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## Significant improvement in IDP camps - UNHCR

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The United Nations agencies and International Non-Governmental Organisations (INGOs) have observed a significant improvement in humanitarian access to IDP sites in the North. While commending the improved facilities at camps for the displaced, the report noted a decreased military presence inside the camps.

According to the latest UNHCR report, the improved access has allowed more effective implementation of activities to enable a better living condition to the displaced persons. So far, around 4,300 displaced persons, mostly elderly and sick, have been released and the government has announced that another 9,000 have been cleared for release. As of July 9, the UN World Food Program (WFP) continues to provide dry rations including wheat flour, rice, dhal, vegetable oil and sugar to meet the food needs of the over 280,000 newly displaced IDPs in camps, according to the UN Office of the Resident/Humanitarian Coordinator (UNR/HC). The reports say that according to the wishes of the residents of the camps individual cooking is replacing the communal cooking - the initial method of preparing food when the camps were first formed. According to the UNR/HC family reunification efforts are continuing. As of June, the Government reported that local authorities had reunited more than 5,000 family members. The Government also continues to authorize the release of vulnerable individuals, including more than 4,000 elderly IDPs and persons with disabilities, to depart from IDP camps. A total of 14 primary health care centers, four referral hospitals, and an unspecified number of mobile health teams currently provide health care services to IDPs in camps. Four hospitals in Vavuniya, Mannar, Cheddikulam and Poovarasankulam provide the majority of inpatient care for IDPs. Disease surveillance indicates that the number of new cases of Chickenpox and infective hepatitis are decreasing, the report added. Meanwhile, the United States has approved an additional \$6 million for humanitarian demining in key areas in the North, covering Jaffna, Kilinochchi, Mannar, and Vavuniya districts to facilitate IDP returns and resettlement to areas of origin. Courtesy: sundayobserver.lk