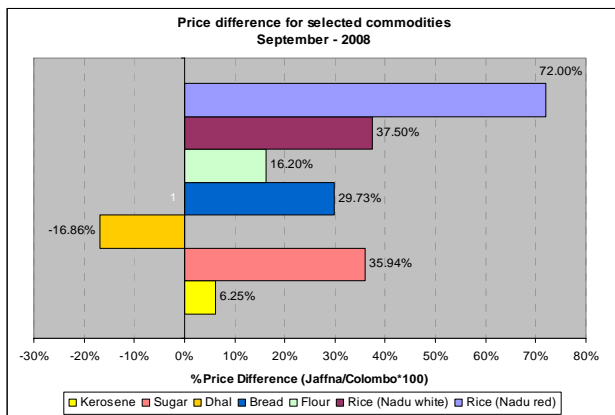
### Food Security

- Basic and complementary commodities are available in the district. Compare to urban areas it is less in the rural areas.
- Prices of the goods are high except the price of dhal compare to Colombo market and within the district; prices are higher in the rural area.
- Rice, sugar, flour and dhal is supplied to MPCSSs for sale freely without any restriction.
- Purchasing power is reduced among the households due to the loss of livelihood activities and rapid increase of prices.

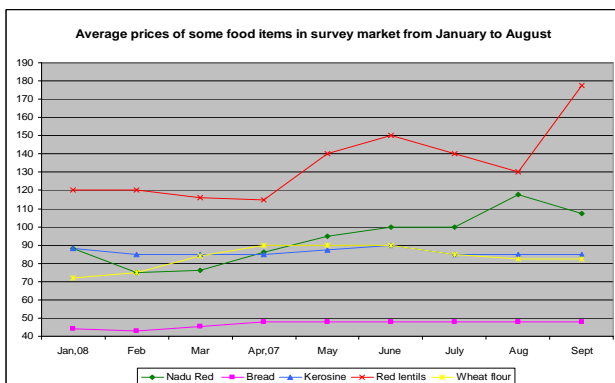
<sup>1</sup> District Secretariat – Jaffna

<sup>2</sup> WFP market survey

- The price of the commodities has increased compared to the south market, showing fluctuation depending on the arrival of the ships.



- Prices of all essential commodities except bread and dhal increased drastically in the month of September when compared to prices in May 2007.
- Overall, prices are higher than last year. However, after a period of stabilization prices appear to be rising again.<sup>3</sup>



- 45% of the families in Jaffna are dependent on sources other than work for their main foreign remittances, charity, pension, social welfare etc. Further the Needs Assessment Survey for Income Recovery conducted by ILO revealed that this percentage is four times higher than the national average.<sup>4</sup>
- ILO says that Passed out students from various vocational training sessions are also looking forward to job opportunities. Provisions of assistance to start small and medium industries are also very much limited.

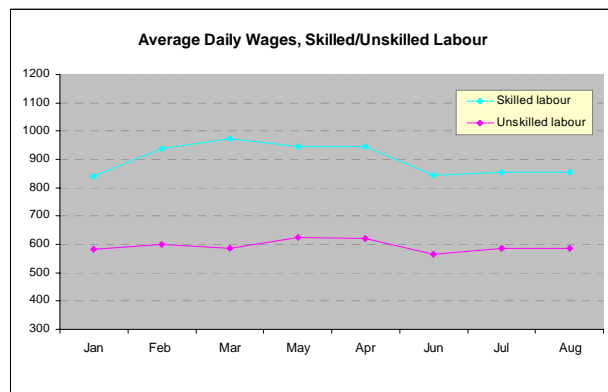
<sup>3</sup> WFP Monthly Price Bulletin.

<sup>4</sup> NSRI – ILO October 2006

- ILO estimates that unemployment and underemployment is high among the local population. Accordingly wages for skilled and unskilled labour have been gradually decreasing during 2008.

- The NGOs assistance to livelihood is reduced by 50% and this also causes hindrances to the recovery of the affected communities<sup>5</sup>.

- Except the agriculture labor, general labor wages have shown an increasing trend and the District price fixing committee had increased the wages.



- However wages for skilled and unskilled labour have been increased slightly since January 2008.<sup>6</sup>

## Nutrition

- Data indicates an increase in acute malnutrition among children less than five years in the whole district, from 18% in November 2006 to 22.4% in May 2007<sup>7</sup>.

- These days health staff is screening the children to identify the severe acute under nutrition children with UNICEF assistance.

- 22MT of RUTF was send to Jaffna to restart the NRP programme after this universal screening programme<sup>8</sup>.

- WFP has implemented a supplementary feeding programme (*MCHN*) for all pregnant and lactating women and their children aged from six to 59 months in Jaffna.

<sup>5</sup> ILO

<sup>6</sup> Joint UN NE Situation Monitoring Report.

<sup>7</sup> DPDHS Jaffna.

<sup>8</sup> UNICEF

- From January to September 2008, distribution of the nutrition supplementation from WFP (Corn Soya Blend) was 400MT.
- This programme has also suffered from pipeline breaks over the years however the supply has been somewhat regular from early 2008 onwards due to the shipment priority given by the Government. 2007 there were 45,554 people who benefited from this programme.
- The Government has a supplementary feeding programme “*Thripasha*” targeting malnourished children under five and pregnant and lactating women identified at the health centres during growth monitoring.
- Based on 2007 data total of 91,563 beneficiaries were entitled for the ration (62,460 children, 19,237 pregnant women and 13,139 lactating mothers<sup>9</sup>). Due to insufficient supply of *Thripasha* from the factory and transport constraints distributions have been irregular.

### **Food Imports by ship to Jaffna**<sup>10</sup>

- The Government has agreed to prioritize Government and WFP food assistance to Jaffna. WFP expects to send 5,300 MT in September 2007, equivalent to two and half months requirements, this will help to build buffer stocks. From October onwards the monthly requirement of 2,300 tons of WFP food will be regularly shipped.
- However from January 2008 to September 2008, WFP was able to ship a total of 2,598 MT of commodities against its 4,600 MT requirements:

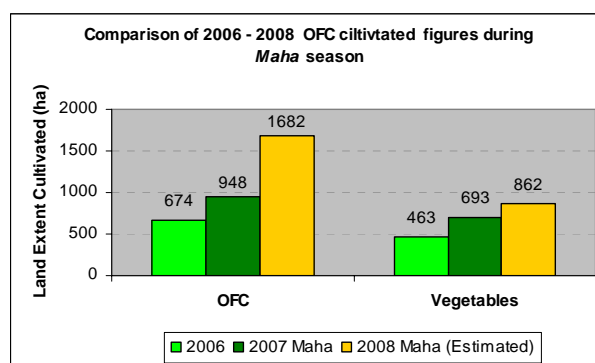
Food Commodity	MT
Rice	5367
Wheat flour	6600
Lentils	1150
CSB	400
Oil	400

<sup>9</sup> RHDS

<sup>10</sup> WFP Logistics

### **Agriculture**<sup>11</sup>

- Agricultural activities formed the prime livelihood for 85,411 farming families including 2,000 farm labourer households in Jaffna.
- Inputs for *Maha* cultivation in place from the NGOs and the government but costs high due to exorbitant shipping cost.
- Paddy cultivation is in progress Dept.of Agrarian service is distributing 40MTs of seed paddy in reasonable price, as well as FAO has been providing 50MTs quality seed which were brought from south as free issue for farmers.
- Approximately 15-20% of the agricultural areas (comprising highly productive arable land) consists of high security zones and is inaccessible. The total area of available land for paddy cultivation was 13,000(ha) for this Maha season, out of which only 8752(ha) were used.
- In this season SLA allowed Vidathal pallai area to cultivate paddy. In addition 64 Acres land has ready to cultivate out of this 150 Acres.
- The average yield of Paddy dropped to 1.5MT/ha during the last Maha season, compared to the usual yields of 3-4MT/ha.
- Vegetable cultivation is progressing slowly due to the lack of inputs with total production only reaching 862 (ha) this season.
- 75% increase in estimated land allocation for OFC and 24% increase in land allocated for vegetables compared to 2007 Maha season.



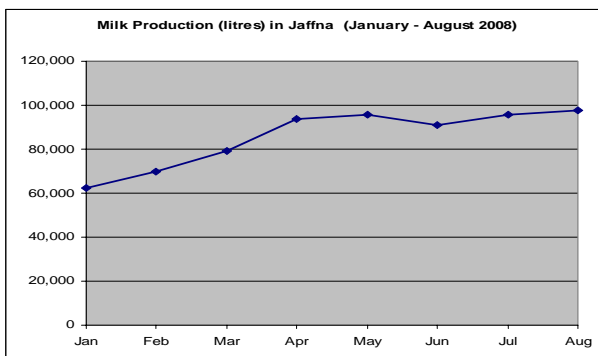
<sup>11</sup> Information provided by FAO.

## Livestock

The present livestock situation is as follows:

Live stock	Jan-08	Aug-08	Change %
Poultry Layers	102,200	130,100	27.30%
Poultry Broilers	35,512	20,710	-41.68%
Milking Cows	16,120	16,120	0.00%
Other Cows	8,629	11,500	33.27%
Bulls	16,825	15,320	-8.95%
Calf	12,820	14,301	11.55%
He goat	-	12,400	-
She goat	-	29,650	-
Sheep	-	2012	-

- Livestock figures are increased for poultry layers, other cows and calves where as number of poultry broilers and bulls have decreased compared to January 2008.<sup>12</sup>
- Milk production for month of August is 97,637 litres, a remarkable increase which is 57% compared to January 2008.



## Fisheries<sup>13</sup>

- There are 15 927 active fishermen in 14 D.S Divisions of Jaffna. For security reasons and ease of monitoring, the military allow only 50% of the fishermen to fish per day on a rotational basis leaving the other 50% unemployed that day.
- Strict security measures on fishing such as fishing banded at night time and day to day launched volatile fishing restrictions have seriously impacted the industry. Only traditional fishing craft are allowed in the district.

<sup>12</sup> Information provided by FAO.

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Point Pedro East/West: Fishing hours 7a.m to 4p.m, distance 1 km

K.K.S East/West: Fishing hours 6a.m to 3p.m, distance 1 to 1.5km **with out Craft**

Sandilipay: Fishing hours 6a.m to 4p.m, distance 2km

Kayts: Fishing hours 6a.m to 5p.m, distance 1.5 to 2 km

Delft: Fishing hours 6a.m to 4p.m, distance 2km

Chullapuram: Fishing hours 5.30a.m to 5p.m, distance 2km

Jaffna West/East: Fishing hours 7a.m to 2p.m, 1 km **with out Craft**

Vellaney: Fishing hours 8a.m -4p.m, distance 1km

Chavakachcheri: Fishing hours 8a.m -11p.m, 1 km<sup>14</sup>

- Fish production has decreased slightly since the beginning of the year, but is still only some 12% of pre-conflict levels, with the consequent affect on household livelihoods.
- Average fish yield for the Month of August is 198.9 MT, 7% higher than July but less than May.

