

Sri Lanka, Asia-Pacific | Tropical Cyclone Ditwah



The Sri Lanka Red Cross Society provides essential household items to cyclone-affected families following Cyclone Ditwah. (Photo: IFRC)

Appeal No: MDRLK023	To be assisted: 518,030 people	Appeal launched: 02/12/2025
Glide No: FL-2025-000213-LKA	DREF allocated: CHF 1,000,000	Disaster Categorisation: Orange
Operation start date: 02/12/2025	Operation end date: 30/06/2027	

IFRC Secretariat Funding requirement: CHF 5 million

TIMELINE



As part of its emergency response, the Sri Lanka Red Cross Society expedites relief distributions to affected communities. (Photo: IFRC)

26 November 2025: A well-marked low-pressure system in the Bay of Bengal intensifies into a tropical depression, later named Cyclone Ditwah. Meteorological agencies begin issuing early warnings as the system tracked toward Sri Lanka.

28 November 2025: The President of Sri Lanka declares a nationwide state of emergency on 28 November in response to the severe impact of Cyclone Ditwah. On the same day, the Government of Sri Lanka activates the Essential Public Services Act through an extraordinary gazette, granting the authorities the powers and mechanisms needed to stabilise the situation, protect vulnerable populations, and ensure an effective disaster response.

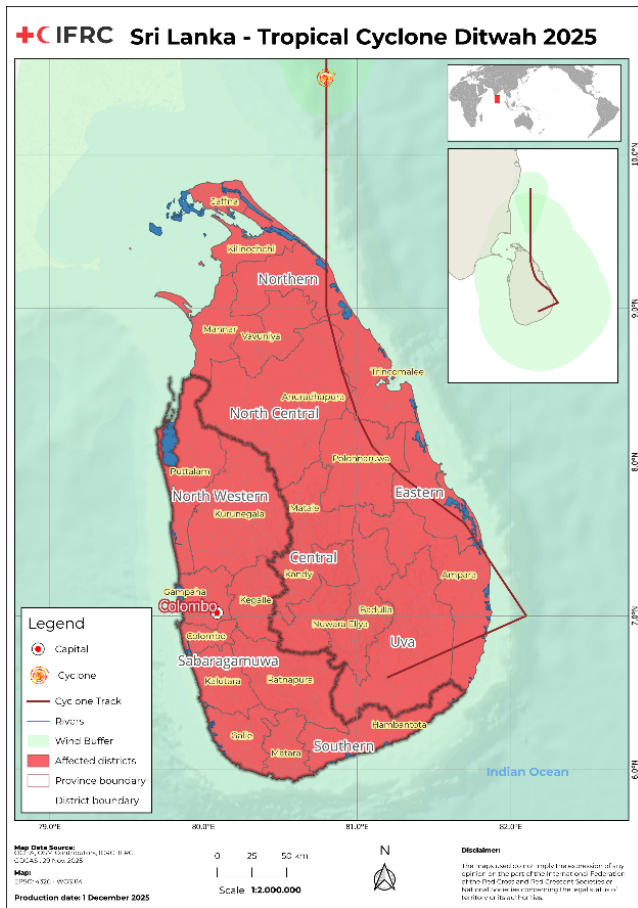
29 November 2025: Cyclone Ditwah reaches peak intensity with sustained winds of 75 km/h (IMD) and makes landfall in Sri Lanka. Torrential rains trigger severe flooding and landslides, cutting off major roads and inundating homes.

30 November 2025: The cyclone weakens into a remnant low but leaves behind widespread devastation. A state of emergency declared, and the Essential Public Services Act activated to ensure continuity of critical services.

2 December 2025: An IFRC Emergency Appeal (EA) with Secretariat funding of CHF 5 million is launched for an 18-month timeframe targeting 500,000 people.

4 December 2025: The DREF request is fully approved, with a total allocation of CHF 1 million granted to provide immediate life-saving support and early recovery assistance to 268,180 people as part of the EA.

DESCRIPTION OF THE EVENT



Cyclone Ditwah struck Sri Lanka against a backdrop of pre-existing vulnerabilities, including widespread poverty, high levels of malnutrition, and fragile health systems, amplifying the humanitarian consequences of the disaster. The country was already facing economic instability and food insecurity, leaving large segments of the population – particularly children, women, and the elderly – at heightened risk.

The cyclone's geographical scope was nationwide, affecting all 25 districts, with severe floods and landslides displacing over 209,000 people and affecting approximately **1.1 million people**, including 362,939 children, 326,703 older persons, and 19,513 pregnant women (UNDP). Physical impacts included the destruction of homes, schools, hospitals, and transport networks, while widespread power outages and communication breakdowns disrupted essential systems.

The crisis overwhelmed health services, limiting access to maternal care, nutrition programmes, and disease prevention, while increasing the risk of

waterborne disease outbreaks due to contaminated supplies.

In response to the scale of the devastation, the government declared a state of emergency and formally appealed for international assistance, with the UN, IOM, UNICEF, and other agencies mobilising rapid support. International partners, led by India under Operation Sagar Bandhu, alongside the United States and other donors, have provided emergency relief including food, medical supplies, and shelter.

Overall, the combined effect of pre-existing socioeconomic fragilities and the cyclone's widespread destruction has created a complex humanitarian emergency. This situation requires coordinated operational strategies to restore access to essential goods and services, strengthen health and nutrition systems, and support recovery for the most vulnerable groups.

Severity of the humanitarian conditions

1. Impact on accessibility, availability, quality, use, and awareness of goods and services.

Cyclone Ditwah severely disrupted the accessibility, availability, quality, use, and awareness of goods and services in Sri Lanka, creating both immediate humanitarian challenges and long-term economic consequences.

The cyclone caused massive infrastructure damage, with submerged roads, destroyed bridges, and landslides cutting off key transport routes. This isolation made it difficult for communities to access essential goods such as food, medicine, and clean water. Factories and warehouses were also flooded, limiting the movement of supplies across districts. Accessibility was further strained by widespread power outages and communication breakdowns, which hindered coordination of relief and disrupted banking, transport, and digital services.

The cyclone further altered consumption patterns. Many households shifted from regular market purchases to emergency relief supplies, reducing demand for non-essential goods. Extensive damage to business premises, compounded by unreliable electricity, led to widespread closures and

significantly disrupted financial, retail, and transport services.

2. Impact on physical and mental well-being

Cyclone Ditwah has had a profound impact on the mental health of people in Sri Lanka, resulting in widespread psychological trauma alongside physical destruction. Survivors are grappling not only with the loss of homes and livelihoods, but also with invisible wounds including anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress.

The cyclone displaced over **61,000 families**¹ and affected more than **1.1 million people across all 25 districts** of Sri Lanka. For many, the sudden loss of loved ones, property, and community ties has triggered acute stress reactions. Survivors report feelings of helplessness, fear, and uncertainty about the future. Children, in particular, have shown signs of trauma, including nightmares, withdrawal, and difficulty concentrating.

The disaster has also disrupted daily routines and social structures, which are crucial for emotional stability. When schools, workplaces, and community centres are destroyed or inaccessible, people lose not only their physical spaces but also their sense of normalcy and belonging.

The psychological effects of Cyclone Ditwah will extend far beyond the immediate aftermath. Depression, anxiety disorders, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) are likely to rise among affected populations. The emotional scars of displacement – living in overcrowded shelters, uncertainty about rebuilding, and financial insecurity – can exacerbate mental health struggles.

Young people are particularly vulnerable. Many have reported feeling drained, anxious, and uncertain about their futures, highlighting the need for targeted mental health awareness and support programmes. Without sustained intervention, these issues risk becoming chronic, undermining educational outcomes, limiting employment opportunities, and eroding social cohesion.

3. Risks and vulnerabilities

Cyclone Ditwah has had a devastating impact across Sri Lanka, affecting communities in all 25 districts. The storm brought severe flooding and landslides, resulting in hundreds of lives lost and leaving many more missing. Families have lost homes, livelihoods, and access to essential services, while schools and health facilities have suffered extensive damage. The humanitarian needs are immediate and pressing, particularly in the areas of shelter, safe water, sanitation, and healthcare.

The disaster has highlighted the country's acute vulnerabilities to climate-related hazards. A significant proportion of the population lives along the coastline, where storm surges and flooding pose constant threats. At the same time, large numbers of people reside in landslide-prone areas of the central highlands, where heavy rainfall triggered deadly slides. These overlapping risks underscore the fragile balance communities face between geography, climate, and human settlement patterns.

Sri Lanka's high population density and limited infrastructure capacity amplify the risks during disasters. Safety centres, water supplies, and health systems were quickly overwhelmed by the scale of the displacement. The cyclone also revealed gaps in preparedness and resilience, showing how quickly essential services can be stretched beyond capacity. Without stronger housing, flood defences, and decentralised disaster response systems, communities remain highly exposed to future shocks.

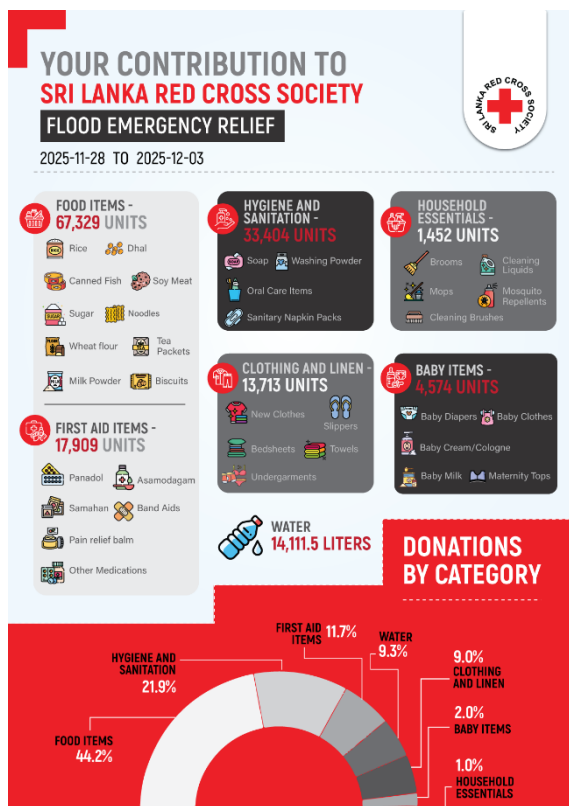
Cyclone Ditwah is a stark reminder that disasters are not only natural events, but also humanitarian crises shaped by vulnerability. Building resilience requires urgent investment in disaster preparedness, climate adaptation, and community-based risk reduction. Strengthening early warning systems, reinforcing infrastructure, and supporting recovery efforts will be critical to reducing the impact of future hazards while protecting the most vulnerable.

¹ <https://www.newswire.lk/2025/12/02/deaths-climb-to>

CAPACITIES AND RESPONSE

1. National Society response capacity

1.1 National Society capacity and ongoing response



The Sri Lanka Red Cross Society (SLRCS) has mobilised its extensive nationwide network to respond to Cyclone Ditwah, leveraging volunteers, disaster response teams, and partnerships to deliver urgent relief.

The SLRCS operates through 25 district branches across the country, each with community-level chapters that enable rapid mobilisation. More than 7,000 trained volunteers and specialised National Disaster Response Teams (NDRTs) were deployed to evacuation centres, distribution points, and affected villages. The National Society's added value lies in its deep community presence, trusted relationships, and integration with ongoing health, WASH, and livelihood programmes, which are now being adapted to meet emergency needs.

Assets include warehouses for pre-positioned relief stocks, a fleet of vehicles for logistics, and IT systems for coordination and reporting. Access to affected areas has been facilitated by strong acceptance at the community and government levels, with the authorities recognising the SLRCS as a key partner in humanitarian response.

1.2 Capacity and response at the national level

The response to Cyclone Ditwah in Sri Lanka has drawn on the combined strengths of government institutions, national organisations, and civil society, with the SLRCS playing a central role. Government agencies have mobilised emergency services and health authorities to provide evacuation, medical care, and infrastructure repair. Civil society groups and local NGOs have complemented these efforts through community-based relief, food distribution, and psychosocial support (PSS). The SLRCS, with its nationwide branch network and thousands of trained volunteers, is embedded in the official disaster response plan, ensuring rapid mobilisation and coordination with state authorities. At the capital level, the National Society maintains strong relationships with ministries and the Disaster Management Centre, while in affected districts, its branches work directly with local authorities and communities to deliver aid. This dual presence at national coordination and local implementation levels has made the SLRCS a trusted partner in bridging government response and grassroots needs.

2. International capacity and response

2.1 Red Cross Red Crescent Movement capacity and response

IFRC membership

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) is working in close coordination with the SLRCS to strengthen the national response to Cyclone Ditwah. This collaboration includes operational planning, information management, and external engagement, ensuring that the response is evidence-based and focused on the most vulnerable communities. The IFRC Country Cluster Delegation (CCD) in Delhi and the Asia-Pacific Regional Office (APRO) supported the SLRCS in developing the DREF application, launching an Emergency Appeal, aligning it with Federation standards, while also sharing regular situation updates to maintain a common understanding of the evolving needs and resource gaps. On the ground, the IFRC team is providing

technical support to SLRCS branches in operations management, WASH, health, PGI, logistics, and cash programming, while facilitating systematic information sharing between the SLRCS, Movement partners, and external actors such as UN agencies, INGOs, and diplomatic missions. At the regional level, CCD Delhi and APRO are offering coordination backup, liaising with Participating National Societies, and pre-positioning surge and technical support. To ensure strategic oversight, CCD Delhi has deployed senior staff, including the Head of Delegation, Programme Manager for Operations, and a Coordination/Partner Engagement lead, reinforcing high-level engagement with government, donors, and partners. Further deployments are planned in procurement and finance to strengthen supply chain management and accountability, reflecting the lessons learned from past DREF operations. A formal surge alert was issued to activate short-term support, with requested profiles including communications, assessment coordination, information management, and PMER specialists, ensuring comprehensive coverage of operational, technical, and accountability needs as the response scales up.

These surge profiles are intended to complement, not replace, SLRCS capacities, with a focus on building local systems, enhancing accountability and enabling timely, high-quality reporting and adaptation of the operation as the situation evolves.

ICRC

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) maintains a strong presence in Sri Lanka and actively supports the SLRCS through contributions to the ongoing emergency response, including financial support, restoration of family links (RFL) services, and logistics support.

2.2 International Humanitarian Stakeholder capacity and response

The Humanitarian Country Teams (HCT) mechanisms have been active in coordinating various clusters since day one, with UN agencies supporting cluster leads in the response. The Sri Lanka Red Cross Society and IFRC co-lead the shelter cluster, contributing to joint assessments, sharing operational updates, and aligning activities with wider humanitarian objectives and national and international response frameworks to ensure visible impacts. By engaging in these discussions, the SLRCS and IFRC demonstrate accountability, help raise resources, and speak up for vulnerable communities, while promoting cooperation that supports both urgent relief and long-term recovery.

Following the activation, the IFRC and IOM co-chaired the initial shelter and CCCM sector meeting, soon to transition into the shelter land and site coordination (SLSC) cluster with participation from over 40 stakeholders. The IFRC has already deployed an information management surge and will assign a dedicated cluster coordinator with the SLRCS, focusing on shelter and relief implementation, while actively engaging in coordination meetings. This collaborative framework ensures that sectoral needs are addressed and that the humanitarian response is both inclusive and well-coordinated.

3. Gaps in the response

Initial reports from affected districts indicate that immediate needs include emergency shelter, WASH support such as well cleaning, health support primarily focused on awareness messaging to prevent waterborne disease outbreaks, and education assistance for school children who have lost their learning materials. While the government is responding to the disaster, many areas remain underserved as needs vary and are spread across the country. As an auxiliary to the public authorities with a nationwide presence, the SLRCS will help address these gaps through the DREF and Emergency Appeal.

Shelter: As of November 2025, more than 15,000 households across 25 districts were destroyed by the cyclone. Displaced populations require emergency shelter materials, including tents, tarpaulins, sleeping mats, blankets, and mosquito nets. In addition to displacement, affected households urgently need essential household items such as clothing, kitchen utensils, and bedding as their belongings were either submerged or destroyed. Significant gaps remain in providing temporary shelter structures for homes destroyed by the cyclone.

Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene Promotion (WASH): The floodwaters contaminated household wells, increasing the risk of waterborne diseases among the affected and displaced populations. According to initial information received from the districts, there is an urgent need for safe drinking water supplied through water bowers, bottled water, and purification tablets. Cleaning contaminated wells will be essential to restore safe water as soon as floodwaters begin to recede. Women and adolescent girls residing in evacuation centres also require hygiene items, having lost their belongings due to flooding.

Health: Health facilities were affected by the flooding, resulting in limited or suspended services as access roads were cut off. As a result, those that remain operational are stretched beyond capacity, increasing the risk of waterborne and vector-borne diseases. First aid services and general medical care are urgently needed to reduce the chances of hospitalisation and prevent serious health complications. Mobile health clinics and medical camps are required to reach remote communities in the affected districts. Mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) is urgently needed for individuals who have witnessed the death of a family member, seen their homes swept away, or lost their livelihoods.

Protection, Gender, and Inclusion (PGI): Displaced populations are residing in close proximity within evacuation centres, increasing the risk of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV). Urgent measures are needed to provide PSS and raise awareness on violence prevention, including SGBV. Special care and attention will also be required for children, pregnant and lactating women, people with disabilities, individuals with chronic illnesses, and other vulnerable groups.

Education: Households in low-lying areas have lost their school supplies due to flooding, significantly disrupting education. This impact is particularly severe in impoverished communities, as well as urban, semi-urban, and rural areas, where essential learning materials were destroyed.

Essential school items are urgently needed to enable children from affected households to return to school once they reopen. The SLRCS integrates education into its broader PGI strategies to safeguard the well-being of children, support low-income daily wage earners, and minimise the psychological and educational gaps caused by the disaster. Temporary learning spaces may be required in evacuation centres if displacement is prolonged. In addition, urgent psychosocial support services are needed for school-going children who have witnessed the death of family members or experienced displacement.

OPERATIONAL CONSTRAINTS

Sri Lanka's central hill districts are among the most difficult areas to reach during humanitarian operations. The terrain is steep, and many communities are scattered across remote valleys and ridges. Road networks are limited, and in some places, they are either poorly maintained or non-existent. When disasters strike, such as floods or landslides, these fragile routes are often blocked or destroyed, leaving villages cut off from assistance. Relief convoys must rely on smaller vehicles, manual transport, or even airlifts, all of which significantly increase the cost of logistics. This remoteness not only delays the delivery of essential supplies but also strains operational budgets, making it harder to sustain long-term relief efforts.

The challenge becomes even more severe during the northeastern monsoon season, which typically runs from October to January every year. Heavy rains during this period affect the northern, eastern, and central regions of the country, triggering landslides, flash floods, and road washouts. In the hill districts, continuous rainfall makes already difficult terrain impassable, isolating communities for extended periods. Relief operations face heightened risks, as vehicles can be stranded or routes left completely submerged. The monsoon also disrupts agriculture and livelihoods, compounding humanitarian needs at the very time when access is most constrained.

Together, geographical remoteness and seasonal monsoon hazards create a double burden for humanitarian actors. Supplies take longer to reach affected populations, costs rise sharply, and communities remain vulnerable without timely assistance. Addressing these challenges requires the pre-positioning of relief stocks in strategic locations before the monsoon, strengthening community-based disaster preparedness, and investing in resilient infrastructure such as roads and bridges. Without these measures, the combination of isolation and seasonal hazards will continue to severely limit effective disaster response in Sri Lanka's hill districts.

FEDERATION-WIDE APPROACH

The Emergency Appeal corresponds to the response priorities of the Operating National Society. The approach, reflected in this Operational Strategy, will ensure linkages between all response activities (including bilateral activities and activities funded domestically) and will assist in leveraging the capacities of all members of the IFRC network in the country to maximise the collective humanitarian impact.

The Emergency Appeal comprises all support and funding to be channelled to the Operating National Society in response to the emergency event. This includes the Operating National Society's domestic fundraising ask, the fundraising ask of supporting Red Cross and Red Crescent National Societies, and the funding ask of the IFRC secretariat.

OPERATIONAL STRATEGY

Vision

To meet the needs of roughly **100,000 families (approximately 500,000 people)** impacted by Cyclone Ditwah, especially in the 20 districts affected by the flash flooding caused by intense rainfall, the appeal focuses on the following key areas:

Emergency shelter: Cyclone damage has left thousands of families without safe housing, forcing them into temporary shelters or unsafe living conditions. Immediate support will focus on providing emergency shelter materials, such as tarpaulins and basic household items, to protect families from the elements. This approach ensures both immediate safety and sustainable recovery, while empowering families to make choices that best suit their needs. Additionally, the SLRCS will provide support for transitional shelters as and when requested by the Government of Sri Lanka.

Livelihoods: Livelihood support will focus on restoring economic options for flood-affected households. Assistance will be provided in instalments through a financial service provider, with targeted households identified through community consultations. The SLRCS will conduct monitoring visits to ensure that cash assistance is being used in line with the agreement between the targeted households and the SLRCS.

Multi-purpose cash assistance: Cash-based interventions allow families to meet diverse needs in a flexible and dignified way. Instead of receiving only in-kind aid, households can use financial support to purchase food, medicine, clothing, or materials for livelihood recovery. This approach recognises that each family's situation is unique and that cash assistance strengthens local markets, supports community recovery, and reduces dependency on external aid.

Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH): Access to clean water and safe sanitation is critical in the aftermath of a disaster, when overcrowding and damaged infrastructure increase the risk of disease outbreaks. The operation will prioritise restoring water supply systems and the distribution of sanitary napkins. For longer-term recovery needs, the SLRCS will support households with the provision of CASH assistance for owner-driven toilet constructions and repairs. Hygiene promotion campaigns will be conducted to encourage safe practices such as handwashing, waste disposal, and menstrual hygiene management. These interventions protect health, reduce vulnerability, and restore dignity in affected communities. Additionally, the SLRCS will continue collecting data on the needs of small-scale water schemes impacted by the floods and landslides.

Health: Disasters often disrupt health services and increase the risk of communicable diseases. The operation will focus on health promotion and awareness campaigns to prevent any outbreaks of waterborne and vector-borne diseases. Support will also be provided to rehabilitate damaged health facilities and strengthen referral systems. Mobile health units and community health volunteers will play a key role in reaching isolated populations, ensuring that vulnerable groups such as children, the elderly, and people with chronic illnesses

receive timely care. For longer-term needs, the SLRCS will focus on building the capacities of volunteers by providing first aid training.

Migration and Displacement: During the Cyclone Ditwah response, the **Sri Lanka Red Cross Society (SLRCS)** extended its humanitarian support not only to affected local communities, but also to **migrants and displaced persons**, recognising their heightened vulnerability in times of crisis. Through **cash assistance programmes**, migrants will be provided with flexible financial support to meet urgent needs such as food, shelter, and healthcare, while maintaining dignity and choice. In parallel, the SLRCS strengthened **restoring family links (RFL)** services, helping reconnect separated families, trace missing loved ones, and provide psychosocial reassurance to those cut off from communication. Together, these interventions ensure that migrants and host communities, receive inclusive, life-saving assistance during one of Sri Lanka's most devastating disasters.

Community engagement and accountability (CEA): Effective humanitarian response requires listening to communities and involving them in decision-making. CEA ensures that affected populations are kept informed about available services, eligibility criteria, and timelines. Feedback mechanisms, such as hotlines, community meetings, and volunteer outreach, will be established to capture concerns and suggestions. This participatory approach builds trust, improves the quality of programming, and ensures that assistance is both relevant and responsive to real needs.

Protection, gender, and inclusion (PGI): Disasters often exacerbate existing inequalities and protection risks. PGI integration ensures that the safety, dignity, and rights of vulnerable groups, including women, children, the elderly, people with disabilities, and marginalised communities, are respected. This involves safeguarding against sexual and gender-based violence, ensuring equal access to services, and promoting inclusive participation in recovery efforts. By embedding PGI principles across all sectors, the operation ensures that no one is left behind.

Disaster risk reduction (DRR): Building resilience is essential to reduce the impact of future disasters. The operation will invest in strengthening staff and volunteers at the branch level, equipping them with training, tools, and resources to respond effectively to emergencies of similar scale and intensity. Community-based disaster preparedness activities, such as early warning systems, evacuation planning, and risk awareness campaigns, will also be strengthened. These measures ensure that both the Red Cross network and local communities are better prepared to face future hazards.

Anticipated climate-related risks and adjustments in the operation

Sri Lanka remains highly vulnerable to climate-related hazards, and Cyclone Ditwah has underscored the growing risks linked to changing weather patterns. The **Northeastern Monsoon** continues to pose a major threat, bringing heavy rainfall that can trigger landslides in the hill districts and flash floods in low-lying coastal areas. Rising sea levels and storm surges further increase the exposure of coastal communities, while prolonged flooding contaminates water sources and disrupts agriculture.

Another anticipated risk is the **increasing frequency and severity of extreme weather events**. Communities that have not fully recovered from Cyclone Ditwah may face repeated shocks, eroding coping capacities and deepening vulnerabilities. High population density in disaster-prone areas, combined with fragile infrastructure, magnifies the humanitarian impact of each event. These overlapping risks highlight the urgent need for climate-sensitive planning in all aspects of the response.

Targeting

1. People to be assisted

This operation aims to reach an estimated **100,000 families** across affected districts, prioritising those most vulnerable and least able to recover on their own. Given the scale of the disaster and the diversity of needs, specific targeting and selection criteria will guide implementation to ensure that assistance is delivered equitably and reaches those at greatest risk.

Low-income households in the affected districts will be a primary focus. These families often lack savings or assets to fall back on during emergencies, making them disproportionately affected by the loss of housing, food supplies, and income. By targeting low-income households, the operation seeks to reduce the risk of long-term poverty traps while helping them rebuild their lives with dignity.

Households with daily wage earners are another critical group. Many families in Sri Lanka rely on informal labour, such as construction work, domestic services, or agricultural day jobs, which are immediately disrupted during disasters. Without a steady income, these households face food insecurity and are unable to afford basic necessities. Providing them with relief ensures that short-term disruptions do not spiral into chronic hardship.

Small farmers and fishing communities who have lost their livelihoods due to the floods represent a sector deeply tied to Sri Lanka's rural economy. Flooding destroys crops, damages fishing boats, and contaminates water sources, leaving these families without their primary means of survival. Supporting them with emergency relief and livelihood recovery assistance is essential not only for their survival but also for the restoration of local food systems and community resilience.

Finally, the operation will extend support to **vulnerable populations, including LGBTQ individuals, refugees, and asylum seekers**. These groups often face social stigma, marginalisation, or legal and institutional barriers that limit their access to mainstream assistance. By explicitly including them in the targeting criteria, the operation ensures that humanitarian aid is inclusive, impartial, and responsive to the needs of all affected people, irrespective of identity or status.

2. Considerations for protection, gender, and inclusion and community engagement and accountability

The integration of **protection, gender, and inclusion (PGI)** considerations into all sectors of the operation is essential to ensure that the response is not only effective, but also equitable and respectful of human dignity. PGI ensures that humanitarian assistance reaches those most at risk, addresses underlying vulnerabilities, and prevents harm. By embedding PGI principles across relief, recovery, and resilience-building activities, the operation can deliver a truly holistic response that protects lives and strengthens communities.



Prioritising the dissemination of messages to raise awareness against sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) and violence against women, children, and other vulnerable groups is a critical component. Disasters often exacerbate the risks of exploitation, abuse, and violence, particularly in overcrowded shelters or isolated communities. Awareness campaigns – delivered through community volunteers, local media, and safe spaces – help empower individuals to recognise risks, seek support, and challenge harmful practices. These messages also reinforce the importance of safeguarding vulnerable groups, ensuring that protection is not an afterthought, but a central pillar of humanitarian action.

Ensuring the IFRC Dignity, Access, Participation, and Safety (DAPS) framework is followed provides a structured approach to PGI integration. DAPS emphasises that all individuals, regardless of gender, age, disability, or social status, must be treated with dignity, have equal access to assistance, be meaningfully involved in decision-making, and remain safe throughout the response. Applying this framework across shelter, health, water and sanitation, and livelihood interventions ensures inclusive, needs-responsive programming while strengthening accountability to affected populations through fairness and respect at every stage of the operation.


Setting up a feedback mechanism in affected districts is equally vital for quality programming. By mobilising trained volunteers to engage directly with communities, the operation creates channels for people to voice their concerns, share experiences, and suggest improvements. Feedback mechanisms, whether through community meetings, hotlines, or suggestion boxes, help identify gaps, prevent exclusion, and adapt interventions in real time. This participatory approach builds trust between responders and communities and ensures that humanitarian assistance is shaped by the people it is meant to serve.

PLANNED OPERATIONS

INTEGRATED ASSISTANCE

 Shelter, Housing, and Settlements	Female > 18: 2,340	Female < 18: 10,660	CHF: 377,000
	Male > 18: 2,160	Male < 18: 9,840	Total target: 25,000
Objective:	Communities in disaster and crisis-affected areas restore and strengthen their safety and well-being through emergency shelter solutions.		
Priority Actions:	<p>Emergency phase:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct an assessment of the severely affected GN division. • Implement a community feedback mechanism to ensure that the voices of targeted households are heard and addressed. • Verify the final targeted household list through the community and government officers. • Procure household items as per the IFRC and SLRCS procurement guidelines. • Distribute essential household items, including bed sheets, towels, sarongs, kaftans, kitchen sets, adult kits, baby kits, solar lamps, and folding mattresses to 5,000 households (25,000 people). • Distribute two shelter-grade tarpaulins to 1,250 households for Emergency Shelter Assistance. • Provide support for transitional shelters if this is requested by the government. 		
 Livelihoods	Female > 18: 1,966	Female < 18: 8,954	CHF: 1,270,000
	Male > 18: 1,814	Male < 18: 8,266	Total target: 21,000
Objective:	Provide livelihood support to targeted households, based on established selection criteria, to restore income sources lost due to flooding and landslides caused by the cyclone.		
Priority Actions:	<p>Recovery phase:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct an assessment of the livelihood sector. • Select targeted households for livelihood support in coordination with local authorities. • Implement a community feedback mechanism to ensure that the voices of targeted households are heard and addressed. • Collect all supporting documents and verify the financial service providers (FSPs). 		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide conditional cash grants to targeted households in the identified districts, equivalent to the minimum expenditure basket. • Conduct post-distribution monitoring (PDM).
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 Multi-purpose Cash	Female > 18: 5,405	Female < 18: 24,625	CHF: 667,000
	Male > 18: 4,990	Male < 18: 22,730	Total target: 57,750

Objective: Provide timely and dignified cash assistance to affected households, enabling them to address their basic needs in alignment with their priorities, while simultaneously strengthening local markets and supporting early recovery.


Priority Actions:

Emergency phase:


- Coordinate with cash working groups and other local and national agencies and authorities to develop cash grant modalities based on a common understanding of stakeholders.
- Conduct detailed assessments and verify targeted households in the selected districts.
- Implement a community feedback mechanism to ensure that the voices of the targeted population are heard and addressed.
- Collect all supporting documents and verify the financial service providers (FSPs).
- Provide unconditional cash grants to targeted households in the identified districts, equivalent to the minimum expenditure basket.
- Conduct monitoring (market, price, and impact) throughout the intervention period.
- Conduct PDM to assess the cash intervention.

HEALTH AND CARE INCLUDING WATER, SANITATION, AND HYGIENE (WASH)

(MENTAL HEALTH AND PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT/COMMUNITY HEALTH)

 Health and Care <i>(Mental Health and Psychosocial Support/Community Health/Medical Services)</i>	Female > 18: 12,168	Female < 18: 55,432	CHF: 207,000
	Male > 18: 11,232	Male < 18: 51,168	Total target: 130,000

Objective:	Address the immediate and recovery health needs of the targeted households.
Priority Actions:	<p>Emergency Phase:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental Health and Psychosocial Support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Train volunteers on PSS refresher training. ○ Mobilise trained volunteers to provide PSS services in the affected communities and at safety centres. • Community Health <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Procure or replenish basic items for first aid services. ○ Organise health promotion activities and conduct first aid camps. • Medical Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Establish medical camps in affected districts to provide essential first aid and additional health services, in coordination with medical officers and public health inspectors for review and approval. <p>Recovery phase:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build the capacity of SLRCS staff and volunteers in public health emergencies, first aid, and epidemic control for volunteers. • Print and distribute the dengue surveillance monitoring card. • Conduct dengue household surveillance.

 Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene	Female > 18: 21,809	Female < 18: 91,709	CHF: 652,000
	Male > 18: 20,131	Male < 18: 99,351	Total target: 233,000
Objective:	Ensure the provision of safe water, adequate sanitation, and promote effective hygiene practices among affected populations in the targeted communities, while building community resilience and mitigating public health risks.		
Priority Actions:	<p>Emergency phase:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Print the well-cleaning manual and distribute it to branches. • Procure service providers for well cleaning and related costs. • Deploy technical support for WASH. • Clean 10,000 dug and community wells as per the Oxfam manual, in coordination with and under the inspection of public health inspectors. • Conduct clean-up and hygiene promotion campaigns to disinfect and clean public places, houses, schools, and safety centres. 		


- Procure and distribute sanitary napkins to the targeted population.
- Procure and distribute gumboots and raincoats.

Recovery phase:


- Conduct hygiene promotion messaging on preventive health and hygiene practices.
- Deploy technical support for WASH intervention in the targeted districts.
- Perform basic WASH-related repairs at safety centres.
- Set up incinerators at safety centres.
- Set up plastic recycling at community and safety centres.
- Distribute cash for sanitation facilities to 250 households (owner-driven toilet construction).
- Continue collecting data on the needs of small-scale water schemes impacted by the floods and landslides.

PROTECTION AND PREVENTION

(PROTECTION, GENDER, AND INCLUSION (PGI), COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY (CEA), MIGRATION, RISK REDUCTION, CLIMATE ADAPTATION AND RECOVERY, ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY, EDUCATION)


 Protection, Gender, and Inclusion	Female > 18: 48,488	Female < 18: 220,888	CHF: 22,000
	Male > 18: 44,758	Male < 18: 203,897	Total target: 518,030
Objective:	Strengthen protection, safety, and safeguarding mechanisms by improving existing community protection capacities and ensuring that all facilities, goods, and services are safe, dignified, and accessible to people of all backgrounds.		
Priority Actions:	<p>Emergency phase:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct refresher sessions on PGI and the code of conduct for volunteers. • Print and prominently display protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) and sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) prevention messages at distribution and safe centres. • Collect sex, age, and disability disaggregated (SADD) data across all activities to understand the needs of different genders, age groups, and abilities. • Conduct a safety audit in each of the safety centres, and ensure that any gaps identified in relation to PGI are then prioritised to ensure the protection of the most vulnerable. 		

	<p>Recovery Phase:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct a Gender Safety Audit in safety shelters in the intervention areas. • Implement and fulfil the identified requirements through a Gender Audit.
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 <p>Community Engagement and Accountability</p>	Female > 18: 48,488	Female < 18: 220,888	CHF: 22,000
	Male > 18: 44,758	Male < 18: 203,897	Total target: 518,030

Objective:	Integrate CEA into response and recovery efforts to ensure that the needs of affected communities are understood and addressed through collaborative and participatory approaches.
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Priority Actions:	<p>Emergency phase:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set-up feedback desks, hotlines, and online platforms to collect and document feedback. • Produce and disseminate IEC materials through a range of channels. • Conduct refresher sessions and orientation on CEA for volunteers and staff. • Clearly and widely communicate the selection criteria for all sectors to recipients and non-recipients, using various channels and approaches, even when the criteria are already established. <p>Recovery phase:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver the full CEA toolkit training to volunteers. • Strengthen CEA activities at the branch and community levels and improve sustainable feedback mechanisms at the branch level.
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 <p>Migration and Displacement</p>	Female > 18: 64	Female < 18: 290	CHF: 16,000
	Male > 18: 59	Male < 18: 268	Total target: 680

Objective:	Affected migrant families will receive cash support to help them recover to pre-disaster living conditions.
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Priority Actions:	<p>Emergency phase:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct a detailed assessment with the appropriate selection criteria. • Distribute cash in envelopes to selected migrants, including refugees and asylum seekers affected by the cyclone.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide restoring family links support at safety centres. <p>Recovery phase:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct migration and displacement training for volunteers and staff to strengthen branch capacity.
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 Risk Reduction, Climate Adaptation and Recovery	Female > 18: 51	Female < 18: 235	CHF: 33,000
	Male > 18: 48	Male < 18: 216	Total target: 550


Objective:	Affected communities will be strengthened to withstand disasters through improved disaster risk reduction knowledge and skills.
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Priority Actions:	<p>Emergency phase:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct BDRT refresher training for volunteers to strengthen capacity and enhance volunteer retention. Conduct refresher and awareness sessions for branch staff, including accounts staff, to ensure familiarity with IFRC financial systems, particularly those related to the appeal. <p>Recovery phase:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct NDRT training for the selected new volunteers and strengthen the internal surge mechanism.
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 Environmental Sustainability	Female > 18: 48,488	Female < 18: 220,888	CHF: 9,000
	Male > 18: 44,758	Male < 18: 203,897	Total target: 518,030


Objective:	Improve the operation's environmental sustainability by minimising and mitigating ecological impacts, promoting responsible resource use, and strengthening community-driven environmental resilience.
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Priority Actions:	<p>Recovery phase:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct community awareness on plastic waste and its uses, and implement activities to promote recycling.
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 Education	Female > 18: 4,680	Female < 18: 21,320	CHF: 210,000
	Male > 18: 4,320	Male < 18: 19,680	Total target: 50,000

Objective:	School education kits are distributed among affected students to help them continue their education after the disaster.
Priority Actions:	<p>Emergency phase:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct an assessment and select the most vulnerable school-going children. • Procure school packs locally, in compliance with local procurement regulations. • Distribute school packs to 10,000 selected school children who have lost their education materials due to the floods.

Enabling approaches

	National Society Strengthening			CHF: 925,000
Objective:	Strengthen the SLRC's preparedness and response capacities by reinforcing branch-level structures and the workforce, mobilising inclusive and trained volunteer networks for effective operations, and advancing youth-led initiatives that improve community resilience.			
Priority Actions:	<p>Emergency phase:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that all staff and volunteers are insured, and that their protection is maintained throughout the operation. • Conduct monitoring by branches, NHQ, and the IFRC. • Strengthen internal coordination and communication between the NHQ and branches to ensure real-time information flows and support localised decision-making. • Conduct progress review meetings and lessons learned workshops at the NHQ level to capture progress, insights, and improvements. • Support essential human resources at NHQ and branches to ensure smooth implementation of operations, including surge capacity, CVA, finance, and other technical expertise. • Produce case stories and news, and share good practices to highlight successes and promote learning. <p>Recovery phase:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct the preparedness for effective response (PER) process to systematically strengthen preparedness and response capacities. • Improve operational readiness by upgrading warehouses and branch structures and the pre-positioning of essential relief items for a timely response. 			

- Promote inclusion and resilience through youth-led initiatives such as clean-up drives, climate adaptation campaigns, cultural and sports events, and mapping services for vulnerable groups.
- Strengthen mobile data collection tools for real-time community feedback, needs assessments, and operational monitoring to support timely and informed decision-making.
- Implement post-distribution monitoring and joint field visits using standardised tools to ensure service quality and accountability.



Coordination and Partnerships

CHF: 45,000

Objective:

Strengthen coordination and collaboration within the IFRC membership and the wider Movement ensuring technical and operational complementarity, while enhancing cooperation with external partners to improve the effectiveness and reach of SLRCS operations.

Priority Actions:


Membership Coordination

- Maintain consistent coordination across the Movement and with the IFRC network to align technical and operational support and facilitate the timely deployment of resources and personnel based on needs on the ground.
- Engage regularly and share information with SLRCS branches to update any operational needs and support reporting.
- IFRC country and country cluster coordination with the SLRCS will ensure that formal operational updates and reports are shared with wider stakeholders.

Engagement with external partners


- The SLRCS will closely and regularly coordinate with the district level, GN level, and other local authorities through its district-level representatives, ensuring the smooth implementation of responses.
- The SLRCS and IFRC will closely coordinate with the sectoral clusters and the country level HCT at the strategic level and share regular updates with any other relevant coordination structures.
- The IFRC will co-lead the Shelter Cluster Coordination throughout the operation and ensure adequate technical support and engagement to fulfil obligations.
- Maintain strong representation with donors, external partners, and the diplomatic community to secure sustained support and demonstrate the impact of the SLRCS's response across the immediate, medium, and long-term phases.

	<p>Movement Cooperation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate external engagement to strengthen the visibility of SLRCS cyclone operations, supporting improved access and resource mobilisation. • Maintain continued coordination between the SLRCS, ICRC, and IFRC to share updates on the response, preparedness, and long-term development.
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 <p>Shelter, Household Items, CCCM Cluster Coordination</p>			CHF XXX²

Objective:	Supporting a coordinated, comprehensive, quality, coherent and consistent shelter, household items, and CCCM response.
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Priority Actions:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set a strategic direction for the cluster: Develop and implement a cluster strategy, define the priorities, integrate preparedness and localisation, and contribute to the Humanitarian Priority Plan. • Drive evidence-based coordination and effective delivery: Support 5W reporting, conduct needs and gap analyses, and harmonise the response through common standards and capacity building. • Lead on advocacy and resources mobilisation: Develop key advocacy priorities with the HCT, and monitor results and recommendations.
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 <p>IFRC Secretariat Services</p>			CHF 537,000

Objective:	Provide comprehensive support to the SLRCS in their relief operations, ensuring adherence to compliance standards, effective operational management, and enhanced visibility of their actions.
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Priority Actions:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deploy surge support personnel based on needs assessments to expedite rapid response efforts. • Conduct monitoring visits to affected districts to oversee the implementation of activities. • Conduct and participate in coordination meetings and brief government stakeholders on the Operational Strategy. • Support the visibility of IFRC and SLRCS actions through joint communication initiatives.
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² Supported through other sections of the Operational Strategy and through contributions external to the Emergency Appeal.

- Provide the required technical support on assessments, planning, monitoring, final evaluation, etc.
- The IFRC security plans will apply to all IFRC staff throughout the operation. An Area-specific Security Risk Assessment will be conducted for any operational area should any IFRC personnel deploy there, and risk mitigation measures will be identified and implemented. All IFRC personnel must, and RC/RC staff and volunteers are encouraged, to complete the IFRC Stay Safe e-learning courses, i.e. Stay Safe 2.0 Global edition Level 1-3. IFRC Regional and Global Security Units will coordinate with IFRC HoD/HoCCD to identify and support additional safety and security needs.

Risk management

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
Limited access to the targeted areas due to logistical capacities and challenges	Medium	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporary bridges and roads are currently under construction. The logistics team will work together with the relevant branches and authorities to plan effectively and avoid delays in the delivery of assistance.
The Northeastern monsoons affect and delay the implementation	High	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monsoons primarily affect districts in the northern and eastern regions, and adequate pre-planning will be implemented through close coordination with the relevant branches.
Inadequate HR and technical capacity at the branches	Medium	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The National Society has deployed NDRT and BDRT members to branches with limited capacity, and surge personnel are mobilised to support key technical areas.
Delay in financial settlements from the branches	Low	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train the volunteers and branch teams, and closely follow-up on accounts and settlements in branches with limited capacity.
Natural shock recurrence: Another disaster such as drought, disease outbreak, and flood occurs during the response and recovery phase	Medium	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop contingency plans that anticipate overlapping disasters (e.g. drought, floods, vector-borne disease outbreaks). • Preposition relief stocks in strategic locations to allow for rapid scale-up. • Strengthen disease surveillance in coordination with health authorities at the local level.

Delays in procurement or distribution of the relief items.	Medium	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-identify local suppliers and initiate the procurement process early through the IFRC CCD to shorten procurement timelines. • Continuously coordinate with the IFRC team and reference procurement guidelines. • The Sri Lankan Government has implemented a flexible process at the port to facilitate international procurement of aid supplies.
Risk of unexploded ordnance (UVO)	Low	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • External sources report serious concerns that landmines and unexploded ordnance (UXO) in Sri Lanka may have been displaced or destabilised by Cyclone Ditwah, increasing the risk of accidental detonations. These risks need to be analysed in the operational areas, and mitigation measures, including awareness campaigns, should be prepared. The budget will need to be adjusted accordingly.

Quality and accountability

The Sri Lanka Red Cross Society will be responsible for the day-to-day monitoring of the operation. Joint monitoring teams will regularly visit operational sites to track implementation progress by using existing or contextualised tools. A final evaluation will be conducted at the end of the operation to identify best practices and lessons learned. Additionally, the indicators below will track progress and measure the operation's impact across themes. This list may change or be updated as the situation evolves.

Sectors	Indicators
Shelter	Number of households provided with essential household items assistance.
Livelihoods	Percentage of households surveyed that received a cash transfer and are satisfied with the amount received.
	Number of people reached with livelihood-related training sessions.
MPC	Number of targeted households provided with cash assistance.
	Percentage of households that reported receiving MPC and are satisfied with the amount received.
Health	Number of people reached with mental health and psychosocial services (MHPSS) from the National Society.
	Number of people reached through health awareness on epidemic controls, vector-borne diseases, etc.
WASH	Percentage of people reporting use of WASH infrastructure supported by the SLRCS as part of the appeal.
	Number of sanitation facilities reconstructed or rehabilitated.
	Number of people reached by hygiene promotion activities.

Education	Percentage of school students reporting that the education packs were useful after resuming school following flood-related disruptions.
	Number of school-going students receiving school education kits or packs.
Migration and Displacement	Number of migrant workers receiving cash and voucher assistance.
	Number of migrant workers receiving RFL services.
Disaster Risk Reduction	Number of staff and volunteers trained in DRR-related training sessions.
Environmental Sustainability	Number of people reached through awareness-raising activities on recycling plastic waste.
Cross-cutting (CEA, PGI, DRR)	Number of RCRC staff and volunteers trained in PGI.
	Percentage of affected people surveyed who feel their opinions are taken into account in operational decision-making.
	Number of people reached by disaster risk reduction public awareness messaging and public education campaigns (PAPE).
	Percentage of staff and volunteers involved in the operation who have been briefed or trained on CEA.
National Society Strengthening	Number of volunteers insured throughout the operation.
IFRC Secretariat Services	Number of IFRC monitoring and support missions.
	Number of surge personnel supporting the operation.
	Number of evaluations conducted during the operation.

FUNDING REQUIREMENT

Federation-wide funding requirement*

Federation-wide Funding Requirement including the National Society domestic target, IFRC Secretariat and the Participating National Society funding requirement	
TBD	IFRC Secretariat Funding Requirement in support of the Federation-wide funding ask CHF 5 million

**For more information on the Federation-wide funding requirement, refer to the section: Federation-wide Approach*

Breakdown of the IFRC Secretariat funding requirement



OPERATIONAL STRATEGY

MDRLK023EA - Srilanka
Tropical Cyclone

FUNDING REQUIREMENTS

Planned Operations	3,493,000
Shelter and Basic Household Items	377,000
Livelihoods	1,270,000
Multi-purpose Cash	667,000
Health	207,000
Water, Sanitation & Hygiene	652,000
Protection, Gender and Inclusion	22,000
Education	210,000
Migration	16,000
Risk Reduction, Climate Adaptation and Recovery	33,000
Community Engagement and Accountability	30,000
Environmental Sustainability	9,000
Enabling Approaches	1,507,000
Coordination and Partnerships	45,000
Secretariat Services	537,000
National Society Strengthening	925,000
TOTAL FUNDING REQUIREMENTS	5,000,000

all amounts in Swiss Francs (CHF)

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Reference



Click here for:

- [Emergency Appeal](#)
- [DREF Operation – Cyclone Ditwah](#)