



Severe flooding, leaving homes and businesses inundated. (Source: News channel)

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| Appeal: MDRLK023 | Hazard: Cyclone | Country: Sri Lanka | Type of DREF: Response |
| Crisis Category: Orange | Event Onset: Sudden | DREF Allocation: CHF 1,000,000 | |
| Glide Number: FL-2025-000213-LKA | People Affected: 1,118,929 people | People Targeted: 268,180 people | |
| Operation Start Date: 07-12-2025 | Operation Timeframe: 9 months | Operation End Date: 30-09-2026 | DREF Published: 08-12-2025 |

Targeted Regions: **Central, Eastern, North Central, North Western, Northern, Sabaragamuwa, Southern, Uva, Western**

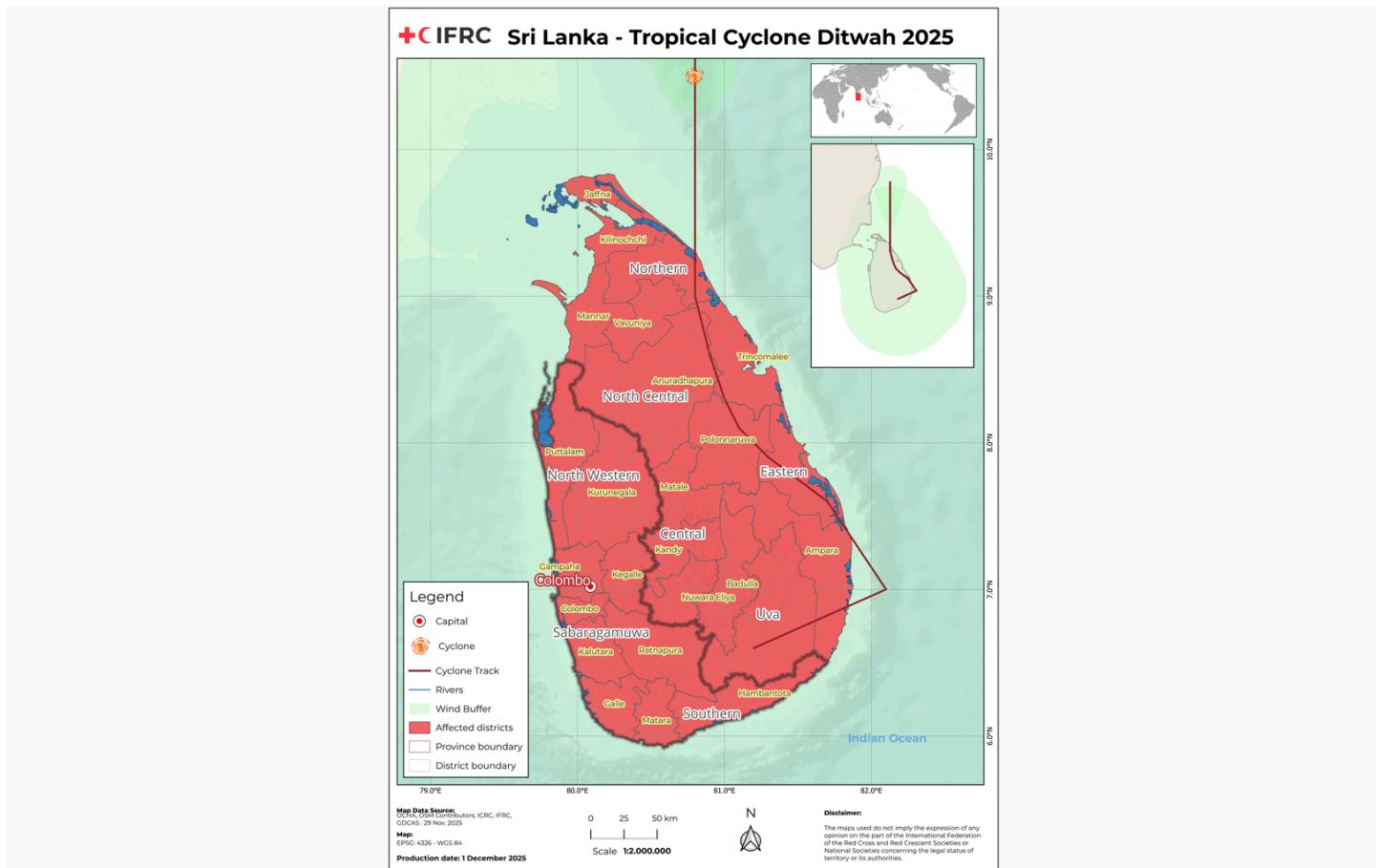


Description of the Event

Crisis Category Supporting Document

Date of event

28-11-2025



Map of all districts affected by the Cyclone Ditwah 2025, (Source: IFRC)

What happened, where and when?

A low-pressure system that developed over the southwest Bay of Bengal near Sri Lanka on 25 November 2025 rapidly intensified into a deep depression by 26 November 2025, bringing heavy rains and strong winds across the island. The Department of Meteorology, along with the Disaster Management Centre (DMC), issued early warnings as the system began to track north-northwestwards, positioning itself approximately 100 kilometers south of Sri Lanka's eastern coastline.

On the morning of 27 November 2025, the Department of Meteorology escalated its alert to a 'Red' Level Warning—the highest meteorological threat level—as the deep depression intensified into Cyclonic Storm "Ditwah". This trajectory carried the storm across the Eastern, North-Central, Central, and Northwestern provinces, cutting through major population centres and historically vulnerable terrain, including Batticaloa, Polonnaruwa, Badulla, Kandy, and the central highlands.

As of 30 November 2025, at 06:00 hrs., the Disaster Management Centre (DMC) reports that adverse weather associated with Cyclone Ditwah has affected 309,607 families (1,118,929 people) across 25 districts, with 334 deaths and 370 people still missing, and 55,747 families (196,790 people) sheltering in 1,494 safety centers. The heaviest loss of life is concentrated in the Central and Uva districts, where landslides and slope failures buried homes and cut off entire villages.

Low-lying coastal and river-basin districts in the Western, Northwestern, and Northern Provinces have experienced extensive inundation, infrastructure damage, and large-scale evacuations. Puttalam (36,098 families; 135,922 people), Mannar (24,313 families; 79,946 people), Gampaha (62,728 families; 236,498 people), Badulla (7,973 families; 32,760 people), Batticaloa (12,466 families; 34,380 people), Kandy (10,873



families; 36,765 people) and Colombo (52,939 families; 218,123 people) together account for nearly half of the total affected caseload, reflecting prolonged flooding of housing, markets, public buildings and transport corridors. In parallel, hill-country and mid-country districts such as Badulla, Nuwara Eliya, Kandy, Matale, Kegalle and Monaragala have reported deadly landslides and slope failures.

Early warnings

The Department of Meteorology and the National Natural Hazards Early Warning Centre issued a series of warnings as Ditwah developed, including red alerts for very heavy rainfall exceeding 200 mm over Northern, North-Central, Central, North-Western, Sabaragamuwa and Western Provinces, and heavy showers above 150 mm for districts such as Trincomalee, Badulla, Galle and Matara. The Irrigation Department issued high-risk flood alerts for major rivers, including Kelani, Kalu, Mahaweli, Maha Oya, Deduru Oya, Attanagalu Oya, Malwathu Oya, and Menik Ganga, advising communities in downstream low-lying areas to evacuate to safe locations as water levels approached or exceeded 2016 flood benchmarks. The National Building Research Organization (NBRO) extended landslide warnings to 13 districts and issued “red” evacuation alerts in high-risk DS divisions in Badulla, Kandy, Kegalle, Kurunegala, Matale, Monaragala, and Nuwara Eliya, emphasising that saturated slopes could fail suddenly even after rainfall began to ease.

Infrastructure damages and services

Cyclone Ditwah has caused widespread disruption to transport, power, communications, and essential public services, significantly constraining the humanitarian response. Sections of key highways and regional roads have been damaged or cut down by landslides and flash floods, including bridges such as Moragahakanda and other structures critical for connectivity between the central highlands, North-Central Province, and the rest of the country.

Rail operations on the upcountry, Batticaloa, and Trincomalee lines have been curtailed or suspended due to track damage and flooding, while some domestic flights have been delayed or diverted as a precaution. The Ceylon Electricity Board reports that 25-30 per cent of the national power supply has been disrupted at different points, with fallen transmission lines and the temporary shutdown of major hydropower plants such as Kotmale and Rantambe, leaving large areas without electricity and affecting water supply, telecommunications, and health services.

National response and Current situation

The Government of Sri Lanka has activated national and district-level coordination mechanisms, with the DMC leading multi-agency efforts to manage 1,494 safety centres, disseminate public alerts, and coordinate with armed forces, police, and local authorities. The tri-forces, particularly the Army and Navy, have been deployed for search and rescue, water-based evacuations, and emergency road-clearing operations, while local authorities and volunteers provide cooked meals, dry rations, and basic health support in evacuation centres.

Although the Department of Meteorology indicates that rainfall should gradually ease as Ditwah moves away from Sri Lanka, the Irrigation Department and NBRO stress that the next 24-48 hours remain critical due to elevated river levels, damaged embankments, and the high probability of secondary landslides, meaning humanitarian impacts and displacement are still evolving even as the meteorological threat begins to recede.



SLRCS volunteers performing emergency evacuation during response (Photo: SLRCS)



Community volunteers engage in field assessment (Photo: SLRCS)



Landslide damage caused by Cyclone Ditwah (Photo: A-Pad Sri Lanka)



NDRT members are engaging in the field assessment (Photo: SLRCS)

Scope and Scale

Cyclone Ditwah is producing widespread, multi-hazard impacts across Sri Lanka, with severe consequences for lives, livelihoods, well-being, and infrastructure, particularly among already poor and marginalised communities in flood- and landslide-prone areas. The event is comparable in scale to the 2016 and 2017 floods and landslides but with a more dispersed national footprint and a particularly deadly pattern of landslides in Central and Uva provinces.

Humanitarian Impacts

The combined effects of flash floods, riverine flooding, landslides, and high winds have led to a very high death toll, mass displacement, and acute psychosocial distress. As of 30 November 2025, 334 deaths and 370 missing people have been reported across 25 districts, with the highest concentration in landslide-affected hill districts such as Kandy, Badulla, and Kegalle. Many fatalities occurred at night when sudden slope failures and rapidly rising waters overwhelmed households, giving little time to evacuate elderly people, children, and people with disabilities.

There is also increased risk of gender-based violence, exploitation, and mental health issues in temporary shelters, particularly for women, adolescent girls, and people with pre-existing trauma from economic crises and past disasters.

Impacts on livelihoods

Cyclone Ditwah strikes communities that rely heavily on vulnerable, climate-sensitive livelihoods, including smallholder agriculture, estate labour, and informal urban work. In the central highlands and Uva, intense rainfall and landslides have damaged tea and vegetable plots, washed away topsoil, and destroyed hillside access roads, leaving plant workers and small farmers without income during a period of already high food prices.

The agricultural sector has suffered catastrophic losses. Initial estimates indicate that over 600,000 acres of crops, especially paddy, vegetables, and maize, have been inundated or destroyed across the Eastern, Northern, Central, and Uva provinces. The timing of the cyclone was particularly devastating, as paddy farmers had recently completed planting, with crops only 30 days old at the time of flooding. Prolonged waterlogging threatens the upcoming harvest season, raising concerns about food security and farmer livelihoods.

In low-lying and coastal districts such as Puttalam, Mannar, Gampaha, and Colombo, prolonged inundation has damaged markets, petty trade stalls, small workshops, and informal businesses, hitting daily wage earners who cannot work when streets and workplaces are flooded. Fisheries livelihoods are disrupted by rough seas, suspension of fishing, and damage to boats and gear, reducing protein intake in coastal communities and shrinking already tight household budgets.

While detailed structural damage assessments are ongoing, the scale of flooding and landslides indicates extensive losses to housing and critical infrastructure. Initial assessments indicate that more than 15,000 homes have been destroyed across affected areas, displacing families into schools and public buildings and forcing others to shelter with relatives or remain in damaged, unsafe structures.



Key bridges and sections of national and provincial roads have been washed away or blocked by debris, particularly in central, north-central, and southern districts, cutting off access to markets, hospitals, and administrative centres. Power cuts affecting up to one-third of the country at various times have disrupted water supply, health services, communications, and cold chains, especially in rural hospitals and small clinics. Schools in multiple districts have been closed or converted into evacuation centres, interrupting education and turning children's learning spaces into crowded, mixed-use shelters.

Impacts on Health Services and WASH

Health services across affected districts are operating under severe pressure. Heavy flooding has contaminated wells and water sources, creating critical risks for waterborne diseases, including diarrhoea, leptospirosis, and dengue fever. Flooded latrines and septic systems have increased the probability of disease transmission. Health facilities face restricted access due to road closures and bridge failures, increased demand for emergency and trauma care, and shortages of essential medicines and medical supplies in isolated areas.

The Health Department issued warnings about the rising risk of infectious diseases and urged residents to take precautions, particularly regarding water and food safety. Dengue control programmes have been activated in flood-affected areas, with residents urged to eliminate mosquito breeding grounds.

The most severely impacted people live in a combination of high-risk geographies and high-vulnerability socio-economic conditions. Hill-country and mid-country households in Kandy, Badulla, Nuwara Eliya, Kegalle, Matale, and Monaragala live on steep slopes, near cuttings or under unstable rock faces, where high rainfall and poor drainage make landslides likely and evacuation difficult.

Poor urban and peri-urban communities in Colombo and Gampaha reside in low-lying, densely built-up settlements along canals and riverbanks with inadequate drainage, where even moderate flooding can rapidly inundate homes, contaminate wells, and spread disease.

Coastal and lagoon-fringe communities in Puttalam, Mannar, Trincomalee, and Ampara face combined risks from riverine flooding, storm runoff, and strong winds, while relying on fragile livelihoods such as fishing, salt production, and day labour. These areas overlap strongly with districts that already have above-average poverty and food insecurity, meaning households have fewer savings, weaker assets, and limited safety nets to absorb shocks.

Vulnerability

Women and female-headed households manage caregiving, food preparation, and water collection, roles that become far more difficult when homes are flooded, sanitation facilities are damaged, and family members are injured or missing. Children face interruptions to schooling, loss of safe spaces, increased exposure to waterborne disease, and heightened psychosocial stress, particularly in districts where schools double as overcrowded shelters.

Elderly people and people with disabilities, and people with mobility, sensory, or cognitive impairments, struggle to evacuate quickly from rapidly rising waters or sudden landslides, especially at night or in steep terrain. They are also at greater risk of neglect, health deterioration, and isolation in shelter environments not designed for their needs.

Estate communities in upcountry tea plantations and small farmers in marginal lands often live in substandard housing on unstable slopes, with minimal tenure security, weak access to services, and chronic poverty, making recovery from housing and livelihood losses particularly slow. Residents of informal settlements along canals, railway lines, and road reservations in Colombo and Gampaha lack legal tenure and are less likely to receive compensation for damaged homes, even though they suffer repeated flooding and asset losses.

Displacement and overcrowded evacuation centres increase protection risks for children, women, elderly persons, and persons with disabilities. Limited privacy, inadequate sanitation facilities, and security concerns in temporary shelters heighten vulnerability to exploitation and abuse. School closures nationwide have disrupted education for thousands of children, particularly in remote areas where alternative educational opportunities are limited.

Sri Lanka's recent disaster history shows that high-intensity flood-landslide events such as Cyclone Ditwah cause recurrent, long-term setbacks for the same vulnerable districts and social groups. The May 2016 floods and landslides affected nearly 500,000 people across 24 districts. In 2017, severe southwest monsoon floods and landslides affected almost 700,000 people, displaced more than 600,000, and destroyed over 2,000 houses, with at least 200 deaths reported, particularly in Kalutara, Galle, Matara, and Ratnapura.

Post-disaster studies from 2016–2017 also highlight that many families remain in temporary shelters or unsafe housing for years, face recurring debt cycles, and struggle to rebuild livelihoods, especially in estate and rural areas. Cyclone Ditwah is occurring against a backdrop of economic hardship, high food prices, and climate stress, which together increase the likelihood that this event will deepen poverty, widen inequalities, and create prolonged humanitarian needs if recovery support is not timely and inclusive.



| Source Name | Source Link |
|---|---|
| 1. Disaster Management Center - Situation update | http://www.dmc.gov.lk/ |
| 2. Metrological department Sri Lanka | https://meteo.gov.lk/ |
| 3. National Building Research Organization - Landslide warnings | https://www.nbro.gov.lk/index.php?lang=en |
| 4. Sri Lanka Local News Channel | https://www.newswire.lk/2025/11/28/sri-lanka-extreme-weather-as-cyclone-ditwah-intensifies-live-updates/ |
| 5. Sri Lanka Local News Channel | https://www.dailymirror.lk/breaking-news/Critical-flood-warning-issued-for-Maha-Oya-Basin/108-326419 |
| 6. Sri Lanka Local News Channel | https://www.adaderana.lk/hot-news/?pageno=3 |
| 7. International News Channel | https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/world/south-asia/over-80-dead-as-cyclonic-storm-leaves-unprecedented-trail-of-destruction-in-sri-lanka/articleshow/125649773.cms |

Previous Operations

| | |
|--|------------------------------|
| Has a similar event affected the same area(s) in the last 3 years? | Yes |
| Did it affect the same population group? | Yes |
| Did the National Society respond? | Yes |
| Did the National Society request funding from DREF for that event(s) | Yes |
| If yes, please specify which operation | MDRLK021 Cyclone Fengal 2024 |

If you have answered yes to all questions above, justify why the use of DREF for a recurrent event, or how this event should not be considered recurrent:

Sri Lanka faces frequent climate-related disasters such as floods, landslides, and cyclones, and was heavily affected by Cyclone Fengal in November 2024, mainly in the Eastern, Northern, and North Central provinces. Cyclone Ditwah is different because it has caused far higher nationwide impacts, with almost full country coverage, severe riverine flooding and landslides, and much larger displacement and damage to infrastructure. Ditwah is already described as one of the worst flood disasters in two decades, with nearly one million people affected across all 25 districts, compared to about 441,000 people across 24 districts during Fengal, indicating a wider scope, heavier humanitarian needs, and higher risk of long-term food insecurity, livelihood losses, and strain on basic services.

Cyclone Fengal's impacts were concentrated in Eastern, Northern, and North Central provinces, while Cyclone Ditwah had the heaviest impacts in Gampaha, Colombo, Puttalam, Mannar, Kandy, Badulla, and Matale, plus eastern coastal districts, showing both urban and rural vulnerability. The prolonged flooding, major damage to transport, power, and health facilities, and destruction of crops and storage have created higher risks of long-term food insecurity, livelihood collapse, and disease outbreaks than Cyclone Fengal in 2024.

Lessons learned:

SLRCS activated its risk mitigation plan as soon as severe weather alerts were issued, allowing for quick and organized preparedness and response actions. The organization ensured rapid deployment of volunteers, branch response teams, and first aid teams, which was essential in meeting urgent needs and reducing disaster impact.

Clear and transparent selection criteria were shared with government officials and communities during orientation meetings, helping everyone to understand and accept the process. Community engagement was strengthened through training and feedback mechanisms, ensuring that local voices were incorporated and concerns addressed.

SLRCS integrated important topics like protection, gender, inclusion, and community accountability across all interventions, making



these priorities part of the overall response. Continuous (24/7) community feedback systems improved responsiveness and service quality.

The operation demonstrated that vulnerable groups, such as the elderly, people with disabilities, pregnant and lactating women, and women-headed households, displayed notable resilience despite challenges in accessing food and safe water. SLRCS also followed IFRC standards on gender and diversity, making sure vulnerable groups were always considered.

Training and deploying local surge teams for cash assistance helped distribute aid to 900 households in a month, making the process faster and more efficient than before.

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| Did you complete the Child Safeguarding Risk Analysis in previous operations, what was risk level? | Yes |
| What was the risk level for Child Safeguarding Risk Analysis?: | Low Risk - The activity plan does not involve any individuals working in-country with children, and the national society level of contact with children and systems is in place - no further action required. |

Current National Society Actions

Start date of National Society actions

27-11-2025

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| Shelter, Housing And Settlements | SLRCS NHQ has sent out the relief items. The following relief items have been released for distribution to the districts of Badulla, Matale, Kandy, Puttalam, Kurunagala, Anuradhapura, Batticaloa, and Trincomalee. The following items were distributed: Towels (800), kaftans (800), bedsheets (800), sarongs (800), jerrycans (800), kitchen sets (150), raincoats (240), mosquito nets (150), gumboots (90), rubber gloves (90), and baby kits (100). Volunteers are supporting the immediate evacuation of the affected people from the inundated areas in all the affected districts. Also, the trained volunteers are being deployed to manage the safety centres and support the evacuated people. |
| Health | The SLRCS branches are currently providing emergency first aid services to people in the safety centres in all 25 affected districts across the country, having assisted more than 10,000 individuals so far. The National Disaster Response Team (NDRT) and Branch Disaster Response Team (BDRT), comprised of emergency first aid-trained volunteers, have been deployed to the severely affected divisions to support individuals in these safety centres. Also, the BDRT team members from the Colombo, Gampaha, Kandy, Badulla, Ampara, Batticaloa, and Mullaitivu districts support the inundated hospitals to evacuate the patients to safer places. They utilise ferry services to reach inundated houses and provide treatment to those in neighbouring homes, also helping the people who are stuck in their homes due to high levels of floodwater. |
| Water, Sanitation And Hygiene | The SLRCS immediately mobilised drinking-water bottles through the in-kind donation from the public and private partners; over 15,000 drinking water bottles were distributed to those affected in safety centres in Colombo, Gampaha, Kandy, and Matale districts. Additionally, with support from UNFPA, maternity kits (100) and dignity kits (200), as well as cash vouchers for 10-15 pregnant mothers, have been distributed in the Batticaloa district at the safety centres to meet the urgent hygienic needs of women and girls. |
| Community Engagement And Accountability | SLRCS volunteers and the response team (NDRT, BDRT) continue to engage with people in evacuation centres and communities, assessing their immediate needs and |



requirements and connecting with the relevant authorities. SLRCS further accelerated the process of seeking feedback on assistance through the feedback desk and providing information as aid.

IFRC Network Actions Related To The Current Event

Secretariat

The IFRC team is working in close coordination with SLRCS, supporting operational planning, information management, and external engagement. The IFRC CCD and APRO offices are supporting SLRCS in developing the DREF application, aligning it with Federation standards and ensuring that the planned response is evidence-based and focused on the most affected and vulnerable communities. IFRC CCD also shares regular situation and coordination updates with IFRC APRO to maintain a common understanding of evolving needs and potential resource gaps.

In Sri Lanka, the IFRC team is providing technical support to SLRCS branches in areas such as operations management, WASH, health, PGI, logistics, and cash where relevant, and is facilitating systematic information sharing between SLRCS, Movement partners and external actors (UN, INGOs, diplomatic missions). At the regional level, the IFRC CCD in Delhi and IFRC APRO are offering additional coordination back-up, including liaison with Partner National Societies and pre-positioning of surge and technical support if required.

Surge support

To ensure strategic oversight and operational continuity, IFRC CCD Delhi has deployed the Head of Delegation (HoD), Programme Manager for Operations, and a Coordination/Partner Engagement lead to Sri Lanka, arriving in Sri Lanka on Sunday, 30 November 2025. These profiles are reinforcing high-level engagement with the Government, UN, donors, and movement partners and support SLRCS in translating rapidly evolving assessments into a coherent response plan and funding request.

Subsequent deployments are planned in specialist support areas, particularly Procurement and Finance, to strengthen supply chain management, tendering, warehousing, and financial accountability as the operation scales up. This is consistent with lessons from previous DREF operations in Sri Lanka, where early reinforcement of logistics and finance capacity was critical to managing large volumes of relief stocks and ensuring timely reporting to donors.

Surge alert and requested profiles

A formal surge alert has been sent to the IFRC Surge Desk to activate additional short-term support for this operation. The requested profiles and deployment modalities are,

Communications – 1 month, in-country deployment to support public information, accountability to affected people and donor visibility, including social media, human-interest stories and situation updates.

Assessment coordinator – 1 month, in-country deployment to support SLRCS branches with rapid multi-sector assessments.

Information Management (IM) – 1 month, initially remote deployment, to set up data flows, dashboards and mapping, aggregate DMC/branch data and provide analytical products for decision-making.

PMER – 3 months, in-country deployment to establish monitoring frameworks, indicator tracking, reporting timelines and lessons-learned processes, and to ensure alignment with IFRC results-based management requirements.



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| | 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. |
| Participating National Societies | Currently, No Partners present physically in Sri Lanka |

ICRC Actions Related To The Current Event

The ICRC maintains an active delegation in Sri Lanka and has contributed CHF 12,588 (in local currency) to SLRCS to meet urgent needs, complementing IFRC's DREF support.

Other Actors Actions Related To The Current Event

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| Government has requested international assistance | Yes |
| National authorities | <p>National and local disaster management agencies, together with district and divisional administrations, are directing response operations across all affected provinces. The Disaster Management Centre (DMC) is coordinating with government line ministries, security forces, UN agencies, and NGOs, convening humanitarian coordination meetings, and, with OCHA support, updating 3W mappings to identify gaps and prioritize immediate relief items. The President has instructed District Secretaries and District Disaster Management Committees to prioritize life-saving rescue and relief, authorizing the rapid use of available funds and issuing a special circular to avoid administrative delays.</p> <p>The Army, Air Force, Navy, and Police are deployed across all severely affected districts to conduct search and rescue, evacuations, and first-line relief. The Sri Lanka Navy has significantly scaled up its disaster response, deploying over 140 Disaster Relief Teams nationwide, with around 79 teams actively engaged in flood-hit areas as of 29 November 2025. Naval relief teams operate in locations such as Kala Oya, Maho, Eluwankulam, Polonnaruwa, Trincomalee, Batticaloa, and Kegalle, using small craft to evacuate stranded residents and assist trapped passengers.</p> <p>The Sri Lanka Air Force is conducting aerial rescues and reconnaissance, including high-profile operations such as rescuing individuals trapped on trees and bridges in Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa when ground access was cut by rising floodwaters. Sri Lanka Police have activated special disaster operation centers and 47 division-level hotlines to receive distress calls, support evacuations, and maintain law and order in congested evacuation areas. Together, the tri-forces continue to clear blocked roads, remove fallen trees, and support the transport of relief items to evacuation centers in coordination with the DMC and district authorities.</p> <p>To strengthen political oversight and accountability in the worst-hit regions, two high-level teams led by Cabinet Ministers have been appointed to oversee relief operations in the Northern and Eastern Provinces, which have experienced extensive flooding and displacement. Acting under presidential directives, these minister-led teams work with governors, district secretaries, and security force commanders to monitor field operations, address bottlenecks, and report regularly to the national leadership on progress and emerging needs.</p> <p>The Department of Irrigation is continuously monitoring river basins and major reservoirs, issuing flood warnings and red alerts—especially for the Kelani, Kalu, Mahaweli, Maha Oya, Attanagalu Oya and other key rivers—and sharing real-time information with the DMC and local authorities.</p> <p>The government has released an initial allocation of approximately LKR 1.2 billion for</p> |



emergency relief and indicated that up to LKR 30 billion is available under the 2025 budget for disaster response, with instructions to districts to request additional funds as required. These resources are being used to provide cooked meals, dry rations, and essential NFIs for people in safety centres, as well as to support urgent needs such as boats, vehicles, fuel, and equipment for rescue operations.

Local health authorities, particularly the Medical Officers of Health (MOH) and Regional Directors of Health Services in affected districts, are leading the health response, coordinating with the Ministry of Health and partners. Mobile medical teams have been deployed to flood-affected communities to provide outpatient care, essential medicines, maternal and child health services, and public health education. In parallel, vector-control activities such as fumigation and larvicide are being intensified to reduce dengue risk, while public health staff are promoting protective measures and chemoprophylaxis where appropriate to prevent leptospirosis, a disease known to surge after seasonal flooding in low-lying areas of the Western, Sabaragamuwa, and Southern Provinces.

These combined national-level, security-force and health-sector measures demonstrate a broad, state-led effort to stabilize the situation, reduce mortality and morbidity, and maintain essential services during an evolving, island-wide disaster.

UN or other actors

UN agencies, bilateral donors and international NGOs are supporting the Government of Sri Lanka's response through in-kind relief, technical assistance and early funding commitments, coordinated through national mechanisms led by the DMC and the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT). The United Nations in Sri Lanka convened a HCT meeting On 30 Nov 2025.

Decision was made to proceed with a multi-sectoral Joint Rapid Needs Assessment (JRNA) in coordination with the Sri Lankan Disaster Management Center (DMC). The first step will consist of a layering exercise based on existing information in each sector such as satellite data, census data and existing sectoral information. The second phase will consist of an analysis to determine gaps and needs for field-level assessments.

Humanitarian coordination and requests - the reactivation of the HCT structure, through the following sectors: food security, livelihoods and agriculture with nutrition as a sub-sector; education; water and sanitation; health with sexual and reproductive health as a sub-sector; and protection. Shelter/non-food items (NFI)/Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM) as well as early recovery were introduced as new sectors, given the specific impact of the floods.

Agreement to explore a costed Joint Response Plan (JRP), which would ensure coordinated planning, reporting and resource mobilization. The OCHA Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (ROAP) in Bangkok is exploring options for providing surge support to help rapidly draw up the JRP.

The Disaster Management Centre convened UN agencies and humanitarian partners on the rapidly evolving situation and requested immediate relief items for affected districts. At this forum and subsequent engagements, the DMC highlighted urgent needs for rescue support, temporary shelter, WASH, NFIs and logistics assets, and asked agencies to channel contributions in line with government priorities to avoid duplication and ensure coverage of hard-to-reach areas.

The United States government announced an immediate cash allocation of around USD 2 million to support urgent flood relief and early recovery, signaling broader donor willingness to back the national response. These international contributions, alongside growing offers of bilateral aid from neighboring countries and global partners, help to fill critical gaps in national relief pipelines while longer-term recovery needs and potential appeals are assessed.

Are there major coordination mechanism in place?



The Disaster Management Centre (DMC) coordinates with all key national stakeholders—the Department of Meteorology, Department of Irrigation, National Building Research Organization (NBRO), tri-forces, Police, line ministries, local authorities, UN agencies and NGOs—to harmonize early warnings, assess needs, allocate resources and avoid duplication of response efforts. The DMC hosts coordination meetings, shares situation reports and works bilaterally with agencies to expedite life-saving actions, including through a dedicated Coordination Unit at the Defense Headquarters and a network of district-level emergency operation centers.

The Sri Lanka Red Cross Society (SLRCS) operates in close collaboration with the DMC, the Meteorological Department, the Irrigation Department and Divisional Secretariats to coordinate branch-level response and translate national alerts into community-level action. SLRCS branches work with district and divisional authorities to conduct rapid assessments, manage evacuation centers, distribute relief items and feed information back to the national coordination system.

The National Building Research Organization (NBRO) is the primary technical agency for landslide risk assessment and early warning and plays a central role in coordination efforts by issuing graduate landslide alerts. For the current event, NBRO issued and repeatedly extended red (evacuation-level) landslide warnings across the districts.

The Department of Irrigation monitors river levels and reservoir operations, issuing flood warnings and advising communities in low-lying areas to evacuate when thresholds are exceeded; during this event, major flood warnings were issued for Kelani, Kalu, Mahaweli, Attanagalu Oya, Maha Oya and other key rivers, with statements that some areas could experience "the worst floods in decades." The DMC maintaining that alerts were issued promptly on official platforms, while acknowledging that power cuts, telecommunications failures and blocked roads may have affected last-mile delivery in some areas.

The Department of Agriculture, in coordination with farmer societies, divisional agricultural offices and the Agricultural and Agrarian Insurance Board (AAIB), is leading assessments of crop damage and planning compensation schemes for affected farmers. Preliminary field reports indicate that over 600,000 acres of crops, primarily paddy, vegetables and estate crops—have been damaged or destroyed by flooding, waterlogging and landslides across multiple districts. This agriculture coordination ensures that livelihood recovery is planned in parallel with immediate humanitarian relief, recognizing that many affected families depend on crop income and face acute food insecurity.

The WASH Technical Working Group has convened a WASH cluster meeting to coordinate water, sanitation and hygiene interventions, bringing together government (Ministry of Health, National Water Supply and Drainage Board), UN (UNICEF, WHO), INGOs and SLRCS to map ongoing activities, identify gaps and agree on priorities for restoring safe water, repairing sanitation facilities and preventing waterborne disease in evacuation centers and flood-affected communities. This cluster mechanism supports strategic allocation of WASH supplies, harmonization of hygiene promotion messages and early planning for sustained support as displaced families begin to return home.

Similar coordination mechanisms are being activated or strengthened in health, shelter, livelihoods and protection, ensuring that sectoral expertise informs the overall response strategy and that limited resources are deployed where they will have the greatest humanitarian impact.

Needs (Gaps) Identified



Shelter Housing And Settlements

As of 30 November 2025, more than 15,000 houses have been destroyed across 25 districts. But these figures were revised significantly upward as assessments reached remote areas. Damage to household items, livestock shelters, and agricultural infrastructure remained under comprehensive assessment. Currently, 196,790 people from 55,747 families are in 1,494 safety centres across the country as per the DMC update, and more than 15,000 individuals (more than 3500 families) are staying with relatives due to insufficient shelter capacity.

Displaced populations urgently need emergency shelter materials, including tents, tarpaulins, sleeping mats, blankets, and mosquito nets. Many families in overcrowded safe centers require immediate support with basic non-food items, including clothing, kitchen utensils, and bedding, as their belongings are submerged or destroyed. The government has mobilized tri-forces to assist rebuilding, yet significant gaps remain in providing temporary shelter structures and essential household items to both official centers and families staying informally with relatives. Once floodwater recedes, affected households will require cleaning tools, disinfectants, and financial support to restore and repair properties—a significant challenge for daily wage earners with limited savings.





Livelihoods And Basic Needs

Over 600,000 acres of crops—paddy and vegetables—have been destroyed, particularly in Eastern, Northern, and Central provinces, with crops only 30 days old at harvest time. Daily wage earners, small farmers, and fishing communities face immediate income loss, with five fishermen already dead at sea and markets disrupted by road closures.

Multi-purpose cash assistance is urgently needed for severely affected households to purchase food, medicine, clothing, and shelter. Families with children, elderly members, pregnant women, and persons with chronic illnesses require immediate support to meet basic needs. Early livelihood support including agricultural inputs (seeds, fertiliser), livestock fodder, and tools for small businesses will be essential for recovery. Evacuated individuals need substantial financial support to restore and clean homes once water levels recede, a challenge given lost income-generating opportunity.



Health

Health services in affected districts face severe pressure from multiple emerging health threats. The Health Department has warned of diarrhea, leptospirosis (rat fever), and dengue fever from contaminated water and flooded sanitation systems. Health facilities face restricted access due to road closures and bridge failures, with shortages of medicines and medical supplies in isolated areas. Based on historical data, dengue cases are likely to rise dramatically in the coming weeks as inadequate sanitation creates breeding grounds for Aedes mosquitoes.

First aid services and general medical care are urgently needed to reduce hospitalisation risks and prevent serious health complications. Mobile health clinics and medical camps must reach remote communities in Badulla, Kandy, Colombo, Gampaha, Nuwara Eliya and Ampara, and other affected districts where health facility access is severely restricted. Mental health and psychosocial support services are critically needed for traumatized individuals who have witnessed deaths, lost family members, or experienced destruction of homes and livelihoods. Disease surveillance systems must be strengthened to monitor and respond rapidly to waterborne and vector-borne disease outbreaks.



Water, Sanitation And Hygiene

Floodwater exceeded 10 to 15 feet in low-lying areas, contaminating all local drinking water sources, including pipe-borne systems. Water pipes are damaged, and purification centres are submerged, severely restricting access to potable water. Household wells—the primary water source in affected districts—are polluted due to elevated floodwater levels, particularly near rivers and in low-lying zones. Flooded latrines and septic systems increase waterborne disease transmission risks.

An urgent need for a safe drinking water supply through water bowsers, bottled water, and purification tablets. Well, cleaning is an essential requirement in all inundated areas to restore household water sources. Hygiene kits containing soap, detergent, sanitary napkins, and toothpaste are critically needed, particularly for women and adolescent girls in evacuation centres who have lost access to basic hygienic materials. Portable sanitation facilities and temporary latrines are required in evacuation centres where existing infrastructure is destroyed. Community clean-up campaigns with supplies (brooms, shovels, disinfectants) are essential to prevent dengue mosquito breeding in debris and stagnant water.



Protection, Gender And Inclusion

With more than 196,790 people displaced, special protection concerns arise for children, pregnant and lactating women, elderly persons, and persons with disabilities. Displacement and overcrowded evacuation centres significantly increase risks of exploitation, abuse, and neglect. Limited privacy, inadequate sanitation facilities, and security concerns heighten vulnerability, particularly for women and girls facing increased risks of gender-based violence in crowded facilities.

The minimum standards for emergency programming include creating designated partitioned areas in evacuation centres for women and families, establishing priority lanes for persons with disabilities and the elderly, ensuring adequate lighting and security in temporary shelters, and establishing confidential reporting mechanisms for protection concerns. Volunteers require training in Protection, Gender, and Inclusion (PGI), Child-Friendly Spaces (CFS), and Psychosocial Support (PSS) to effectively address vulnerable group needs. Comprehensive child safeguarding analysis must protect children from violence, abuse, and exploitation, with focus on preventive measures.





Education

Schools remain closed nationwide from 28 November 2025, disrupting education for hundreds of thousands of children. Families in low-lying areas lost school supplies when flooding reached 10 feet, with parents unable to replace items due to livelihood loss and financial constraints. The impact is particularly severe in impoverished areas of estate communities, urban and semi-urban and rural areas across the affected districts where essential school materials have been destroyed.

Essential stationery kits, including exercise books, pens, pencils, erasers, rulers, school bags, uniforms, and shoes are urgently needed to enable children to resume education once schools reopen. Priority should target vulnerable families unable to replace lost items independently. Temporary learning spaces may be needed in evacuation centres to prevent prolonged educational gaps, particularly for examination-preparing students. Psychosocial support for traumatised children who have witnessed deaths, destruction, or experienced displacement is essential to help them cope and re-engage with learning.



Community Engagement And Accountability

Affected households require accessible information about available support, eligibility criteria, and access means through multiple channels, yet many remote communities face challenges due to power outages and telecommunications disruptions. With over 1,118,929 affected individuals and humanitarian assistance reaching only approximately 5% of families, establishing transparent and community-accepted beneficiary selection criteria is essential.

Establishing 24/7 accessible feedback desks at distribution points and evacuation centres, operating community hotlines for grievances, conducting regular community meetings to gather input, and ensuring accessibility for people with disabilities are critical. Post-distribution monitoring through key informant interviews, focus group discussions, and household surveys is essential for enhancing future interventions and building community trust. Community engagement in relief processes builds accountability, ensures dignity, and promotes benefits while improving response effectiveness.

Any identified gaps/limitations in the assessment

Severe logistical, infrastructure, and access constraints are limiting the speed and reach of the humanitarian response, with profound consequences for isolated communities still awaiting assistance. Blocked roads, damaged bridges, and cut-off communities. Transport infrastructure across multiple provinces has been severely damaged or rendered impassable by floodwaters, landslides, and collapsed bridges, creating major obstacles for relief distribution and assessment teams. The Road Development Authority (RDA) reports that at least 206 major roads, including critical national (A-grade) and provincial (B-grade) routes, are currently blocked or damaged, while 10 bridges have been destroyed or structurally compromised and are unsafe for use.

Primary and internal roads near riverbanks and in low-lying districts remain submerged, with water levels in some locations exceeding 10 feet, making it impossible for vehicles—or even boats in some cases—to navigate safely.

Challenges for SLRCS and branch-level response SLRCS branches in the most severely affected districts have reported that they need external assistance—including boats, all-terrain vehicles, fuel, and trained personnel—to reach some communities that are entirely cut off by flooding or landslides. Local volunteers are unable to distribute relief items to neighbouring houses in flooded areas because roads are blocked and water levels prevent safe movement, even on foot. Relief items dispatched from the SLRCS Headquarters (HNQ) warehouse in Colombo are experiencing significant delays and routes to affected districts due to damaged main routes, inundated roads, and overflowing bridges.

Beyond physical infrastructure damage, telecommunication disruptions and power outages are compounding access challenges and delaying needs assessments. The combination of road closures, damaged bridges, telecommunications failures and ongoing rainfall and landslide risks means that some areas—particularly in hill-country districts such as Badulla, Kandy, Nuwara Eliya, Kegalle and Matale—remain extremely difficult to reach, even for military and emergency services, raising concerns that needs assessments and casualty figures are significantly understated and that vulnerable groups such as elderly people, persons with disabilities and pregnant women may not be receiving timely assistance.

Humanitarian agencies, including SLRCS, UN partners, and INGOs, continue to advocate for priority access, pre-positioning of relief stocks in district hubs before roads are cut again by secondary landslides, and the rapid deployment of engineering assets (such as Bailey bridges and temporary river crossings) to restore connectivity to the most isolated and high-need communities.



Operational Strategy

Overall objective of the operation

This operation aims to provide immediate life-saving assistance and early recovery support to restore the well-being, dignity and resilience of displaced and affected populations for approximately 268,180 people from affected across 20 districts by Cyclone Ditwah and the associated floods, landslides and severe weather conditions, by providing emergency shelter and essential household items, cash assistance, water and sanitation services, emergency health care, and community engagement and protection services and ensuring protection of vulnerable groups, restoration of household dignity, and strengthened community and branch capacity over a nine-month operation period.

The operation will focus on the 20 most severely affected districts, which account for approximately 90 per cent of the total affected population and experience the highest concentration of casualties, displacement, and infrastructure damage. These districts are Puttalam, Gampaha, Colombo, Kandy, Mannar, Kurunegala, Ampara, Batticaloa, Trincomalee, Anuradhapura, Kegalle, Badulla, Jaffna, Kilinochchi, Mullaitivu, Polannaruwa, Vavuniya, Nuwara Eliya, Rathnapura, and Matale.

The SLRCS will deliver emergency shelter and essential household items to displaced families; provide cash and voucher assistance to income-vulnerable households to restore livelihoods; rehabilitate water sources and conduct hygiene and community-led cleanup campaigns to reduce disease risk; deploy first aid-trained volunteers and coordinate mobile health services for traumatised care for individuals and disease prevention and psychosocial support; and strengthen branch volunteer capacity in community engagement, accountability, protection and safeguarding to ensure sensitive, inclusive and dignified assistance. These integrated interventions address the immediate humanitarian gaps while laying foundations for community resilience and preparedness.

This nine-month DREF operation is launched as a contribution to a complementary 18-month Emergency Appeal, to kick-off emergency response as part of the overall intervention being implemented by SLRCS.

There is a need for educational support for the affected families and their children to ensure they can continue their education once schools reopen in the impacted districts. The SLRCS plans to address this need through its emergency appeal, and this initiative will be integrated into the overall operational strategy.

Operation strategy rationale

OVERALL APPROACH

SLRCS targets immediate aid for vulnerable households across twelve districts, aligning its strategy with short-term needs and emergency response plans. Emphasizing localized action, district branches will execute activities while HQ coordinates with the IFRC network, national authorities, and partners.

Collaboration with local government and organisations will prevent duplication and maximise impact. Beneficiary lists derived from comprehensive assessments will be verified by authorities to ensure targeted, non-overlapping assistance. Programmes will adhere to gender and diversity standards, prioritizing vulnerable groups such as the elderly, disabled, women-headed households, and LGBTQ individuals. To ensure community feedback is valued, SLRCS will utilize hotline services and regular community meetings across all locations.

(A) Multi-purpose cash grants: Targeting 12,500 people from 1,000 households and 680 people from 156 refugee and asylum seeker families

Cash and voucher assistance (CVA) will support 2,500 of the most vulnerable households whose livelihoods and assets have been severely damaged by floods and landslides, especially daily wage earners, small farmers, estate workers, and female-headed families in the worst-affected districts—Matale (350 HHs), Kandy (350 HHs), Nuwara Eliya (400 HHs), Badulla (350 HHs), Polannaruwa (350 HHs), Anuradhapuram (350 HHs), and Kegalle (350 HHs).

In the Gampaha district, many refugees and asylum seekers are temporarily living in rented houses. During the flooding, they were severely affected and lost their belongings as floodwaters inundated their homes, which impacted their livelihoods. Providing cash in envelopes for multi-purpose use will help them meet their immediate needs. This aid is part of a multipurpose cash grants initiative. This group has been identified as a priority and will receive immediate support through the cash intervention established during the initial assessment.

Many have lost income, food stocks, and essential items while facing higher prices and debt, leaving them unable to meet basic needs or restart livelihoods. CVA will provide flexible, dignified support so households can prioritise food, essential household items, and small-



scale recovery, while also stimulating local markets where they are functioning.

An initial assessment by the BDRT team revealed that markets at higher altitudes remained open, with people continuing to make purchases with the limited stocks currently; however, the market will resume in full effect when the situation normalizes. Further, now the water levels have decreased, enabling primary transport to return to normal.

The value of the cash grant of LKR 20,000 per family is already determined based on the Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB) analysis by the Cash-Technical Working Group, which coordinates with all organizations implementing cash interventions in the country. SLRCS is co-chairing the cash working group, conducting regular meetings with the network, and providing updates about cash interventions, including the number of people, geographical information, and the selection process.

The Sri Lanka Red Cross Society has a dedicated team of volunteers and staff at its national headquarters who are trained in cash and voucher assistance as well as in coordinating CVA and community feedback mechanisms (CEA). SLRCS collaborated with Sampath Bank PLC as a financial service provider (FSP) with an exceptional FSP approval to facilitate the transfer of funds to individuals affected by a previous disaster during 2022-2024.

This year, the process for the Financial Service Provider Framework Agreement has been completed and approved by the IFRC technical committee. The initial FSP agreement has been shared with Sampath Bank, and SLRCS has urged the bank to review and sign this agreement within two weeks. Notably, the bank has extensive branch coverage and ATM services available nationwide.

(B) – Emergency shelter and essential household items: 5,000 families: 25,000 people

Through detailed assessment, the displaced, most vulnerable people will be assessed and selected based on the selection criteria to receive the set of essential household items across the target areas in the 20 districts. The household items include bed sheets, sarongs, kaftans, towels, and tarpaulin; a total of 5,000 families will be selected based on the affected households in all 20 districts, covering 250 households in each.

(C) Health: Targeting 50,000 people through Emergency first aid activities and Mobile Medical Camps

In the targeted districts, people require immediate first aid, as access to healthcare is limited. First aid is needed due to the sudden floods and high-water levels, which have injured people and children evacuating from their homes. The trained volunteers will be coordinated to conduct the first aid services.

The immediate first-aid services have already supported displaced people in the safer centers. The trained volunteers were mobilized and deployed in the field, and villages were disconnected to help them with the services. A total of 100 first-aid services, covering all 25 districts, are planned, 5 for each, which cover the entire district and the safer centers set up within the district.

(D) Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene: Targeting 180,000 people from the cleaning campaign and well cleaning

The cleaning campaigns and well cleaning, focusing on all the target 20 districts and assisting vulnerable households in cleaning their homes, digging wells, and cleaning surroundings, are immediate needs highlighted from the initial assessment, as well as community clean-up operations to remove waste from low-lying areas, canals, and riverbanks to prevent dengue mosquito breeding.

Volunteers and community members will be coordinated for the cleaning campaign. The most affected areas within the districts will be prioritised, focusing on the most vulnerable houses and common public places. Additionally, the disinfection process will be carried out during the cleaning campaign, and the cleaning will be carried out with the close coordination of the Ministry of Health (MOH) offices and Public Health Inspectors, according to the standard procedures.

This process will not only focus on cleaning but also raise awareness about dengue prevention and surveillance. Households in the affected areas will be informed about the measures they can take to prevent and eliminate dengue if it is identified.

A detailed assessment will be carried out by the affected districts to find out the inundated dug wells, which are the immediate needs to ensure the affected people have access to clean water. A total of 10,000 households will be cleaned based on a priority basis among the severely affected districts. This intervention will reach 50,000 people directly.

Furthermore, refresher training on psychosocial support will be conducted for the volunteers who are on the ground and supporting the affected people in the safety centres. The trained volunteers will carry out psychosocial support to the people who have lost their family members and who are traumatised individuals due to the loss of their belongings, targeting more than 2000 families.

In addition, 4,000 sanitary napkins will also be supported and distributed to adolescent girls and women in the safety centres across the affected districts.

Cross-cutting issues:



Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA):

Risk communication and community engagement will be integrated into each response activity. Information about the planned interventions will be shared with the affected communities, focusing on the assistance provision process. Local volunteers will be actively involved in the response and relief efforts. Additionally, a feedback mechanism will be established to address any grievances from the community.

The SLRCS aims to mobilise over 2,000 volunteers from local units across all 20 districts. The refresher CEA in emergencies will be conducted for the volunteers and branch staff to strengthen their understanding and effective response. These volunteers will conduct assessments, verify beneficiaries, hold community meetings, and participate in cleanup campaigns. To enhance visibility and foster acceptance within the community, visibility items such as T-shirts and jackets will be distributed to the volunteers.

Protection, Gender and Inclusion (PGI):

The SLRCS, with support from the IFRC, will ensure that the dignity, access, and participation of all community members are upheld throughout the intervention period. The most vulnerable individuals in the affected communities will be prioritised during the beneficiary selection process and when providing assistance.

The PGI technical focal point will organise refresher training for volunteers and branch staff to ensure that PGI principles are integrated into the response process.

National Society Strengthening:

The National Society will engage current and new SLRCS staff, funded by DREF, for nine months to ensure the effective implementation and monitoring of activities and complete them within the timeframe. The human resources allocation has been planned based on the minimum requirements and the necessary response for each district.

SLRCS also aims to enhance the capacity of local NDRT and BDRT members by actively involving them in relief operations, assessment, cash and voucher assistance (CVA), protection, gender and inclusion (PGI), and community engagement and accountability (CEA) initiatives. This approach is designed to improve their practical skills and capabilities.

Targeting Strategy

Who will be targeted through this operation?

This operation will target approximately 268,180 individuals across the most severely affected districts of Cyclone Ditwah, prioritising those currently displaced in safety centres, staying with relatives, and communities returning to damaged homes.

The selection focuses on districts experiencing the greatest impact, especially Badulla (30 deaths, severe landslides), Ampara (major agricultural losses), Kandy (declared state of emergency), Kurunegala (extensive low-lying community flooding), and other severely affected areas within the targeted 20 districts.

The WASH, CVA, shelter-essential household items, and health (first aid and medical camps) interventions directly address the immediate needs identified through rapid assessments by SLRCS branches and government data from the Disaster Management Centre.

The targeting logic prioritises households facing acute income loss, displacement, and health/sanitation crises. Daily wage earners, small farmers, and fishing communities have lost livelihoods due to flooded fields and work prohibitions; LGBTQ community members and refugees and asylum seekers face complete dependence on limited assistance; families with destroyed/damaged homes require shelter items; and communities with contaminated water sources need WASH interventions to prevent waterborne diseases. This vulnerability-based approach ensures assistance reaches the most disadvantaged populations who cannot recover independently.

Targeted vulnerable groups will be reached through inclusive mechanisms: rural communities will be identified through village-level coordination with Grama Niladhari divisions and Divisional Secretariats; estate sector workers will be prioritised; refugees and asylum seekers will be verified through UNHCR coordination with government immigration authorities; LGBTQ individuals will be engaged through established community networks in Colombo and Gampaha; and women-headed households, the elderly, people with disabilities, pregnant/lactating women, and households with infants will be identified through disaggregated household assessments.

Transparency and protection will be ensured through community meetings to share selection criteria, verified beneficiary lists posted publicly with feedback hotlines, coordination with government authorities to prevent duplication, and Protection, Gender, and Inclusion



(PGI) mainstreaming across all targeting processes. SLRCS's commitment to IFRC's minimum standards for gender and diversity in emergency programming ensures vulnerable groups receive appropriate, dignified, and protective assistance throughout the operation cycle.

Explain the selection criteria for the targeted population

The selection criteria are based on severity of impact, pre-existing vulnerability, and capacity to recover, using combined data from DMC, SLRCS rapid assessments, and community validation. Families are first identified in the most affected DS and GN divisions in districts within the targeted districts, with priority given to households whose homes are destroyed or partially damaged, those currently in safety centres or living with relatives, and those with major livelihood losses due to flooded fields, damaged boats, or disrupted small businesses. Also, critical WASH and health risks are included.

Within this affected population, the logic is to prioritise those facing acute income loss and immediate basic needs who lack savings or social protection. Daily wage earners, small farmers, fishers, and informal workers are targeted for CVA because the cyclone has halted their ability to work through inundated paddy and crop lands, fishing bans, damaged workspaces, and restricted market access, placing them at high risk of food insecurity and negative coping strategies.

Displaced families with destroyed or heavily damaged homes are prioritised for essential household items to restore basic living conditions and dignity when they return home from safety centres or host families. Communities with contaminated wells, damaged water systems, and flooded latrines are prioritised for WASH support to prevent waterborne disease and dengue outbreaks.

Vulnerable groups are explicitly prioritised through additional criteria. These include women-headed and elderly-headed households, families with persons with disabilities, pregnant and lactating women, and households with infants and young children, who face heightened health, nutritional, and protection risks and limited ability to access services. Estate sector communities are included due to chronic poverty, poor housing, and limited access to services in plantation areas; LGBTQ community members because they are often confined to informal work and face discrimination and exclusion from traditional support systems; and refugees and asylum seekers, who cannot legally work and are largely excluded from state safety nets. These groups are prioritised across CVA, shelter, WASH, and health.

Total Targeted Population

| | | | |
|---------------------------|---------|--------------------------------------|----|
| Women | 118,536 | Rural | 2% |
| Girls (under 18) | 20,917 | Urban | 1% |
| Men | 109,418 | People with disabilities (estimated) | 3% |
| Boys (under 18) | 19,309 | | |
| Total targeted population | 268,180 | | |

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 |
|--|---|
| Transport delay: delivery of essential household items may be delayed, as major roads and bridges have been damaged and cut off. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Alternative routes (longer routes) to reach the target areas - Road Development Authority informs that they have set up temporary bridges and filled up the roads |
| Inadequate HR and Technical capacity at the branches | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - NS has deployed NDRT and BDRT to the branches that experience limited capacity - Surge members are mobilised to support the key technical areas – assessment, CVA, and WASH - Refresher trainings are set up to |
| Delay in financial settlement from the branches | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Train the volunteers and the team in the branches - Close follow-up on the accounts and settlement with the branches that have limited capacity |

Please indicate any security and safety concerns for this operation:

Cyclone Ditwah has created a high-risk operating environment, with severe floods, landslides, damaged infrastructure, and a national emergency directly affecting the safety of staff, volunteers, and communities. The worst-affected hill country and low-lying river basins face continuing heavy rains and reservoir releases, meaning renewed flash floods and landslides are very likely throughout the implementation period. These conditions significantly increase the risk of accidents, entrapment, and delayed evacuation for teams travelling to isolated GN divisions.

Serious health and safety risks also arise from widespread contamination of water sources and overcrowded conditions. Wells, piped systems, and surface water are polluted, with clear warnings of leptospirosis, dengue, and diarrheal diseases as waters recede, directly affecting both communities and field teams in close contact with floodwater and debris.

There are no active conflict zones in the targeted districts, but large-scale displacement, losses, and economic hardship can create localized security pressures. If aid is perceived as delayed or unfair, there is a real risk of crowd surges, arguments, or opportunistic theft at distribution sites, particularly in urban and peri-urban areas already affected by crime.

CCD Security team will implement security measures, including but not limited to continuous situation monitoring, timely security and safety updates, tracking of staff movements (via phone or WhatsApp), security assessments in operational areas, and pre-deployment briefings on the current security context. Additionally, contingency plans and completion of relevant IFRC e-learning courses (such as Basic Knowledge and Prevention Measures for Responders, Personal Security, Security Management, and Volunteer Security) are required

The IFRC RO security team maintains close coordination with external humanitarian actors in the country, particularly regarding flood-affected areas. It works closely with SLRCS branches and local authorities in the operational regions. There is recognition of and respect for the RC emblem and an understanding of the activities carried out by the Movement. Regular contact is maintained with local security networks. The IFRC country office also participates in a range of stakeholder meetings in which safety and security matters are considered and discussed, including humanitarian country team (HCT) meetings convened by the UNRC office.

| | |
|---|-----|
| Has the child safeguarding risk analysis assessment been completed? | Yes |
|---|-----|

Planned Intervention



Shelter Housing And Settlements

Budget: CHF 134,708

Targeted Persons: 25,000



Indicators

| Title | Target |
|---|--------|
| Number of households provided with essential household items assistance | 5,000 |

Priority Actions

1. Conduct an assessment of the severely affected GN division.
2. Implement a community feedback mechanism to ensure the community voices are heard and addressed.
3. Verify the final recipients list through the community and government officers.
4. Procure the household items as per the IFRC/SLRCS procurement guidelines.
5. Distribute the emergency shelter and essential household items to the selected individuals.
6. Conduct the PDM survey, and identify findings, and recommendations.



Multi Purpose Cash

Budget: CHF 152,698

Targeted Persons: 12,500

Indicators

| Title | Target |
|---|--------|
| Number of targeted households provided with cash assistance | 2,500 |

Priority Actions

1. Conduct a detailed assessment and recipients verification in the targeted districts.
2. Implement a community feedback mechanism to ensure community voices are heard and addressed.
3. Collect all supporting documents and verify the Financial Service Provider (FSP).
4. Provide unconditional cash grants to the targeted households in the identified districts.
5. Conduct monitoring visits to confirm the delivery of cash.
6. Conduct post-distribution monitoring to assess the effectiveness of the cash grant distribution.



Health

Budget: CHF 71,240

Targeted Persons: 50,000

Indicators

| Title | Target |
|--|--------|
| Number of people supported with medical points | 25,000 |
| Number of people supported with First Aid services | 25,000 |
| Number of Volunteers trained on PSS Refresher | 600 |



Priority Actions

1. Procure or replenish basic items for first aid services.
2. Establish medical camps per district with essential first-aid services to provide additional health assistance to affected communities.
3. Mobilise volunteers and provide incentives.
4. Coordinate with the Medical Officer of Health and Public Health officers for inspection and approval.



Water, Sanitation And Hygiene

Budget: CHF 352,457

Targeted Persons: 180,000

Indicators

| Title | Target |
|--|---------|
| Number of people reached through cleaned/rehabilitated water facilities | 50,000 |
| Number of people reached through clean-up campaigns | 100,000 |
| Number of adolescent girls and women reached through menstrual hygiene distribution and promotion activities | 20,000 |
| Number of people reached with hygiene promotion activities | 10,000 |

Priority Actions

1. Printing the Well Cleaning Manual and distributing it to the branches.
2. Procurement of service provider – well cleaning and related costs.
3. Deployment of technical support for WASH activities.
4. Conduct clean-up campaigns, including disinfection and cleaning activities (e.g., public places, houses, schools, & safety centres).
5. Transportation and distribution of well-cleaning items
6. Procurement and distribution of sanitary napkins
7. Hygiene promotion campaigns.
8. Procurement and distribution of Gumboots and raincoats.



Protection, Gender And Inclusion

Budget: CHF 0

Targeted Persons: 268,180

Indicators

| Title | Target |
|--|---------|
| Number of individuals reached through dignity, access, and protection activities | 268,180 |
| Number of volunteers oriented or refreshed on PGI and Code of Conduct | 550 |

Priority Actions

1. Conduct refresher sessions on PGI and the code of conduct for volunteers.
2. Print and prominently display Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) and Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) prevention messages at distribution and safe centres.





Migration And Displacement

Budget: CHF 8,981

Targeted Persons: 680

Indicators

| Title | Target |
|---|--------|
| Number of migrant households assisted with cash support | 156 |

Priority Actions

1. Conduct assessment with the appropriate selection criteria.
2. Distribute cash in envelopes to the selected migrant households.



Risk Reduction, Climate Adaptation And Recovery

Budget: CHF 21,588

Targeted Persons: 550

Indicators

| Title | Target |
|--|--------|
| Number of volunteers trained and included in the pool of BDRT team | 300 |
| Number of staff trained on DREF guidelines and familiar with standard procedures | 550 |

Priority Actions

1. Conduct BDRT refresher training for the volunteers to strengthen volunteer capacity and enhance volunteer retention
2. Conduct refresher and awareness sessions for the branch staff, including accounts staff, to ensure the timely settlement and follow-up the IFRC-DREF guidelines during the emergency operation



Community Engagement And Accountability

Budget: CHF 15,543

Targeted Persons: 268,180

Indicators

| Title | Target |
|--|---------|
| Number of people reached with CEA initiatives | 268,180 |
| Number of volunteers trained on CEA for emergency response | 550 |
| Number of feedback and complaints received and responded to by SLRCS | 650 |



Priority Actions

1. Conduct refresher sessions and orientation on CEA for volunteers and staff.
2. Activate a feedback mechanism to receive and address grievances from communities.
3. Share the selection criteria with the community during community meetings.
4. Strengthen the feedback mechanism through hotline services.
5. Set up a community desk at Grama Niladhari (GN) offices during community meetings.
6. Design and print the IEC materials and distribute them during the meetings and community consultation



Coordination And Partnerships

Budget: CHF 23,099

Targeted Persons: 0

Indicators

| Title | Target |
|---|--------|
| Number of communication materials produced (e.g., social media posts, media articles, interviews) | 40 |
| Number of volunteers equipped with visibility items (T-shirts, caps, jackets) | 1,000 |

Priority Actions

1. Conduct monitoring visits to identify gaps and good practices in the targeted districts.
2. Share and update interventions based on monitoring findings.
3. Collect and publish case stories, and produce video footage to highlight impact and success stories.
4. Procure jackets and t-shirts for staff and volunteers to create visibility for the intervention.
5. Share news updates and publish articles in newspapers to raise awareness and communicate achievements.



Secretariat Services

Budget: CHF 79,355

Targeted Persons: 0

Indicators

| Title | Target |
|---|--------|
| Number of surge personnel deployed to support the operation | 4 |
| Number of monitoring visits conducted by IFRC | 20 |

Priority Actions

1. Identify the need for surge support based on ongoing assessments and needs.
2. Deploy surge support personnel to swift response efforts.
3. Conduct monitoring visits to affected districts to oversee the implementation of activities.
4. Conduct and participate in coordination meetings and brief government stakeholders on operational strategy.





Budget: CHF 140,331

Targeted Persons: 0

Indicators

| Title | Target |
|--|--------|
| Number of lessons learned workshop conducted | 1 |
| Number of volunteers involved in the operation insured | 1,000 |

Priority Actions

1. Recruit and deploy all local operation-based surge staff at NHQ and branch levels.
2. Ensure all staff and volunteers are insured, and that protection is ensured throughout the operation.
3. Conduct assessments based on the situation and needs analysis.
4. Conduct monitoring by branches, NHQ, and IFRC.
5. Conduct progress review meetings at the NHQ level.
6. Conduct a lessons learned workshop to capture insights and improvements.
7. Produce case stories and news and share good practices to highlight successes and promote learning.

About Support Services

How many staff and volunteers will be involved in this operation. Briefly describe their role.

A total of 1000 volunteers (a combination of males and females) will be involved in this response. The branch executive officer will take the key responsibilities in the implementation of the DREF activities.

NS has planned to deploy more in-country surge capacities and NDRT and BDRT members to the operation; mainly profiles will cover WASH and Health (including PSFA), CEA, and PGI sectors, cash and voucher assistance, and assessment.

More community-level volunteers and youths and leaders will be mobilised to engage in cleaning campaigns and safety centre distribution. Staff and volunteers from each branch and SLRCS HQ will also be directly engaged. The operation will be run by a project manager (national staff) with a team comprising a project assistant, coordinator, community mobilisers, finance, and driver, and the overall Head of Programmes will be responsible for monitoring the progress of the entire operation.

Does your volunteer team reflect the gender, age, and cultural diversity of the people you're helping? What gaps exist in your volunteer team's gender, age, or cultural diversity, and how are you addressing them to ensure inclusive and appropriate support?

SLRCS has a diverse volunteer base drawn from 25 branches across the country, including women and men, youth, and long-standing community-level volunteers from the same districts and GN divisions affected by Cyclone Ditwah. This mix helps ensure that teams can speak local languages, understand cultural norms, and support specific groups such as women-headed households, older people, people with disabilities, refugees and asylum seekers, and LGBTQ persons in a safe and trusted way.

Some gaps remain in reaching the most marginalised communities (for example, in remote estate areas and among refugees and asylum seekers), so the operation will: 1) deliberately recruit and mobilise more female, youth and minority volunteers from these communities; 2) provide refresher training on PGI, child safeguarding and CEA; and 3) pair local community volunteers with branch teams for assessments, CVA, WASH and health to keep support inclusive and appropriate.



Will surge personnel be deployed? If yes, please provide the role profile needed.

Yes

A formal surge alert has been sent to the IFRC Surge Desk to activate additional short-term support for this operation. The requested profiles and deployment modalities are:

Communications – 1 month, in-country deployment to support public information, accountability to affected people and donor visibility, including social media, human-interest stories and situation updates.

Assessment coordinator – 1 month, in-country deployment to support SLRCS branches with rapid multi-sector assessments.

Information Management (IM) – 1 month, initially remote deployment, to set up data flows, dashboards, and mapping, aggregate DMC/branch data, and provide analytical products for decision-making.

PMER Coordinator – 3 months, in-country deployment to establish monitoring frameworks, indicator tracking, reporting timelines, and lessons-learned processes, and to ensure alignment with IFRC results-based management requirements.

Ops Coordinator- 3 months with possibility of further extension, in country to overall coordination and management of the operation.

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.

If there is procurement, will it be done by National Society or IFRC?

There will be an international procurement to procure tarpaulin. Essential household items are above the threshold of CHF 50,000; therefore, IFRC CCD Delhi will carry out the procurement process. In addition, for payments exceeding the CHF 30,000 threshold, the payment will be processed through the IFRC in accordance with our procurement threshold.

How will this operation be monitored?

SLRCS will oversee all operational, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and reporting aspects of the present operation in the affected areas through its country-wide network of branches and volunteers. IFRC, through its Country Office and CCD in Delhi and APRO in Kuala Lumpur, will provide technical support in program management to ensure the operational objectives are met.

Reporting on the operation will be conducted and supported by the surge PMER coordinator, in accordance with the IFRC-DREF minimum reporting standards. Regular updates will be issued during the operation's timeframe, and a final report will be issued within three months of the operation's completion. The IFRC and SLRCS HQ will conduct systematic monitoring visits, as well as at the local level. Following the implementation of the operation, a PDM and exit survey will be conducted. The operation will regularly capture the challenges, lessons learned, and best practices. Additionally, it will be documented through a lessons learned workshop.

Please briefly explain the National Societies communication strategy for this operation

The Sri Lanka Red Cross communications staff or volunteers will work closely with IFRC regional communications and the Surge Communications Coordinator to gather and produce various communications deliverables that highlight various sections of the operation. These deliverables will then be further profiled across various social media platforms, pitched to national/international media, and for Movement sharing and reporting purposes by both SLRCS and IFRC.

The communications contents will include but not limited to:

- In-action photos or short videos of Red Cross volunteers on site, with detailed captions. These photos or videos will capture the work, testimonials, expressions, strong quotes and experiences of the Red Cross members responding to the operation.
- Photo or short videos of the beneficiaries / communities that are recipients of the operations. These photos or videos will capture the moments, expressions, strong quotes and experiences of the beneficiaries. All content collected will be conducted with the informed consent of individuals, in line with IFRC's ethical standards and safeguarding policies, ensuring respect for dignity, privacy, and the protection of vulnerable groups.
- Both SLRCS and IFRC will work together to produce (when in need) press releases, news stories, key messages, infographics etc.
- The SLRCS NHG and Branch field staff will maintain visibility of both IFRC and SLRCS branding while working on the ground by



wearing, at all times, RCRC jackets, caps, aprons, or t-shirts, for volunteers or staff when responding in manner for the operation. Furthermore, IFRC will support in managing reputational risk at the country or regional level and will ensure that the Movement actors speak and act with a unified voice to build trust towards partners, donors, and other stakeholders.



Budget Overview



DREF OPERATION

**MDRLK023 - Sri Lanka Red Cross Society
Cyclone Ditwa**

Operating Budget

| Planned Operations | 757,215 |
|---|------------------|
| Shelter and Basic Household Items | 134,708 |
| Livelihoods | 0 |
| Multi-purpose Cash | 152,698 |
| Health | 71,240 |
| Water, Sanitation & Hygiene | 352,457 |
| Protection, Gender and Inclusion | 0 |
| Education | 0 |
| Migration | 8,981 |
| Risk Reduction, Climate Adaptation and Recovery | 21,588 |
| Community Engagement and Accountability | 15,543 |
| Environmental Sustainability | 0 |
| Enabling Approaches | 242,785 |
| Coordination and Partnerships | 23,099 |
| Secretariat Services | 79,355 |
| National Society Strengthening | 140,331 |
| TOTAL BUDGET | 1,000,000 |

all amounts in Swiss Francs (CHF)

Internal

8/12/2025

#V2022.01

[Click here to download the budget file](#)



Contact Information

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

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[Click here for the reference](#)

