

SRI LANKA
TROPICAL CYCLONE DITWAH
SITUATION REPORT: No.8



Sri Lanka Red Cross distributed life-saving emergency supplies in floods and landslides affected communities. (Photo: Sri Lanka Red Cross Society)

SitRep n°	#8	Reporting period	26 November – 15 December 2025
SitRep Date	18 December 2025	Estimated number of people affected	1.1 million
IFRC Operation n°	MDRLK023	Category allocated to the disaster or crisis	Orange
Total people targeted	500,000	Start date of the operation	26 November 2025
Total people reached (cumulative)	12,941	Expected end date	30 June 2027

Scope and scale, humanitarian conditions and evolution of disaster

Impact to date

The flood and landslide situation resulting from Cyclone Ditwah affected an estimated 1.1 million people across the country, and more than 600 people are reported dead, and 203 people are reported missing ([Sri Lanka Brief](#)). According to the [UN](#), the severely affected districts include Gampaha, Colombo, Puttalam, Mannar, Trincomalee, Batticaloa, Kandy, Badulla, Matale, Vavuniya, Kegalle. Over 200 severe landslides damaged or destroyed around 100,000 houses, with 6,176 fully damaged and more than 95,213 partially damaged across multiple districts. ([Disaster Management Centre](#)).

The affected people have lost their homes, agriculture, livestock, etc. Access to clean water remains a major concern, with reports of drinking water sources being contaminated with floodwater. The [initial data](#) shows that 622 water schemes were severely damaged, including 85 major urban water supply schemes and 540 water treatment plants. Approximately 413,000 household connections were disrupted, representing more than 14 per cent of national connections. In rural areas, around 538 community-managed schemes are affected, reducing access for roughly 751,000 people. Many dug wells remain inundated, increasing contamination risks and the likelihood of waterborne disease as floodwaters recede.

As of 15 December, the water has receded; however, the devastation is more visible than ever. Physical infrastructure, including roads swept away by floods and landslides, is gradually reconnecting to the wider network. However, it is expected to take a considerable amount of time to reconstruct. Severe disruption to electricity, mobile, and communications was reported in northern districts in the initial days of the disaster, which is now restored but not completely.

It is reported that nearly 70,055 people are still living in 762 safety centres ([Disaster Management Centre](#)), including schools converted into emergency accommodation. These temporary accommodations are not designed to support a large number of people with proper sanitation, which might result in water-borne and vector-borne diseases. Children residing in the safety centres require psychosocial support as they might be going through trauma, which will have long-term risks if not addressed on time.

Floods and cyclone Ditwah caused severe damage to education, agriculture, and health services. About 1,185 schools are in flood-affected areas, impacting nearly 459,000 school-age children, 28,900 teachers, and 68,000 preschoolers. As of 16 December, 159 schools remain closed, many serving as safety shelters. Agriculture suffered heavily, with 564,000 hectares of paddy at risk and 96,000 hectares of other crops plus 13,000 hectares of vegetables destroyed by floods and strong winds. Health services were also disrupted, as 243 health institutions reported major damage and over 200 faced access issues. Power and water outages cut off essential services, affecting over 100 facilities, including critical hospital units like operating theatres. ([UN Resident Coordinator's Office](#)).

No. of people HH and families affected	As of 15 December 2025, 639 people are confirmed dead, and 203 are reported missing due to floods and landslides. According to the UNICEF data, more than 400,000 school-going children are affected by floods and landslides. Schools have been severely damaged or converted into shelters, disrupting learning nationwide. The prolonged disruption of schools, coupled with the loss of educational materials, might increase the risk of dropout. In addition, it is reported that more than 100,000 houses were destroyed as a result, and the families are either living in temporary shelters or with host families. (Sri Lanka Brief)
No. of families sheltering in temporary camps	As of 15 December 2025, 70,055 families are staying in 762 safety centres being operated by the Government.

Humanitarian access status	<p>Cyclone Ditwah severely disrupted humanitarian access across Sri Lanka. As more than 40 bridges are affected, 247 kilometers of road are damaged, resulting in limited access to the affected areas. Mobile communication and electricity were disrupted in the initial days; however, they are now gradually being restored.</p> <p>The flood and landslide have contaminated water sources, and the water supply in Kandy, Ambatale, and other places were disrupted. (Sri Lanka Brief) Health facilities in the affected districts were affected by the floods and landslides, resulting in the disruption of the services. The water systems and health facilities remain inaccessible, increasing the risk of water-borne and vector-borne diseases. Emergency distribution is underway, but access to affected areas remains constrained.</p>
Security/Humanitarian Corridors	No formal humanitarian corridors reported; military (Army, Navy, Air Force) deployed for rescue and logistics
Communications	<p>DMC emergency hotline 117 operational; additional contacts: Colombo District DMC (0112434028), DMC Main Office (0112136136)</p> <p>SLRCS NHQ hotlines – (+94 11 2694487/ +94 11 2691095)</p>
Government actions	<p>The President has declared a state of emergency on 28 November 2025, and activated the Essential Public Services Act, designating power, water, transport, health, food supply, telecommunications, and key administrative services as essential to ensure they continue without interruption during the crisis.⁵</p> <p>Apart from an initial allocation of LKR. 1.2 billion rupees for emergency relief, the Government has started a rebuilding Sri Lanka fund. People and private agencies are contributing to the fund.</p> <p>A central Coordination Unit has been established at Defense Headquarters, and an Office of the Commissioner General of Essential Services has been created under emergency regulations to coordinate multi-agency rescue, relief and early recovery operations across sectors and districts.</p> <p>The tri-forces, police, and DMC are deployed nationwide for search and rescue, evacuations, and relief distribution, with helicopters and boats mobilized and additional air and naval assets requested from India and other partners to reach cut-off communities.</p>
Latest situation on the ground	<p>The Government of Sri Lanka continues to conduct the search and rescue in remote regions. Infrastructure clearance is underway. The Disaster Management Centre is leading the national response.</p> <p>The Red Cross and UN agencies are distributing non-food items, focusing on hard-to-reach areas. Volunteer organizations, community groups, religious institutions, and citizens are supporting the affected families with cooked meals.</p> <p>International aid is coming in from countries in South Asia and other parts of the world, providing support for relief supplies, in-kind aid, and emergency funds.</p> <p>The affected population is at risk of water- and vector-borne disease outbreaks and psychosocial distress. School students who have lost educational materials need these resources to return to schools, which are resuming from mid-December. Additionally, displaced populations residing in safety centres need</p>

support to restore their homes, sanitation facilities, and livelihoods. Key needs identified include immediate relief items, food packages, hygiene kits, and more. A key challenge is accessing affected areas due to damaged infrastructure immediately and further support is required to address longer-term recovery needs.

National Society strategy

The Sri Lanka Red Cross Society (SLRCS) aims to meet the urgent needs of approximately 100,000 families (around 500,000 people) affected by Cyclone Ditwah and flash floods across 20 districts. The response prioritizes emergency shelter, livelihood restoration, and multi-purpose cash assistance. Families displaced by cyclone damage will receive tarpaulins and essential household items for immediate protection, along with transitional shelter support as requested by the government. Cash-based interventions will empower households to meet diverse needs such as food, medicine, and livelihood recovery, while stimulating local markets and reducing dependency on external aid. Livelihood support will be provided through phased financial assistance, ensuring targeted households can rebuild income sources.

In addition to shelter and cash support, the operation focuses on Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) and health interventions. Efforts include cleaning of dug-wells, distributing sanitary items, promoting hygiene practices, and supporting owner-driven toilet repairs through cash assistance. Health services will be strengthened through mobile health units, volunteer outreach, and awareness campaigns to prevent outbreaks of waterborne and vector-borne diseases. Improve health facilities in the safty centers , and First Aid training will build long-term community resilience. Special attention will be given to migrants through cash assistance and Restoring Family Links (RFL) services to reconnect separated families.

Cross-cutting priorities include Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA), Protection, Gender, and Inclusion (PGI), and Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR). CEA ensures transparent communication and feedback mechanisms, fostering trust and community participation. PGI safeguards vulnerable groups against discrimination and gender-based violence while promoting equal access to services. DRR activities will strengthen preparedness through volunteer training, early warning systems, and risk awareness campaigns. This integrated approach combines immediate relief with sustainable recovery, ensuring safety, dignity, and resilience for all affected populations.

More details can be referred to the [Operational Strategy](#) of the operation.

Operational constraints and risks

Operational challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Road damage, bridge failures, and disrupted communications can hinder the timely delivery of shelter materials, cash assistance, WASH supplies and health services to remote areas of affected districts 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. Price fluctuations, stock shortages, and uneven market recovery in affected areas could reduce the effectiveness of multi-purpose cash and livelihood instalment, requiring close monitoring and adaptive targeting
Key risks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heightened probability of water and vector-borne diseases outbreaks due to overcrowding in the safety centres, damaged WASH systems, and inadequate sanitation. To minimize these risks, the SLRCS is already conducting well cleaning in the affected communities. Increased exposure to sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) in safety centers for which the SLRCS will mobilize volunteers to conduct awareness sessions.

Sectors of intervention/cross-cutting key highlights

Based on the initial need assessment, SLRCS is reaching out to the affected population, focusing on: providing emergency shelter items to displaced families, WASH support and hygiene promotion activities, health promotion for awareness activities on vector and water-borne diseases, and hygiene kits to mitigate diarrheal disease risk in flooded and densely populated shelters.

Health, nutrition, and protection interventions are increasingly critical as damaged facilities, medicine shortages, and disrupted referral systems coincide with rising trauma, injuries, and mental health needs. Early recovery and livelihoods planning have also started, given extensive losses and asset damage that threaten medium-term food security

Relief and Assessment

Key updates	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Local branches are engaged in rescue operations and supporting the Government in safety Centre management.Initial assessment was conducted by mobilizing Red Cross volunteers.The SLRCS and IFRC are working together to initiate a multi-sectoral assessment in the coming weeks, which will provide clarity on the recovery needs required to develop a detailed recovery plan.12,941 people reached with essential households- dry rations, hygiene packs, baby kits, bed sheets, towels, sarang, kaftan, sleeping mats, jerry cans, etc.DREF orientation completed in the affected districts, where branches were oriented on key activities on DREF.
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Shelter

Key updates	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Ongoing procurement of tarpaulins and kitchen sets
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Livelihood & basic needs

Key updates	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Activities have not started yet, as the recovery needs will be clarified by the multi-sectoral assessment.
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Health, First Aid, Ambulance and MHPSS

Key updates	<ul style="list-style-type: none">SLRCS volunteers are conducting PSS sessions in the communities and in safety centers, as well as the branches in the central provincesSLRCS has established safe spaces for children living in the safety centers, and volunteers are providing PSS sessions to children.A medical camp was established, offering wound care and essential medical treatment, reaching out to 539 people.Emergency first-aid services are being carried out at safety centers, treating people affected by floods and landslides. As of 16 December 2025, 4,981 people were reached with the emergency first aid services provided at the safety centers.
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WASH

Key updates	<ul style="list-style-type: none">SLRCS conducted a technical orientation to branches to conduct the assessment on the dug-well cleaning process, which will help them to identify the contaminated dug wells.Hygiene promotion activities are ongoing at the safety centers.Volunteers are helping to clean up the houses, community centres, and public places inundated by the floods. A total of 300 volunteers are being mobilized by the SLRCS to support these campaigns across affected districts.More than 15,000 liters of bottled water distributed271 women/girls reached with 271 packs of sanitary napkins distributed in the safety centres and at the communities.
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Protection Gender and Inclusion

Key updates	<ul style="list-style-type: none">SLRCS distributed 100 maternity kits and 200 dignity kits with the support from UNFPA in Batticaloy District, reaching out to 300 pregnant, lactating mothers and adolescent girls.Unconditional cash grant to 10 affected pregnant women is being planned in the same districts
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Coordination (incl. Movement, bilateral project with IFRC Network members and external partners)

External Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none">UK High Commission pledges UK £1 million in humanitarian support for cyclone-affected communities in Sri LankaSwiss Government provided comprehensive humanitarian assistance to Sri Lanka for a total of CHF. 450,000The United States has announced \$ 2 million in emergency assistance to support Sri Lanka's response to Cyclone Ditwah.
UN/Cluster engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">UN Flash appeal is launched with a funding requirement of US\$35.5 million, primarily focusing on education, food security, agriculture and nutrition, health, protection, shelter, WASH, and early recovery with a time frame of April 2026.SLRCS is actively participating in cluster meetings on WASH, Health, CVA, etc.

Corporate Services Key Highlights

Communications (incl. external communications, Humanitarian Diplomacy, and public relations)

Photos/videos shared	 <p>Community member affected by Cyclone Ditwah is receiving medical care in the medical clinic. (Photo: SLRCS, Gampaha Branch)</p>
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Key updates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communications workplan developed and agreed with SLRCS • Key messages are updated and media inquiries dealt with • Content for photos and videos depicting SLRCS activities and volunteers, as well as people helped in the communities gathered during field visits, was developed and finalized. Content is published and shared broadly. • Further content-gathering visits are ongoing from 15 to 16 December 2025 with emphasis on multimedia content and novel ways. • Training in basic (Audio Visual) AV skills for SLRCS staff to be provided, further ways IFRC can support NS comms activities are being discussed.
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Logistics

Key updates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2,500 Kitchen Sets and 2500 Tarpaulin (approx. 30 MT) were sent via pro bono flights from IFRC Dubai warehouse, arrived in Sri Lanka staggered in several flights this week. • There is no request on launching mobilization table from operation at this moment, but APRO is on standby.
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Planning, Monitoring, Evaluations and/or Reporting

Key updates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency Appeal and its Operational Strategy (OS) have been developed and published. • DREF grant is approved as part of the Emergency Appeal. • Report tracking tool for DREF and Appeal is developed. • Eight IFRC SitReps produced to date. • Key monitoring tools for the operation is being developed.
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Information Management

Key updates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The IM Coordinator is on board and providing remote support • IM officer in the SLRCS is consolidating data received from the branches
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Safety & Security

Key updates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No new updates
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Surge Deployments

Two personnel from CCD Delhi arrived in the country, including the Head of Delegation (HoD), on 30 November, Sunday, and completed their mission for the time being and have returned to Delhi. However, CCD Delhi is providing technical support as required. Subsequent deployments from IFRC Delegation in Delhi will include specialized support in Procurement and Finance to strengthen supply chain management and financial accountability during the response. Additionally, one APRO Communications staff member was deployed for around two weeks to fill the gap while awaiting the arrival of the Comms Surge. Following are the requested profiles for the operation and status of deployment to date:

Key updates	<p>Requested profiles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ops Manager- 3 months, in country deployment ○ Communications – 2 month, in country deployment (alert is out for the second round)
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment – 1 month, in country deployment Information Management – 1 month, initially remote deployment PMER – 3 months, in country deployment
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No	IFRC Rapid Response Profile	Alert Level	Status	Deployment Duration / Start Date	Deploying Entity
1	PMER Coordinator	Regional	Confirmed – In country deployment	3 months / in country 4 December 2025	IFRC
2.	Ops Manager	Regional	Confirmed – In country deployment	3 months / in country 10 December 2025	New Zealand Red Cross
3.	Comms Coordinator	Regional	Confirmed- in-country deployment	1 month / in country 8 December 2025	Finnish Red Cross
4.	IM Coordinator	Global	Confirmed- in-country deployment	1 month / in country (started remotely)	The Netherlands Red Cross
5.	Assessment Coordinator	Regional	Confirmed- in-country deployment	1 month / in country deployment 15 December 2025	Australian Red Cross

Finances

Key updates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding transfer amounting CHF 100,000 confirmed has been received to NS account on 3 December 2025. Project Funding Agreement completed for DREF Grant.
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Contribution to the Tropical Cyclone Ditwah Response

Information on the appeal coverage will be provided in the forthcoming updates.

References & Links

- [Operational Strategy](#)
- [Emergency Appeal](#)
- [DREF](#)

Contact Information

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

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