



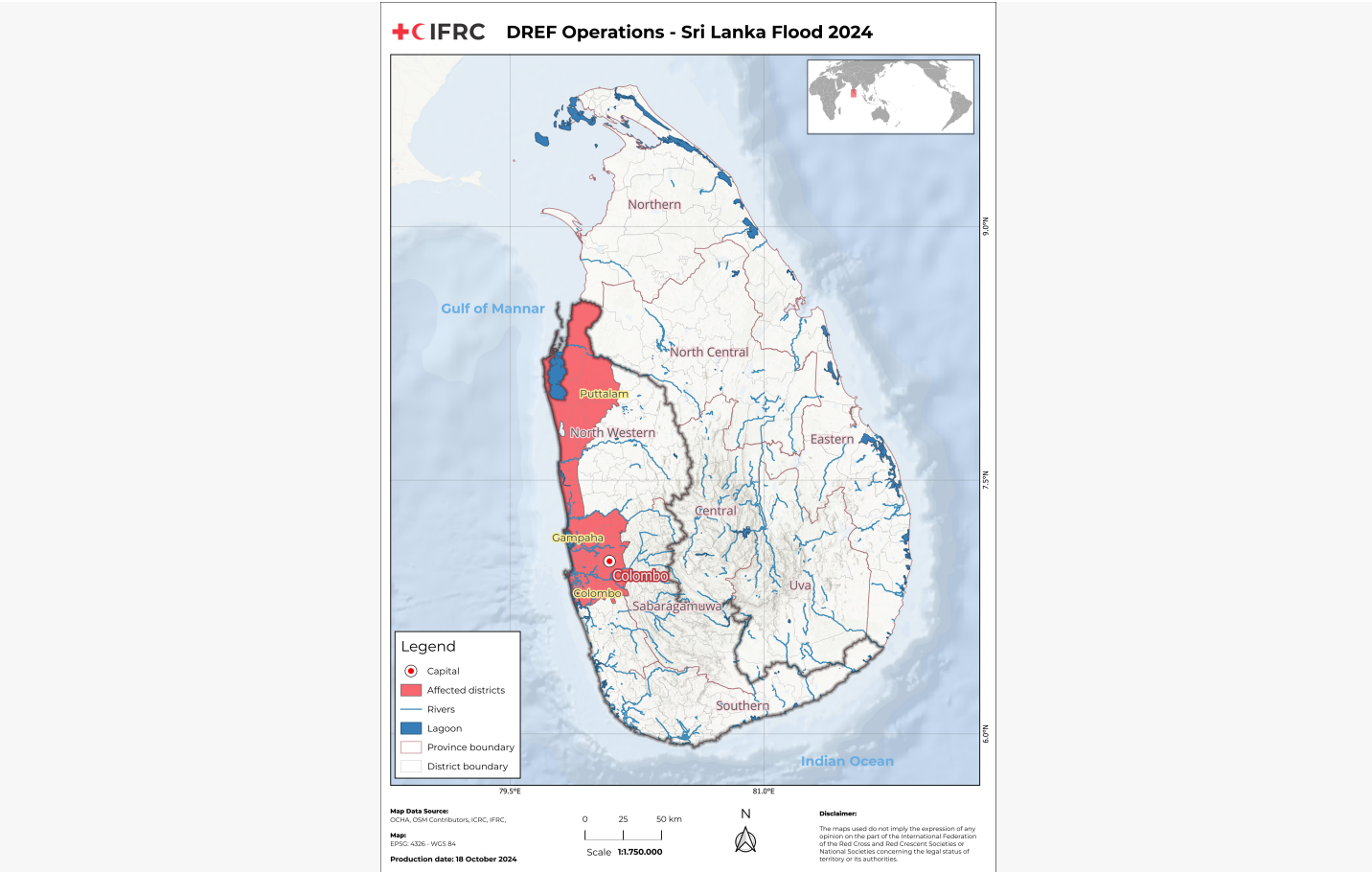
First-aid trained volunteers and BDRT members at the displacement centers, providing immediate support to the flood-affected people. (Photo: SLRCS)

Appeal: MDRLK020	Total DREF Allocation: CHF 309,662	Crisis Category: Yellow	Hazard: Flood
Glide Number: FL-2024-000189-LKA	People Affected: 154,782 people	People Targeted: 40,800 people	People Assisted: 117,868 people
Event Onset: Sudden	Operation Start Date: 24-10-2024	Operational End Date: 28-02-2025	Total Operating Timeframe: 4 months

Targeted Regions: **North Western, Sabaragamuwa, Western**

The major donors and partners of the IFRC-DREF include the Red Cross Societies and governments of Australia, Austria, Belgium, Britain, China, the Czech Republic, Canada, Denmark, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Liechtenstein, Malta, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, the Netherlands, DG ECHO, the Mondelez Foundation, and other corporate and private donors. The IFRC, on behalf of the National Society, would like to thank all for their generous contributions.

Description of the Event



Extreme weather - map of severely affected districts (Source: IFRC IM)

Date of event

12-10-2024

What happened, where and when?

On 11 October 2024, the Meteorological Department forecasted persistent showery conditions in southwestern Sri Lanka due to an atmospheric disturbance near the island. Heavy showers exceeding 150 mm, or thundershowers, were anticipated in several provinces, increasing the risk of flooding in vulnerable areas. In response to the forecast, at 2:00 PM on 11 October, the Department of Irrigation issued an early flood warning for the Attanagalu Oya area in Gampaha District and surrounding regions as heavy rainfall continued in the river basin.

By the morning of 12 October 2024, the Attanagalu Oya had reached primary flood levels at Dunamale. In addition, the Kelani River in Colombo District, the Ging River in Galle District, and the Kalu River in Kalutara District also reached flood levels, triggering additional alerts from the Department of Irrigation. These warnings were issued due to unstable atmospheric conditions, which continued exacerbating the situation.

The highest recorded rainfall in the affected regions was 117 mm in Eheliyagoda, 114 mm at Halvatura Estate, and 105.5 mm in Hanwellla (Colombo and Gampaha districts). By 13 October 2024, the Department of Irrigation escalated the warnings, issuing major flood alerts to people living around Attanagalu Oya in Gampaha District, where the situation had worsened. The district continued to experience heavy rainfall and reported the highest number of affected residents, totalling 68,672.

As of 15 October 2024, the Disaster Management Centre (DMC) reported that the adverse weather conditions affected approximately 154,782 people from 39,522 families. Of these, 10,361 people from 2,433 families were sheltered in 80 safe locations. Gampaha District remained the most severely impacted, with 78,281 affected residents [01]. The following districts experienced the most significant damage, and the people affected:



- A. Western province – Colombo district – 60,233 people from 15,941 HHs and 5,509 people sheltered in 41 centers
- B. Western province – Gampaha district – 78,281 people from 19,956 HHs and 1,574 people sheltered in 19 centers
- C. Northwestern province – Puttalam district – 8,902 people from 2,203 HHs and 3,261 people sheltered in 18 centers

A 34-year-old man had drowned in Kelanimulla, Mulleriyawa, located in the Colombo District. The adverse weather conditions resulted in three fatalities. According to the Disaster Management Centre (DMC), the severe weather destroyed one house and partially damaged 321 others.

Government response and early warning messages:

On 13 October 2024, the government directed the Secretary of Defence to take immediate measures to ensure the safety of people in areas affected by extreme weather. In response, the Ministry of Finance allocated 50 million rupees for relief efforts. The Sri Lanka Navy deployed six flood relief teams to various locations across the Gampaha and Colombo districts to conduct urgent search and rescue operations. Due to the severe weather, all schools within the Gampaha and Colombo educational zones were closed on 14 and 15 October 2024, as many schools had been inundated by floodwaters.

Meteorological Warnings (12 – 14 October 2024):

During the intense weather between 11-14 October 2024, the sea areas off the coast from Puttalam to Hambantota, via Colombo and Galle, were rough, with gusty winds reaching 60 to 70 km/h. Naval and fishing communities were advised not to enter these waters until further notice. The increased intensity of rainfall, which had exceeded 100 mm, the Department of Irrigation also warned that as water continued to flow from higher elevations, water levels in the rivers were expected to rise further, posing a high risk of flooding in the low-lying areas of Gampaha and Colombo districts.

At the same time, the National Building Research Organisation (NBRO) issued a landslide warning for nine districts in the western and southwestern provinces, including Colombo and Gampaha. Residents, particularly those in mountainous areas, near artificial cut slopes, and along roads in the designated Divisional Secretariat Divisions (DSDs), were advised to remain vigilant.

By the second week of November 2024, the people in the displacement center returned to their homes as the adverse weather conditions improved and water levels receded in the low-lying areas of Colombo, Gampaha, and Puttalam districts.

The Irrigation Department and the National Building Research Organisation lifted the emergency warnings for floodwater levels at the Attanagalu Oya and Kelani rivers and the warnings related to landslide risks that had been issued due to the severe weather in these districts.

The Sri Lanka Red Cross Society (SLRCS) initiated the DREF response operation promptly after receiving approval from IFRC. With the support of additional volunteers, all three branches completed a rapid assessment in the affected districts in November 2024 and collaborated with the government agent and divisional secretariats to plan and coordinate the relief operation with the relevant Grama Niladhari officers.

The SLRCS units were mobilised and informed of the planned interventions to enhance community participation in the response efforts effectively. Trained volunteers were deployed to safety centres to identify the immediate needs of the displaced individuals, while first-aid services and mobile medical camps were established at the displacement centres. At the end of the operation in February 2025, the situation improved further, allowing the affected individuals to return to their daily lives. The task forces, with guidance from the disaster management centres, completed the repairs on the partially destroyed houses. Those whose homes were completely damaged received financial assistance from the government to help them rebuild.

[01] - Situation update https://www.dmc.gov.lk/images/dmcreports/Situation_Report_on_2024_1728965696.pdf

[02] - <https://www.dailymirror.lk/breaking-news/Sri-Lanka-vulnerable-to-extreme-weather-events-as-an-island-in-equatorial-belt/108-293783>

[03] - https://nbro.gov.lk/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=628:landslide-early-warnings-issued-to-galle-kalutara-kegalle-and-matara-district&catid=20:warnings&lang=en&Itemid=299





Field team in engaging rapid assessment in the affected division in Colombo district. (Photo: SLRCS)



Community volunteers engage in clean-up campaign in Gampaha district. (Photo: SLRCS)

Scope and Scale

On 12 October 2024, severe floods triggered and impacted the Colombo, Gampaha, Kalutara, and Puttalam districts. Approximately 154,782 people from 39,522 families, mostly from vulnerable populations living in low-lying urban and semi-urban areas, were affected. This situation greatly hindered their ability to resume daily activities during the flooding. On 15 October 2024, a report highlighted the severe impact of extreme weather in the region, leading to three deaths—one in Kalutara and two in Colombo.

Displacement:

In response to the flooding, 80 safe locations in Colombo, Gampaha, and Puttalam were set up to shelter 10,361 people from 2,433 families. Significantly, the most vulnerable families from the severely affected districts, Colombo, Gampaha, and Puttalam, faced significant challenges as rising waters damaged their water and sanitation facilities, leaving many without basic needs. Additionally, families in low-lying areas lost their primary sources of income due to the loss of their livelihoods and daily work opportunities, creating a strong need for food assistance in the aftermath of the disaster.

Health warnings:

The extended rainy season had significantly increased the risk of several severe illnesses. By the end of 2024, the National Dengue Control Unit had reported 47,291 dengue cases, with Colombo and Gampaha districts recording 216 and 116 cases during week 49. Additionally, leptospirosis, commonly known as "rat fever", had been reported as flooded areas became contaminated. The health department had warned about the growing risk of leptospirosis in the affected regions [05]. Moreover, diarrhoeal diseases had also emerged during the monsoon due to contaminated water, particularly in Colombo's semi-urban areas. This had been highlighted during the branch's rapid assessment.

Economic and Social Impact:

Families in urban and semi-urban areas surrounding the Colombo and Gampaha districts temporarily lost their income during adverse weather, as they depended mainly on daily wages. Among those most affected were LGBTQ people, refugees, and asylum seekers who primarily live in urban areas, as well as families with infants, people with disabilities, individuals with chronic illnesses, and pregnant or lactating women.

Impact on Water and Sanitation Facilities:

Due to the high floodwater level in the low-lying areas of the three districts, many dug wells, the primary drinking water sources for the affected communities, urgently require cleaning after severe weather conditions.

The SLRCS planned intervention and implemented the rehabilitation of these wells, which was one of the most critical early recovery measures, which was implemented successfully and supported the communities to restore access to safe drinking water and significantly enhanced the health and well-being of the affected population.

Magnitude of the hazard:

The residents of urban and semi-urban areas in Colombo and Gampaha frequently experience flooding, typically two to three times each year, which has a detrimental impact on people's lives.

The ongoing economic hardships in the country particularly affect those living in urban and semi-urban regions. Many families in these districts rely on daily wages and have incurred debt to afford basic necessities. In this context, pregnant women, patients, and young children are especially vulnerable. Additionally, the lack of proper sanitation in displaced areas increases the risk of waterborne diseases among these communities, such as dengue and diarrhoea.

[05] - <https://www.dailymirror.lk/top-story/Health-experts-sound-alarm-over-spike-in-waterborne-diseases/155-293894>
[06] - https://www.meteo.gov.lk/images/Weekly_FC_Oct_10-2024.pdf

Source Information

Source Name	Source Link
1. SLRCS internal Data collection update from 24 and 72 hrs report - Google forms	https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1o8LdBlA_2quxoia6D2nP_ebtF_rDKBg8xX1Mxl5PpsvM/edit?gid=0#gid=0
2. Metrological department Sri Lanka	https://www.meteo.gov.lk/images/Weekly_FC_Oct_10-2024.pdf
3. Health Department warning	https://english.newsfirst.lk/2024/10/17/health-officials-urge-vigilance-against-waterborne-diseases-following-flooding
4. The National Building Research Organisation (NBRO) - Landslide alert	https://nbro.gov.lk/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=628:landslide-early-warnings-issued-to-galle-kalutara-kegalle-and-matara-district&catid=20:warnings&lang=en&Itemid=299
5. ECHO Daily Flash	https://ercportal.jrc.ec.europa.eu/ECHO-Products/Echo-Flash#/daily-flash-archive/5192
6. Disaster Management Center - Situation update	https://www.dmc.gov.lk/images/dmcreports/Situation_Report_on_2024_1728965696.pdf

National Society Actions

Have the National Society conducted any intervention additionally to those part of this DREF Operation?	No
---	----

IFRC Network Actions Related To The Current Event

Secretariat	The in-country IFRC team closely coordinated with the SLRCS, the IFRC country cluster office in Delhi, and the regional IFRC office. The IFRC CD/CCD programme team supported the SLRCS team in preparing the IFRC-DREF application and planning the response and regularly shared updates on the in-country situation, developments, and technical inputs with the IFRC regional team, the operation coordinator, and the DREF focal point. Furthermore, the IFRC programme team in Sri Lanka closely worked and provided technical support to SLRCS in planned intervention and operation implementation throughout DREF implementation periods, facilitating information sharing between SLRCS, the Movement, and external partners. IFRC CCD supported this DREF operation with surge finance to work closely with the SLRCS to speed up the settlement process and check all settlements on time. Also, the programme team at the CD/CCD level participated in the weekly progress review with
-------------	--



	the respective branches, and NHQ carried out the follow-up activities and monitoring. The IFRC country staff and support from the CCD programme conducted regular field visits to the districts during the implementation of activities, engaged with local branches, and closely monitored the process, particularly focusing on the Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA) component to gather feedback from affected individuals. Additionally, the IFRC PMER staff at the country level assisted in analysing the Post Distribution Monitoring survey. The IFRC CCD officer also participated in a lessons-learned workshop, contributing insights to address implementation challenges and enhance future interventions.
Participating National Societies	There is no Participating National Societies (PNS) presence in the country.

ICRC Actions Related To The Current Event

The SLRCS works with the ICRC to implement various programmes in the country. However, during this DREF response, the SLRCS was not directly involved with the ICRC in any activities related to the flood emergency response.

Other Actors Actions Related To The Current Event

Government has requested international assistance	No
National authorities	National and local disaster management agencies, along with district administrative units, were at the forefront of the response efforts across the affected districts in the country. According to the Disaster Management Centre (DMC), the Army, Air Force, Navy, and police were deployed to all impacted areas to carry out necessary rescue operations. The Department of Irrigation actively monitored water levels in river basins and low-lying areas, issuing alerts and warnings to the public in close coordination with the DMC. The government allocated immediate relief funds to support people in safe centres and distributed cooked food and other essential items. The DMC played a central role in managing these safety centres and arranging necessities for affected individuals across all districts. The National Water Board provided drinking water, while the Ministry of Health oversaw sanitation facilities at these centres. Local health units, specifically the Medical Offices of Health (MOH) in the affected provinces, addressed health issues within the flooded areas. The MOH took the initiative to investigate health-related matters at the displacement centres. They led coordination efforts and collaborated with various agencies and organisations for health-related actions. The MOH also conducted mobile medical services and public awareness programmes in flood-affected regions, including fumigation efforts to control dengue. Additionally, measures were implemented to address potential causes of leptospirosis, commonly referred to as rat fever. Furthermore, local civil society organisations, sports clubs, temple committees, politicians, and mosques provided meals for displaced individuals in all districts. The National Disaster Relief Services Centre (NDRSC) also supplied cooked meals, non-food items, and dry rations.
UN or other actors	The UN Population Fund distributed 3,000 dignity kits at safety centres in the Colombo district. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Sri Lanka provided relief packs to the Disaster Management Centre (DMC) to support flood response efforts in the Gampaha and Colombo districts. Save the Children Sri Lanka aided schoolchildren affected by the floods in Gampaha by providing drinking water and assistance to those

impacted.

In addition to UNDP, the UNFPA contributed 3,000 relief packs for the communities affected in the Colombo and Gampaha districts. The SLRCS migration and displacement focal point coordinated with UNHCR to assess the needs of migrants living in the flood-affected areas of Negombo in the Gampaha district. UNHCR assisted in identifying flood-affected refugees and asylum seekers to support the cash-in envelopes in the Colombo and Gampaha districts.

Are there major coordination mechanism in place?

The Sri Lankan government primarily led the coordination efforts on a bilateral basis. The Sri Lanka Red Cross Society (SLRCS) was key in closely coordinating these initiatives. The National Disaster Relief Services Centre (NDRSC) at the district level coordinated with all stakeholders to update the damage information for the Disaster Management Centre (DMC). Additionally, the NDRSC was responsible for distributing cooked food and non-food items to people in the safety centres.

The DMC, the Meteorological Department, the Divisional Secretariat, and the Irrigation Department collaborated on responses and early warning activities related to the adverse weather conditions. SLRCS branches worked closely with district-level authorities to conduct assessments and provide relief. The WASH Technical Working Group organised a WASH Cluster meeting where the Water Board and the Irrigation Department shared information about the damage caused by flash floods to pipelines and water purification centres, and the required steps were taken to repair the systems and restore the services to normal.

Needs (Gaps) Identified



Shelter Housing And Settlements

The Disaster Management Centre (DMC) reported that approximately one house was destroyed fully, and around 321 were partially damaged between October 12th and 16th, 2024. The most extensive damage occurred in the Gampaha district, where nearly 49 houses were partially damaged, followed by Colombo, where about seven houses suffered similar damage.

Residents whose homes were fully or partially destroyed were relocated to host families in nearby villages and towns. They required assistance repairing their partially damaged homes and non-food items to support their livelihoods.

The government instructed the tri-forces to assist in rebuilding both fully and partially damaged houses. The government distributed grants to the most vulnerable families for reconstructing their fully damaged homes. DMC supported the affected people with temporary shelter and provided them with food and other necessary relief items.

The cleaning of mud from homes was the second priority when floodwater receded, and this required additional tools and disinfectants for kitchens, utensils, and clothing. Medical health officials and public health inspectors urged the public to clean and eliminate stagnant water in homes and public drainage areas, helping to reduce the risk of a dengue outbreak.

Furthermore, in the flooded areas, the belongings of the affected people in the low-lying areas were submerged, creating an urgent need for essential items such as clothing, sanitary napkins, and hygiene packs.



Livelihoods And Basic Needs

The severe weather impacted over 150,000 individuals in the three targeted districts, resulting in significant losses of livelihoods and daily income. More than 10,000 people were relocated to safer areas, requiring urgent food, water, and essential items.

The flooding severely affected over 10,000 paddy and vegetable farmers, mostly in the Puttalam district. These farmers needed immediate assistance to protect their remaining crops until harvest time. Additionally, the damage to agricultural land increased the costs of land preparation.

Members of the LGBTQ community in Colombo and Gampaha districts, primarily unskilled daily labourers, were unable to work due to the flooding. Refugees and asylum seekers were also affected in Negombo, Gampaha District, requiring immediate livelihood support and ineligible to work in the country.



Furthermore, evacuated individuals needed support to restore and clean their homes once water levels receded, which was challenging due to financial constraints. Many of those affected were unskilled daily labourers and coolie workers engaged in farming and other businesses to support their families. The flooding destroyed farming fields and inundated workspaces, including carpentry, masonry, and small businesses, delaying their recovery and return to work. Families with children and elderly members particularly require immediate cash support to address their urgent needs.



Health

The affected population relied heavily on government hospitals for their healthcare needs. However, access to these facilities was limited due to transport disruptions caused by closed roads during flooding. The situation was further worsened by medication shortages and complications arising from the country's economic crisis.

Health departments warned people in the impacted districts and reported various health issues emerged as floodwaters receded, including common diseases such as diarrhoea, leptospirosis, and dengue. Additionally, there was contaminated water intake and the spread of diseases due to the inundation of dug wells in the affected areas.

There was an urgent need for first aid services in the displacement centres and general medical care to reduce the risk of hospitalisation and other health complications.

Due to disruptions in the livelihoods of the affected individuals, all districts faced a critical need for food and water. People living near the river were particularly vulnerable, having lost their sources of income and struggling to provide food for their children.



Water, Sanitation And Hygiene

The floodwater level rose about 7 to 10 feet, and severely affected areas were near the rivers, contaminating all drinking water sources, including pipe-borne water from the water supply systems. The strong flow of floodwater damaged water pipes and submerged purification centres, which limited access to drinking water facilities in the affected areas.

Household wells, the primary source of drinking water in the affected districts, became polluted due to the high floodwater level, mainly along riverbanks and in low-lying areas. As a result, well-cleaning was an essential requirement in all inundated areas within the districts.

Given the poor condition of existing sanitary facilities, sanitation and hygiene conditions deteriorated due to extreme weather. Promoting hygiene awareness using IEC materials was crucial to limit the spread of waterborne and other communicable diseases at the displacement centres and low-lying areas.

Additionally, the Epidemiology Unit of the Ministry of Health prioritised conducting dengue awareness campaigns, door-to-door visits, and clearing debris that blocked drainage as immediate response activities, as the Colombo and Gampaha districts were identified as high-risk areas for dengue.



Protection, Gender And Inclusion

Among the displaced and affected people, special care and attention were given to children, vulnerable women (pregnant and lactating), people with disabilities, those with chronic illnesses, and the elderly, considering their heightened vulnerability.

It was vital to address the protection needs of vulnerable groups, including women, men, children, persons with disabilities, and older people, who were at an increased risk of exploitation, abuse, and neglect while sheltering at the displacement centres or while being alone in the home.

SLRCS incorporated the IFRC Minimum Standards into its emergency programming to address the needs of at-risk individuals and groups. Specific measures were taken to ensure the safety and security of all individuals, including partitioning areas in evacuation centres and establishing priority lanes for persons with disabilities and older people.

Furthermore, SLRCS incorporated the IFRC Child Safeguarding Policy to ensure that programmes were designed and implemented with the child's best interests in mind. A child safeguarding analysis was conducted to protect children from all forms of violence, abuse, and exploitation, with a focus on preventive actions and accountability. The child safeguarding risk analysis was conducted in the districts where the intervention occurred.





Community Engagement And Accountability

Effective communication and information sharing were conducted to identify the most vulnerable families and individuals among the displaced people. Many sheltered in their neighbours' houses, while a few stayed in inundated homes due to the fear of losing their belongings. Identifying and addressing the immediate needs of those affected was very challenging. The information was made easily accessible to ensure that affected households were well-informed about the support they were eligible for.

The active participation of SLRCS volunteers and community members during detailed assessments throughout the operation ensured a fair selection process and promoted community engagement in planning, assessment, and beneficiary selection. Given the limited assistance, a community feedback mechanism during the beneficiary selection process was key to implementing the planned intervention effectively.

Continuous monitoring of the diverse needs of the affected population was also needed, as different groups had specific requirements. Also, the SLRCS required disaggregated data on the affected people for decision-making.

Post Distribution Monitoring (PDM) through methods such as Key Informant Interviews (KII) and Focus Group Discussions (FGD) was a key tool that gathered feedback and addressed any grievances or complaints from beneficiaries, helped to resolve their concerns, and enhanced the distribution of assistance to those affected.

Operational Strategy

Overall objective of the operation

The response activities were implemented as planned in the three most severely affected districts, Colombo, Gampaha, and Puttalam, located in the Western and Northwestern provinces, over four months commencing in November 2024.

This operation's main objective was to support multipurpose cash grants to meet the basic needs of the most vulnerable households, as well as well-cleaning and cleaning campaigns—including dengue awareness, door-to-door visits, and emergency first aid services. Additionally, CEA and PGI integrated as cross-cutting interventions, along with refresher training for volunteers.

Initially, the operation aimed to assist 40,800 people from 10,200 families in the three districts. Through an effective implementation plan, enhanced coordination with relevant stakeholders, and extensive engagement with volunteers, the operation reached approximately 117,868 people from 29,467 households across all three districts by the end of the operation. This was mainly done through monitoring dengue control in homes. There was a strong need for dengue interventions, and the branches successfully reached over 97,000 people from more than 24,297 households, far surpassing the original plan to help just 7,000 households only through the dengue surveillance initiative.

Furthermore, the total number of people reached confirms that the entire operation was carried out while adhering to all cross-cutting elements, including PGI, CEA, and Communication, throughout the implementation of the overall planned intervention.

The direct outreach included Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA) for 7,800 people from 1,950 families; WASH (Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene) efforts, which involved cleaning dug wells for 6,400 people from 1,600 families; and under the vector control, dengue household surveillance, which reached 97,188 people from 24,297 households. Additionally, a clean-up campaign benefitted 6,480 people from 1,620 families. Under the health programme, 300 individuals received medical and first-aid services.

Operation strategy rationale

The operation's strategy was fully aligned with the policies, procedures, commitments, and mandates of both the SLRCS and IFRC. With the support of the IFRC, SLRCS aimed to provide immediate assistance to the most vulnerable households within the affected populations across three districts: Colombo, Gampaha, and Puttalam.

The selection process for assistance involved community members, leaders, and members of the affected areas' civil societies, ensuring close coordination with local government authorities and other stakeholders at the community level. The specific intervention areas (Divisional Secretariat and Grama Niladhari divisions) were identified based on assessments conducted by the respective branches for the most affected populations.

This proposed strategy was designed to address those affected' immediate, short-term needs and was consistent with the government's plan. The response operation was implemented over four months, from October 2024 to February 2025.



A comprehensive assessment was done to gauge needs accurately, and relevant government authorities were informed to prevent overlapping assistance. An initial list of beneficiaries was shared to ensure support reaches those in genuine need. SLRCS is committed to providing sufficient assistance in the affected districts.

SLRCS was committed to aligning its operations with gender commitments and IFRC's standards for gender and diversity in emergencies. They collected data on vulnerable groups, including the elderly, individuals with disabilities, pregnant women, women-headed households, migrants, refugees, LGBTQ individuals, and families with young children. Additionally, SLRCS improved community engagement and established a feedback mechanism to ensure all voices were heard during this response operation.

(A) Multi-purpose cash grants: Reached 7,800 people from 1,950 households (including 124 LGBTQ community people and 180 refugees and asylum seekers).

Multi-purpose cash was the primary intervention implemented in the response to recommendations from a rapid assessment conducted by the relevant branches in the affected districts. The most vulnerable individuals, severely impacted by adverse weather conditions, relied on daily wage work and lost their livelihoods due to widespread flooding. The multi-purpose cash grants enabled the most affected families to maintain their dignity by prioritising their immediate needs.

A total of 1,950 households received multi-purpose cash assistance: 750 in Colombo, 1,100 in Gampaha, and 100 in Puttalam. This includes 124 households from the LGBTQ community and 180 from refugee and asylum-seeking backgrounds in the Gampaha district.

A detailed assessment was conducted with support from Grama Nildhari (GN) officials and community leaders. The volunteer team that carried out the assessment analysed market conditions, availability of food and household items, and restocking capacity.

Community feedback and a redressal process were key in identifying the most vulnerable individuals for cash assistance. The value of the cash grant, set at LKR 20,000 per family, was determined based on the Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB) analysis conducted by the Cash Technical Working Group. This group coordinates with all organisations (including UN agencies, Save the Children, and WFP) involved in implementing cash interventions in the country.

(B) Health: Reached 300 people through emergency first aid activities.

In the affected districts, people urgently needed first aid due to limited access to healthcare and transportation. This need arose from the sudden floods and high water levels, which caused injuries among residents, including children, during their evacuation from homes. Trained volunteers from the Sri Lanka Red Cross Society (SLRCS) coordinated the provision of first aid services. Three first-aid camps were established, with one in each district at displacement centers where the divisional Ministry of Health officials' (MOH) services were unavailable, and the following a request from the District Management Committee (DMC).

(C) Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene: Reached 6,400 people from 1,600 households for well cleaning.

WASH interventions focused on cleaning wells and assisting vulnerable households in cleaning their homes, surroundings, public spaces, and buildings. This included removing mud and blockages caused by the high floodwaters. Many dug wells were inundated during the flooding, resulting in contaminated drinking water. The pipe-borne water infrastructure was also damaged due to the swift flow of flash floods in low-lying areas.

These cleanup activities were essential for removing waste from low-lying areas and riverbanks to prevent the breeding of dengue mosquitoes.

In the targeted districts, the Sri Lanka Red Cross Society branches conducted a detailed assessment to identify the dug wells used by the most affected households for drinking and other purposes, which floodwaters had contaminated.

A total of 650 households in Colombo, 850 in Gampaha, and 100 in Puttalam had their wells cleaned, and a total of 6,400 individuals benefitted from getting clean water for their drinking and other domestic purposes. The cleaning process was carried out under the guidance of public health inspectors from the respective medical offices, following Oxfam's cleaning criteria.

(D) Epidemic control – Dengue awareness and door-to-door visits conducted in 24,297 households (Colombo 20,085 and Gampaha 4,212) and 81 clean-up campaigns, reaching a total of 103,668 people.

Each year, once the floodwaters receded, the risk of dengue mosquito breeding increased, leading to a rise in reported cases of dengue fever. Community awareness and cleanup campaigns proved to be very effective in controlling this increase. As a result, this operation focused on epidemic control, collaborating closely with the National Dengue Control Unit.

Community-based surveillance implemented through household visits used adapted IEC materials to ensure households in affected areas



know the dengue prevention and elimination actions to be taken if dengue is identified.

The volunteers were trained in epidemic control before these door-to-door visits. The visits involved government officials, PHI, and MOH officers from the Dengue Control Unit to promote proper and sustainable solutions for eliminating dengue mosquito breeding sites and helping households follow effective, no-cost practices at the household level.

Cross-cutting issues:

Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA):

Risk communication and community engagement were integrated into every response activity. The SLRCS was dedicated to establishing a robust community feedback mechanism during its operations to ensure that all community voices were heard and valued.

To achieve this, the SLRCS organised additional community meetings in various locations across the districts during the implementation phase, alongside providing hotline services. Throughout the implementation, a comprehensive feedback system was established to promote a sense of community ownership throughout the operation.

Local volunteers actively participated in the response and relief efforts. Additionally, a feedback mechanism was put in place to address any grievances from the community.

Protection, Gender, and Inclusion (PGI):

SLRCS ensured that planned interventions under this operation were aligned with its gender commitments and IFRC minimum standard commitments to gender and diversity in emergency programming.

Specific considerations on the most vulnerable people, including the elderly, persons with disabilities, pregnant and lactating women, women-headed households, migrants, and households with infants or young children, were given confirmed access to immediate assistance. Also, they were included in the community participation and decision-making process, which was prioritised in the selection criteria.

National Society Strengthening:

SLRCS engaged both existing and new staff, fully funded under the DREF for a period of four months, and ensured proper implementation and monitoring of activities.

This team included three district project officers and three field officers, who coordinated efforts across three districts from their respective branch locations. Additionally, there was one accountant and one project assistant supporting a project manager based at the National Headquarters. This structure ensured effective overall coordination, monitoring, and implementation of the project.

To further enhance the swift execution of activities related to Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA), well-cleaning, epidemic control, Protection, Gender and Inclusion (PGI), and Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA) in the branches, local technical experts were also deployed to provide necessary support.

Coordination with Government Authorities:

Following a comprehensive assessment, the relevant government authorities were promptly informed and coordinated to prevent overlapping assistance efforts.

An initial list was shared with these authorities to identify the most vulnerable individuals and ensure sufficient assistance was provided in the affected districts.

At the end of the operation, SLRCS organised a lessons-learned workshop and reviewed the response efforts, identified areas for improvement, and shared the findings and recommendations with the relevant branches and stakeholders.

Targeting Strategy

Who was targeted by this operation?

Through comprehensive assessments and household surveys, the Sri Lanka Red Cross Society identified the most severely affected individuals, including the elderly, persons with disabilities, pregnant and lactating women, women-headed households, migrants, and



households with infants or young children severely affected in the targeted districts.

Priority was given to the damages and losses to livelihoods and homes caused by floodwaters, river overflows, and health impacts. The selection of beneficiaries was a community-driven process conducted closely with local authorities.

SLRCS developed pre-established criteria for selecting beneficiaries for Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance (MPCA), which were detailed and explained to the volunteers. Branches worked with government authorities to identify the Divisional Secretariat (DS) divisions that were worst affected, taking into account previous DREF operations and ensuring that the most impacted households were included to prevent geographical overlap in assistance.

The list of selected beneficiaries was shared with government authorities for verification and confirmation, ensuring transparency about the beneficiaries to avoid duplication of support from other partners. Once confirmed by the Grama Niladhari (GN) officers (government authorities), the list was posted in public places and GN offices at the village level, along with a hotline for receiving community feedback and grievances. Complaints and feedback were recorded, and a redressal process was initiated to engage the community and clarify any concerns before assisting the selected people.

Explain the selection criteria for the targeted population

This operation aimed to assist the severely affected population in the Colombo, Gampaha, and Puttalam districts based on specific predefined criteria tailored to the situation. Priority was given to individuals displaced by floods, mudslides, and severe winds, particularly those residing in safe centres and those who had lost their livelihoods. Additionally, people returning home after the floodwaters receded were also prioritised.

During the detailed assessment, more information was gathered about vulnerable groups, including the elderly, disabled individuals, pregnant and lactating mothers, and women-headed households. This information was further verified through a community grievance process that involved consultations to identify the most affected individuals.

The assessment team conducted separate evaluations of the needs of asylum seekers and refugees living in rented housing in the Negombo division of the Gampaha district, as well as the needs of the LGBTQ community in the Colombo district, aimed at selecting the most vulnerable individuals based on the established criteria. The respective branches and the Migration and Displacement focal points (NHQ) closely coordinated with the UNHCR and relevant government authorities to enhance the process, ensure transparency, and avoid duplication in the beneficiary selection process.

Total Targeted Population

Women	16,148	Rural	60%
Girls (under 18)	4,660	Urban	40%
Men	15,514	People with disabilities (estimated)	1%
Boys (under 18)	4,478		
Total targeted population	40,800		

Risk and Security Considerations (including "management")

Does your National Society have anti-fraud and corruption policy?	No
Does your National Society have prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse policy?	Yes
Does your National Society have child protection/child safeguarding policy?	Yes



Does your National Society have whistleblower protection policy?	Yes
Does your National Society have anti-sexual harassment policy?	Yes
Please analyse and indicate potential risks for this operation, its root causes and mitigation actions.	
Risk	Mitigation action
Ongoing southwest monsoon: delaying the implementation of the activities	Pre-planning of activities and better coordination: local authorities helped NS implement the activities without delay. Similar experiences implementing the intervention last year also helped to implement the intervention quickly.
inadequate human resource capacity (NHQ & branches)	The National Society implemented the main activities within the first three months and mobilised adequate volunteers. Accordingly, NS allocated the required support to the branches and mobilised further support from BDRT and NDRT members to support the response activities. NS implemented the activities through community engagement and partnerships with government stakeholders, which led branches to complete the activities in time.
Upcoming Parliamentary election & political intervention: delay the beneficiary selection	Better coordination with branches and government stakeholders sped up the activities before the election. The selection criteria were adhered to through the community-based process, and the CEA was strengthened during the implementation period. SLRCS had experience completing all activities on time under the previous DREF, which was carried out during the presidential election in September 2024. Proper planning and coordination were the key factors to success.
Please indicate any security and safety concerns for this operation:	
The SLRCS security framework was in place to support staff and volunteers during the operation. For personnel under IFRC security's responsibility, existing IFRC country office or CCD security plans were in place. All IFRC, RC/RC staff and volunteers were encouraged to complete the IFRC Stay Safe 2.0 e-learning courses. The National Society had a good level of community acceptance countrywide, with established networks of community-based volunteers. The IFRC country office, together with the SLRCS, participated in a range of stakeholder meetings in which safety and security matters were considered and discussed, including Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) meetings convened by the UNHCR office.	
Has the child safeguarding risk analysis assessment been completed?	Yes

Implementation

Multi Purpose Cash

Budget: CHF 138,860
Targeted Persons: 7,200
Assisted Persons: 7,800



Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
# of targeted households provided with cash assistance	1,750	1,950
# of post distribution monitoring conducted	1	1

Narrative description of achievements

Detailed Assessment

With support from local authorities and the involvement of volunteers, the Sri Lanka Red Cross Society (SLRCS) conducted assessments to identify the most vulnerable beneficiaries based on an initial list provided by governmental authorities. Following the evaluation and verification of this information by the SLRCS branch, a finalised list of selected individuals, adhering to specific selection criteria, was shared with both the community and government officials for their feedback. This process encompassed validation through community redress mechanisms, resulting in a confirmed list of eligible individuals who would receive assistance. A similar methodology was employed to identify affected individuals from the LGBTQ+ community, as well as refugees and asylum seekers, ensuring that their privacy was respected and data protection protocols were upheld.

The selection criteria were comprehensive, ensuring that the most vulnerable households affected by the floods, such as households led by women, families with pregnant or nursing mothers, individuals with disabilities, and elderly persons, were well represented.

Simultaneously, CVA-trained volunteers conducted a market assessment to evaluate the feasibility of the cash and voucher assistance (CVA) intervention in each division. They assessed the functionality of the markets and the availability of essential items once the floodwaters receded. It was found that the markets in every town were operating without any interruptions.

Distribution of Multipurpose Cash Assistance

A total of 1,950 families, including LGBTQ+ individuals and refugees and asylum seekers, received multipurpose cash assistance of LKR 20,000 across three targeted districts: Colombo, Gampaha, and Puttalam. In Colombo, 673 families from the general community and 77 from the LGBTQ+ community received assistance. In Gampaha, 873 families came from the general community, 47 from the LGBTQ+ community, and 180 from the refugee and asylum seekers community. In Puttalam, 100 families from the general community were assisted.

All cash transfers were conducted through individual bank transactions, except for the transfers to refugees and asylum seekers in Gampaha. Due to a lack of proper documentation, these individuals could not open bank accounts. In this case, the NHQ finance team, the IFRC country team, the migration focal point, government authorities, and local branch representatives collaboratively arranged a distribution point to provide cash-in-envelope assistance to the selected 180 refugees and asylum seekers.

Based on the Minimum Expenditure Basket, the Cash Technical Working Group—comprising representatives from the UN, World Vision, Save the Children, and other organisations, with support from the SLRCS—recommended a cash grant of LKR 20,000 (CHF 56) to help affected families meet their basic needs for two weeks. Transfers were made directly to their bank accounts, promoting fairness and equity.

PDM findings

The PDM survey was conducted at the end of February 2025 through a combination of telephone (virtual) and in-person (physical) interviews. The sample was selected based on a 10% representation of the total cash assistance recipients, ensuring a balanced and representative assessment of the beneficiaries' experiences across the targeted districts.

The PDM team reached 212 households by conducting additional visits to a few more households within the given period and ensured a more comprehensive assessment of the effectiveness and impact of the cash assistance provided.

The gender distribution within the surveyed sample shows a significant disparity: women comprised 68.4% of those surveyed, reflecting a higher level of female-headed households and homemakers, while men represented 28.8%. Additionally, 2.8% of respondents identified as part of the LGBTQ community, underscoring the programme's inclusivity in reaching diverse groups.

Key findings:



- 71 per cent of respondents used cash assistance for food, 61 per cent for medication, and 22 per cent for children's education (books, shoes, bags). Only 1.8 per cent used it to repay debts, indicating that the cash assistance allows them to use it wisely.
- Most respondents (70 per cent) understood the support they received; some linked cash assistance to their status as daily wage earners, while others associated it with Samurdhi assistance for low-income households; however, all the respondents agreed that they were severely affected by the recent flood.
- Most respondents (86 per cent) stated that the amount was sufficient to meet their basic household needs for two weeks until they returned to everyday life. Meanwhile, 11 per cent indicated that, while the support was helpful, it only allowed them to meet half of their basic household needs, given the current situation and cost of living.
- A significant majority, 98 per cent, of respondents preferred the cash transfer modality, citing its convenience in accessing funds on a timely basis according to their needs. Only 3 per cent of respondents favoured receiving cash in hand, primarily because it helped reduce transportation costs.
- There was a significant need to enhance communication and accessibility during the response. About 33 per cent of beneficiaries knew of the CEA process and indicated that some outreach efforts have been practical but need further strengthening; 67 per cent of beneficiaries utilize the hotline number to seek information from the NHQ regarding cash assistance directly. This indicates that the majority prefer immediate and direct communication for inquiries.
- 63 per cent of the total sample reported being very satisfied with the cash assistance and the services provided by SLRCS. This high level of satisfaction indicates that the support met or exceeded their expectations, effectively addressing their immediate needs during the crisis.

Recommendations:

- Improve beneficiary awareness of complaint and feedback mechanisms. Conduct awareness sessions specifically focused on explaining the feedback mechanism and hotline numbers. Engage community leaders, volunteers, and trusted local figures to help disseminate information.
- Strengthen communication channels to ensure all recipients understand the assistance process. / Use multiple communication channels such as posters, banners, SMS alerts, and community meetings to reinforce awareness.
- Train frontline staff and volunteers to consistently communicate and emphasise the importance of feedback mechanisms during their interactions with beneficiaries.
- Strengthening Beneficiary Inclusion: Efforts should be made to ensure equitable access to assistance, particularly among vulnerable groups who may face barriers to participation.

Lessons Learnt

The inclusion of the LGBTQ+ community, along with refugees and asylum seekers, ensured that the response operation focused on assisting the most vulnerable members of diverse communities. The branch gained valuable experience in how to engage with these communities, which served as an entry point for future coordination and support.

The transparency, quality service, and community-centred approaches were highlighted throughout the Post-Disaster Management (PDM) process. The recommendations made during this process are essential for future response operations.

The initiative aimed to quickly identify and verify those severely affected by coordinating with government officials and supporting local markets. This approach effectively initiated a timely response.

However, challenges during the verification process highlighted the importance of strong community engagement and oversight. Collaborating with community leaders, promoting transparency in beneficiary selection, and implementing safeguards are crucial for minimizing the risks of collusion and favouritism.

Challenges

The selection process was lengthy/time-consuming, as the number of eligible individuals exceeded the available support slots. This required further prioritisation to ensure the most vulnerable people were reached.

Some individuals reported facing challenges when trying to withdraw money from the bank due to the long distance and the additional



transport costs involved. However, they managed to travel to the bank as a group to share the expenses. This way, they could also assess the market and purchase essential items during their visit to the town.



Budget: CHF 14,611

Targeted Persons: 2,850

Assisted Persons: 97,488

Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
# of medical camps and First aid services conducted	15	3
# of people reached by medical camps and First aid assistance.	2,850	300

Narrative description of achievements

Medical Camps

The SLRCS initially planned to conduct 12 medical camps as part of their early intervention plan. However, the demand for these camps in the affected districts was lower than anticipated in later days. As a result, the programme team revised the intervention plan and notified the IFRC programme team of the changes.

After discussions with the field team, the SLRCS requested to reallocate the funds originally designated for the medical camps to support a dengue clean-up campaign, which had become a pressing need in the affected areas. Following the receding of floodwaters, these districts reported a significant increase in dengue cases, and the climate was conducive to mosquito breeding. Additionally, there was a request from the Ministry of Health (MOH) offices to assist with public cleaning campaigns and awareness programmes for communities in low-lying areas and regions identified as high-risk for dengue outbreaks.

The request was approved and accepted, and the SLRCS carried out an additional nine clean-up campaigns in the affected districts, utilising the funds originally budgeted for medical camps.

First-aid camps

First aid service camps were established in each district, particularly in the areas most affected during the initial response phase. These camps were set up at displacement centres. Trained volunteer teams were deployed to safety centres to provide immediate assistance. Additionally, first aid boat services were introduced in the inundated division, ensuring access for those in isolated areas cut off by floodwaters.

Dengue Household Surveillance

This initiative aimed to raise awareness and encourage community members to maintain dengue-free surroundings, particularly in high-risk areas identified as "red zones". The intervention successfully reached 24,297 households across the Colombo (20,085) and Gampaha (4,212) districts. Puttalam was not initially included in this intervention plan, as Colombo and Gampaha were identified as having the highest risk for dengue cases.

Surveillance activities were accurately recorded using KOBO forms, documenting actions taken for each household. This data proved valuable for cross-checking changes in the number of dengue cases following continued visits to each house. It also ensured that households were cleaning their surroundings and maintaining dengue-free zones.

As part of this initiative, refresher training on community epidemic control was conducted by each branch with support from the Ministry of Health (MOH) and the National Dengue Control Unit (NDCU). This training involved volunteers, staff, Red Cross unit members, BDRT teams, and community members. It was efficient in refreshing their knowledge of dengue and raising community awareness about its spread.



Lessons Learnt

The need for the medical camp was recognised during the emergency. However, it required better coordination with the MOH offices, local hospitals, and doctors willing to volunteer their support and access to essential medicines. After nearly three weeks, the need for the medical camps diminished as the situation returned to normal, and those affected resumed their daily lives. In the future, the branch should develop its contingency plan and ensure resources are available to conduct medical camps if necessary for the medical camps.

Challenges

There were also delays in obtaining approval from the relevant health departments to conduct the medical camps in the affected areas. Close coordination with the Ministry of Health office is required in advance.

Additional logistical support was necessary to provide first aid services in the flooded areas, such as ferry boats and trained personnel, to cross the river and reach isolated locations, which delayed the response on time.



Water, Sanitation And Hygiene

Budget: CHF 77,781

Targeted Persons: 12,160

Assisted Persons: 12,880

Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
# of people who have been supplied with an improved protected source of drinking water (well)	6,400	6,400
# of people receiving protection from Environmental sanitation activities	10,800	10,800
# of people reached by hygiene promotion activities during the response periods	38,800	38,800
# of people reached by epidemic preparedness and response activities	28,000	97,188

Narrative description of achievements

Dengue Clean-up Campaigns

The initiative's primary objective was to organise clean-up campaigns aimed at eradicating dengue breeding grounds and controlling the spread of dengue fever in flood-affected districts. Planning meetings were conducted in each district branch to implement the clean-up campaign, involving participation from the MOH, Public Health Inspectors (PHI), relevant government officials, Red Cross unit members, and volunteers. These meetings focused on raising awareness, coordinating the clean-up efforts, and mapping high-risk areas and severely affected regions that could potentially experience dengue outbreaks.

By the end of the operation, the National Society successfully carried out 81 clean-up campaigns across three districts. Additionally, nine campaigns were initiated due to the cancellation of planned medical camps; the resources allocated for those camps were redirected to support the clean-up efforts. The total number (81) of clean-up campaigns conducted was as follows: Colombo (32), Gampaha (24), and Puttalam (25).

The clean-up campaigns focused on clearing canals, drainage systems, culverts, and abandoned lands. The campaigns played a significant role in eliminating mosquito breeding grounds and enhancing public health, contributing to broader strategies for mitigating dengue.

Cleaning of Drinking Water Sources (Dug Wells)

The intervention began with orientation sessions and the mapping of areas severely affected by flooding, where dug wells are primarily



used for drinking water. Stakeholders were informed about the well-cleaning procedures and their respective roles. A total of 1,600 dug wells were cleaned across six districts: Colombo (650 wells), Gampaha (850 wells), and Puttalam (100 wells). All cleaning was carried out in accordance with OXFAM guidelines to ensure safe access to drinking water. After the cleaning process was completed, a public health inspector (PHI) visited each well, checked its condition, and recommended its use. This intervention successfully reached 100 per cent of the target.

Lessons Learnt

The clean-up campaign was a highly successful intervention in response to this DREF. It took place at a crucial time, as dengue cases began to rise after the floodwaters receded. The respective MOH offices in each district were highly cooperative and supportive of the initiative, which effectively reduced the spread of dengue cases.

The initial planning of the activity involved coordination with the MOH, PHI, Red Cross unit members, and other stakeholders. This collaboration was essential for the timely implementation of the intervention.

Additionally, coordination with the PHI to clean dug wells proved very effective, as proper inspections ensured the quality of the processes involved.

Challenges

Continuous rain affected the response to cleanup campaigns and dengue household surveillance across all districts. However, the team managed to complete it through effective community mobilisation.

Conducting cleanup efforts in public places was particularly challenging due to the high population density, enormous waste, and extensive areas that needed attention. However, the SLRCS team closely coordinated with the relevant urban and municipal councils to get additional logistic support.

Identifying the most affected areas was difficult because each district's flooded regions were quite large. However, community participation and support from government offices helped facilitate the process.



Protection, Gender And Inclusion

Budget: CHF 4,059

Targeted Persons: 325

Assisted Persons: 330

Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
# of individuals covered through dignity, access, and protection activities	40,800	117,868
# of volunteers oriented/refreshed on PGI and Code of conducts	325	330
# of people supported with CVA - LGBTQ community	150	124

Narrative description of achievements

A total of 117,868 individuals from 29,467 households were reached through the planned intervention by implementing this DREF operation within four months.

PGI considerations were comprehensively integrated throughout all response phases. This included capacity building by conducting refresher training on PGI for staff and volunteers during emergencies. Training sessions involved staff and members of the SLRCS unit at the community level. 330 members participated across three districts, comprising 171 females and 159 males.



The operation ensured the inclusion of individuals from all age groups and promoted equal participation and decision-making opportunities for both women and men. During the household needs assessments, data disaggregated by sex, age, and disability were collected and analysed. This approach supported effective targeting, facilitated an inclusive community grievance mechanism, and helped ensure that the most appropriate individuals and households were reached with assistance.

SLRCS held community consultations to enhance the selection process and operated hotline services for community feedback and complaints to ensure transparency and accountability throughout the initiative. Additionally, SLRCS distributed leaflets and posters containing messages on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) and prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) at distribution and safe centres.

Lessons Learnt

SLRCS collaborated with government authorities to enhance the safety of women, children, and people with disabilities at the displacement centres. This cooperation enabled the branches to effectively engage with the most vulnerable communities and identify their needs promptly.

During the implementation of the responses, SLRCS enhanced coordination and collaboration among different stakeholders, including government agencies, non-governmental organisations, and local community-based organisations.

SLRCS enhanced its efforts to address PGI concerns by coordinating with stakeholders and sharing timely information. This collaborative approach likely led to a more effective response to the challenges posed by the floods, highlighting the importance of coordination in emergencies.

Challenges

The response to flooding emergencies focused primarily on addressing immediate needs, which can complicate the long-term sustainability of PGI initiatives. However, the SLRCS remained committed to its PGI policies and prioritised the inclusion of diverse communities, including LGBTQ+ and migrant populations, alongside the most vulnerable groups during the implementation of the planned intervention.



Migration And Displacement

Budget: CHF 0
Targeted Persons: 200
Assisted Persons: 180

Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
# of people supported with CVA - Asylum-seekers and refugess	200	180

Narrative description of achievements

A total of 180 refugees and asylum seekers in the Gampaha district were verified and approved for cash assistance following a detailed assessment conducted by the BDRT team. Although the initial plan was to support 200 individuals based on UNHCR records, the assessment revealed that only 180 met the eligibility criteria for cash assistance.

Cash was distributed in envelopes because the refugees and asylum seekers lacked bank accounts and the proper identification documents required to open an account in Sri Lanka. Finance, IFRC, and SLRCS programme teams distributed cash together at the distribution centres opened at the same GN division, with the required protection and distribution plan.

Lessons Learnt

The assessment was effective in identifying the most vulnerable among the refugees and asylum seekers, despite their being registered with UNHCR and under its responsibility.



Challenges

There were more individuals than families among the refugees and asylum seekers in the communities, yet the cash assistance amount was the same for everyone. SLRCS should take family size and individual circumstances into account when selecting future interventions.



Risk Reduction, Climate Adaptation And Recovery

Budget: CHF 8,117

Targeted Persons: 105

Assisted Persons: 96

Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
# of volunteers trained and included in the pool of BDRT team	75	80
# of staff trained on DREF guideline and aware of the standard procedures	30	16

Narrative description of achievements

The SLRCS conducted refresher training for the BDRT volunteers in each branch to enhance their capacity and improve retention during operations. New refresher training guidelines were developed and shared with all branches. Each training session lasted a maximum of 5 hours, and the volunteers who participated were deployed in the field immediately afterwards. A total of 96 participants, including 38 female and 58 male volunteers, staff, and unit members, took part in the BDRT refresher training across all three branches.

These volunteers had previously completed the BDRT induction training. As a result of the refresher sessions, they actively engaged in the operations. Additionally, sessions were held for branch staff, including the accounting team, to ensure timely settlements and compliance with IFRC-DREF guidelines during the emergency operations.

Lessons Learnt

The revised and updated BDRT refresher curriculum was developed to meet current operational procedures. The curriculum primarily focuses on cross-cutting issues, including PGI as well as CEA topics, in line with current requirements.

The volunteers' capacities, engagement, and retention were enhanced, and this helped the branches plan and implement the activities immediately. Also, the implementation plan was discussed during the session, and the response team and the branch staff understood the response plan well.

The refresher sessions should be scheduled regularly, rather than during emergencies, to ensure the BDRT team is up to date and prepared to provide support when needed.

Challenges

Integrating NHQ and branch staff into financial awareness was challenging due to their busy schedules and the short preparation time during the emergency responses. However, some of the sessions were organised virtually to avoid the delay.

The branches were already assisting the affected people during the emergency. Allocating time for long sessions was challenging; however, all branches completed their sessions on weekends and late evenings without impacting their daily tasks.



Community Engagement And Accountability

Budget: CHF 7,923

Targeted Persons: 325

Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
# of people informed about the MPCA/NFI selection process of the beneficiaries	7,200	7,200
# of people reached through social media on awareness	40,800	117,868
# of staff/volunteers oriented (Refresher Training) on CEA and community feedback mechanism	325	325
# of community or orientation meetings conducted	15	15

Narrative description of achievements

The SLRCS established clear selection criteria to prioritise the most vulnerable individuals affected by the floods based on the intervention type, especially the selection criteria for CVA intervention, which were typically detailed. These included female-headed households, single-headed households, families with persons with disabilities, pregnant and lactating women, families with infants and young children, and elderly individuals. Community meetings were organised to explain the response plan and encourage discussions about its implementation. These meetings were vital in fostering two-way communication and building trust between the community and the Red Cross. A grievance redress mechanism was established to address any concerns regarding the selection process.

The SLRCS communications team worked diligently to keep affected communities informed. They produced and shared photos, video clips, and news updates across traditional and social media platforms, providing timely information about the operation and enhancing Red Cross visibility.

To further support community engagement, SLRCS operated a dedicated hotline system managed centrally from headquarters. Two 24/7 hotline numbers were available to community members, enabling timely feedback for the inquiries. The CEA focal point documented all feedback, primarily focusing on comments and complaints related to the selection process for cash and voucher assistance (CVA). To ensure timely responses, trained volunteers at the community feedback desk addressed most inquiries directly and explained the selection criteria. More complex cases were escalated to the branch DREF focal person through the CEA focal point for further investigation and resolution. Additionally, the feedback process was enhanced through door-to-door visits and community meetings facilitated by volunteers.

After the intervention, the SLRCS conducted a PDM survey to assess the effectiveness and relevance of the assistance provided. The survey also collected feedback and suggestions directly from supported individuals, with particularly active engagement noted in urban districts such as Colombo and Gampaha.

Lessons Learnt

The SLRCS branches should engage with the communities in more ways, such as through radio and television broadcasts and more visually engaging distribution of IEC materials to disseminate information about the interventions.

To improve coordination and communication at the community level, strengthen the involvement of local committees and leaders, including engaging with the authorities and community members to address the targeting and complaints management issues to speed up the process.

Challenges

One of the key challenges that emerged during the branches' comprehensive engagement with the community was the higher number of needy individuals compared to the resources available for allocation. This discrepancy made the process time-consuming, particularly when it came to identifying the most suitable beneficiaries for the cash and voucher assistance intervention.

The branches face a shortage of volunteers and staff with strong communication skills, making it challenging to create effective materials

during emergencies. Varying literacy and community mobilisation skills among field volunteers have hindered information collection and reporting.



Coordination And Partnerships

Budget: CHF 8,020

Targeted Persons: 0

Assisted Persons: 0

Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
# of communications materials produced (social media, media articles, interviews, etc.)	12	21
# of volunteers supported with T-shirt, Caps and Jacket to ensure the visibility to the intervention	300	300

Narrative description of achievements

IFRC and SLRCS conducted timely monitoring visits to ensure effective implementation of activities across all targeted districts. The monitoring visits ensured detailed assessments were completed promptly to identify eligible cash assistance recipients and the dug-well community clean-up campaigns.

The SLRCS programme team held biweekly progress review meetings to update their progress, discuss challenges, and share experiences. This approach enabled the team to monitor their progress against the plan and communicate relevant information to management and other stakeholders.

IFRC CCD and the country office visited two times for each operation to ensure the quality implementation of the activities. Furthermore, the SLRCS communication team visited all target districts to capture success stories and gather feedback from community members. These stories were shared across SLRCS's social media platforms, showcasing the impact of the DREF-supported interventions and giving voice to the affected people's experiences.

Lessons Learnt

Timely monitoring visits ensured the completion of the activities within the anticipated time, and it strengthened the coordination with the branches and externally with the government stakeholders.

Regular monitoring visits enhanced the visibility of the National Society among the community members, and it supported the effective community feedback mechanism.

Challenges

There was a delay in coordinating and organizing the field visits during the implementation periods; however, it was planned with all the branches and confirmed during the biweekly meetings.



Secretariat Services

Budget: CHF 12,857

Targeted Persons: 0

Assisted Persons: 0

Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
# of surge support deployed to during the implementation period	1	1
# of monitoring visits conducted	9	9

Narrative description of achievements

Surge finance support was provided to the SLRCS during the implementation phase. The deployed surge personnel closely worked with the SLRCS finance department, programme team, and branches to verify and expedite the settlement process under the DREF.

The IFRC CCD and Country Office closely monitored the implementation of DREF activities. They participated in weekly progress review meetings, offered technical support to the programme and PMER teams, and contributed to the analysis of PDM survey findings. Based on these analyses, they made timely recommendations to improve the effectiveness of response activities.

Lessons Learnt

Biweekly progress review meetings and field monitoring visits were very effective in ensuring the timely completion of the initial response plan and allowed the programme team to keep tracking and following up on the progress. Further, the monitoring visits helped to identify the gaps in implementation, as the branches had different capacities in the intervention.

Challenges

The capacities of the branches varied, and the support from external stakeholders, such as government authorities, differed from district to district. As a result, the intervention plan was not implemented all at once. Timely monitoring visits were necessary to provide advice, guidance, and alternative solutions.



National Society Strengthening

Budget: CHF 37,434

Targeted Persons: 0

Assisted Persons: 0

Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
# of progress review meeting conducted	16	16
# of rapid and detailed assessment teams deployed at branch level (Target: 2 teams per branch)	6	6
# of project staff involved in the NHQ and branch-level	9	9
# of monitoring visits conducted at the NHQ and branch level	12	16
# of volunteers involved in the operation insured	300	74
# of lessons learned workshop conducted	1	1



Narrative description of achievements

Volunteer Mobilization

Approximately 74 volunteers were deployed across the seven districts, contributing a wide range of skills and field experience. All volunteers received orientation on the fundamental principles of the Red Cross and technical briefings related to the operation, including CVA intervention. All 74 volunteers were covered under the insurance for accident cover under this DREF.

Assessment and Monitoring

The SLRCS conducted assessments in all districts—Colombo, Gampaha, and Puttalam—and carried out PDM activities across all targeted divisions. These actions provided valuable insights into the effectiveness and relevance of the response.

The SLRCS and IFRC programme teams carried out regular monitoring visits. These visits were crucial in tracking operational progress and ensuring accountability and quality implementation.

Post-Distribution Monitoring (PDM)

A PDM survey was conducted to assess the effectiveness of the cash intervention in the affected districts. A detailed report was submitted to the management of the SLRCS and the respective branches to analyze the challenges and findings. The report also includes recommendations for improving future operations.

Lessons-Learned Workshop

At the end of the response operation, the lessons learned workshop was conducted with the participation of the branch, volunteers, and national staff. The workshop reviewed the response objectives, identified key achievements and gaps, and captured recommendations to strengthen future operations. The workshops allowed for a thorough analysis of each branch's strengths, challenges, and capacity needs.

Lessons Learnt

Coordination with government stakeholders was essential to the operation's success, as close collaboration with officials and joint field visits facilitated the prompt implementation of activities and effectively addressed various challenges encountered on the ground.

SLRCS improved service delivery by effectively utilising trained volunteers throughout the project, valuing and appreciating their exceptional work.

The lesson-learned workshop enabled the branch to take early action measures by facilitating the exchange of knowledge, success stories, and experiences among volunteers, staff, and external stakeholders involved in response activities.

Challenges

There is an urgent need for a dedicated Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability, and Learning (MEAL) role at the SLRCS National Headquarters level. This position would significantly enhance the National Society's capacity to conduct systematic monitoring, improve reporting quality, and support organisational learning across operations.

Retention of SLRCS volunteers at the branch level is a challenge since most of them are recruited for the operations period. Most of the volunteers are unable to continue their involvement after the operation period because there is a lack of implementation work in the field.



Financial Report

DREF Operation

FINAL FINANCIAL REPORT

MDRLK020 - Sri Lanka - Floods

Operating Timeframe: 24 Oct 2024 to 28 Feb 2025

Selected Parameters			
Reporting Timeframe	2024/10-2025/4	Operation	MDRLK020
Budget Timeframe	2024/10-2025/2	Budget	APPROVED

Prepared on 30/May/2025

All figures are in Swiss Francs (CHF)

I. Summary

Opening Balance	0
Funds & Other Income	309,662
DREF Response Pillar	309,662
Expenditure	-288,430
Closing Balance	21,232

II. Expenditure by planned operations / enabling approaches

Description	Budget	Expenditure	Variance
PO01 - Shelter and Basic Household Items			0
PO02 - Livelihoods			0
PO03 - Multi-purpose Cash			0
PO04 - Health			0
PO05 - Water, Sanitation & Hygiene			0
PO06 - Protection, Gender and Inclusion			0
PO07 - Education			0
PO08 - Migration			0
PO09 - Risk Reduction, Climate Adaptation and Recovery	297,589	281,906	15,683
PO10 - Community Engagement and Accountability			0
PO11 - Environmental Sustainability			0
Planned Operations Total	297,589	281,906	15,683
EA01 - Coordination and Partnerships			0
EA02 - Secretariat Services	12,073	6,406	5,667
EA03 - National Society Strengthening		118	-118
Enabling Approaches Total	12,073	6,524	5,549
Grand Total	309,662	288,430	21,232

[Click here for the complete financial report](#)

Please explain variances (if any)

Budget variance from underspending:

A total of CHF 309,662 was allocated from the IFRC-DREF for the SLRCS to address the needs of approximately 40,800 people. By the end of the operation, the recorded total expenditure was CHF 288,430, which accounts for 93 per cent of the budget spent. The remaining balance of CHF 21,232 will be returned to the DREF pot.

All planned interventions and activities for this DREF operation have been fully implemented at the field level, except for the medical



camps under the health intervention. The reason for this exception is explained in the detailed analysis below.

Health: Initially, 12 medical camps, four in each district were planned to address urgent health needs. However, due to the rapidly evolving situation on the ground and shifting priorities during the response, the planned camps activities were revised and the budget was redirected to a clean-up campaign, utilizing only 35 per cent of the health funding.

WASH: Recorded 108 per cent spent as the medical camp's budget was redirected into it.

CEA: Only 52 per cent of the CEA budget was spent on planned activities, primarily due to lower logistics costs for branch orientation. Nevertheless, all branches held their meetings as scheduled.

Under coordination and partnerships, the total expenditure was 86 per cent, as savings were reported from the procurement of visibility materials.



Contact Information

For further information, specifically related to this operation please contact:

National Society contact: Dr Mahesh Gunsekera, Director General, mahesh.gunasekara@redcross.lk, +94 7003471084

IFRC Appeal Manager: John ENTWISTLE, Head of Country Cluster Delegation, john.entwistle@ifrc.org, +7 09100010236

IFRC Project Manager: Meenu Bali, Programme Manager (CCD/Delhi), meenu.bali@ifrc.org, +91 9971641414

IFRC focal point for the emergency: John ENTWISTLE, Head of Country Cluster Delegation, john.entwistle@ifrc.org, +7 09100010236

[Click here for reference](#)

