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Post Distribution Monitoring –PDM - “Dithwa”



Executive Summary

Tropical Storm “Dithwa”, which struck Sri Lanka in late 2025, caused widespread flooding across several districts, severely affecting housing, livelihoods, and access to essential services. In Trincomalee District, particularly in the Muttur and Seruvila Divisional Secretariat (DS) Divisions, the storm led to partial or complete damage to houses, loss of household assets, disruption of income-generating activities, and displacement of families. Vulnerable households including female-headed households, elderly persons, person’s disabilities and families with limited income sources were disproportionately affected and required immediate humanitarian support.

In response, the Sri Lanka Red Cross Society (SLRCS), with financial support from the Swiss Confederation through the Humanitarian Aid Unit of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), implemented an Emergency Multipurpose Cash Assistance (MPCA) intervention exclusively in Trincomalee District. The program targeted 1,600 flood-affected households, providing a one-off cash grant of LKR 27,000 per household to address urgent needs, including food, shelter, healthcare, water and sanitation, and early livelihood recovery.

To assess the effectiveness, relevance, and accountability of the intervention, SLRCS conducted a Post-Distribution Monitoring (PDM) exercise. The PDM employed a quantitative cross-sectional survey design using the KOBO Toolbox, complemented by field observations and community feedback mechanisms. A 10% sample of the total assisted households was planned (n=160), but the survey successfully included 180 households, ensuring wider representation of vulnerable groups across the targeted DS Divisions.

The PDM examined key indicators, including timeliness and coverage of assistance, utilization of cash, beneficiary satisfaction, and effectiveness of communication and accountability mechanisms. Key findings indicate:

- High coverage and timely delivery: 97.78% of surveyed households received the cash grant, with the majority obtaining it within one month.
- Appropriate utilization of funds: Households primarily used the cash for essential needs such as food (87.78%), household items (53.89%), education (38.89%), medical expenses (33.33%), and livelihood recovery (5.56%).
- High beneficiary satisfaction: 100% of beneficiaries expressed satisfaction with the timeliness, process, and support provided by SLRCS staff and volunteers.
- Effective targeting: Beneficiaries were selected based on vulnerability and disaster impact, including female-headed households, widows, and fully affected families. No households outside the criteria were included. Feedback from non-beneficiaries, including low-income government officers, highlights the potential for minor inclusions in future operations.
- Enhanced coping capacity: Cash assistance reduced reliance on negative coping strategies, supported early livelihood recovery, and strengthened household resilience.

The Post-Distribution Monitoring (PDM) findings confirm that the SLRCS MPCA intervention was effective, timely, and well received, successfully achieving its primary objective of supporting the most affected and vulnerable households in Trincomalee District (Muthur and Serwila). The intervention demonstrated strong adherence to transparency, accountability, and Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA) principles, while enabling rapid, dignified, and flexible assistance. Key lessons identified through this monitoring exercise will inform the design and implementation of future cash-based interventions, including improved inclusion of marginally vulnerable groups and strengthened monitoring and feedback mechanisms.

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List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

- MPCA – Multipurpose Cash Assistance
- PDM – Post-Distribution Monitoring
- SLRCS – Sri Lanka Red Cross Society
- IFRC – International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
- SDC – Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
- GN – Grama Niladhari
- DS – Divisional Secretariat
- CEA – Community Engagement and Accountability
- CFCM – Community Feedback and Complaints Mechanism

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Post Distribution Monitoring –PDM

Introduction:

In late 2025, Tropical Storm Dithwa affected several parts of Sri Lanka, resulting in widespread flooding, damage to housing and livelihoods, and displacement of communities. Prolonged heavy rainfall caused rivers and irrigation systems to overflow, inundating residential areas and agricultural lands. As a result, many households experienced partial or complete damage to houses, loss of essential household assets, destruction of crops and fishing equipment, and disruption to income-generating activities. In several locations, families were temporarily displaced and required immediate humanitarian support to meet basic needs.

Among the affected areas, Trincomalee District was significantly impacted by flooding, particularly in the Muttur and Seruvila Divisional Secretariat (DS) Divisions. Floodwaters damaged homes, contaminated water sources, disrupted access to markets and services, and severely affected livelihoods dependent on agriculture, daily wage labour, and fisheries. Vulnerable households, including female-headed households, elderly persons, and families with limited income sources, were disproportionately affected and had limited capacity to cope with the shock without external assistance.

In response to these impacts, the Sri Lanka Red Cross Society (SLRCS), with financial support from the Swiss Confederation through the Humanitarian Aid Unit of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), implemented an Emergency Multipurpose Cash Assistance (MPCA) intervention exclusively in Trincomalee District. The assistance was designed as an immediate humanitarian response to support flood-affected households in meeting their urgent and essential needs.

As the national humanitarian organization with an all-island branch network, SLRCS has strong field presence and operational capacity in Trincomalee District, enabling the rapid mobilization of staff, volunteers, and resources. Leveraging this capacity, SLRCS immediately implemented the cash assistance intervention following the Tropical Storm Dithwa, ensuring timely support to the most affected communities.

The geographical scope of the intervention was limited to Trincomalee District, with assistance provided only in the Muttur and Seruvila DS Divisions. A total of 1,600 flood-affected households were selected to receive multipurpose cash assistance based on vulnerability criteria, including the extent of housing damage, loss of livelihoods, displacement status, and household composition.

The overall objective of the multipurpose cash assistance was to rapidly support flood-affected households in Trincomalee District by enabling families to meet urgent essential needs, including food, shelter-related expenses, health costs, water and sanitation needs, and early livelihood recovery, in a flexible and dignified manner.

To assess the effectiveness, appropriateness, and accountability of this intervention, SLRCS conducted a Post-Distribution Monitoring (PDM) exercise. The PDM aimed to evaluate beneficiary satisfaction, understand the utilization of cash assistance, and identify lessons learned to strengthen future emergency cash responses.

Purpose of the Study and Objectives of the PDM:

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this Post-Distribution Monitoring (PDM) study is to systematically assess the effectiveness, relevance, and outcomes of the Emergency Multipurpose Cash Assistance (MPCA) provided to flood-affected households in Trincomalee District under the Tropical Storm “*Dithwa*” emergency response. The study seeks to generate evidence on whether the cash assistance intervention achieved its intended humanitarian objectives of rapidly addressing urgent needs, while upholding principles of dignity, choice, and accountability to affected populations.

The PDM further aims to examine beneficiary experiences and perspectives regarding the delivery, utilization, and adequacy of the assistance, thereby enabling SLRCS and partners to understand how cash assistance contributed to meeting immediate household needs in a post-disaster context. Findings from the study are intended to support programmatic learning, accountability to donors and affected communities, and continuous improvement of cash-based interventions implemented by SLRCS in future emergency responses.

Objectives of the PDM

The specific objectives of the Post-Distribution Monitoring are as follows:

- 1. *To verify the timely delivery and coverage of assistance***
To assess whether the multipurpose cash assistance reached the intended beneficiaries in a timely and efficient manner, in accordance with the planned targeting and distribution framework.
- 2. *To assess the appropriateness of the cash assistance***
To evaluate the extent to which the multipurpose cash assistance addressed the priority and immediate needs of households affected by flooding caused by Tropical Storm Dithwa.
- 3. *To understand the utilization of cash assistance***
To analyze how beneficiary households utilized the cash assistance and whether spending patterns aligned with essential needs such as food, shelter-related costs, health, water and sanitation, and livelihood recovery.
- 4. *To measure beneficiary satisfaction***
To assess the level of beneficiary satisfaction with both the assistance provided and the delivery process, including registration, communication, and distribution modalities.

5. *To assess communication, feedback, and accountability mechanisms*
To evaluate the effectiveness of information sharing, community engagement, and feedback and complaints mechanisms, and to determine whether beneficiaries were adequately informed of their entitlements and able to safely raise concerns.
6. *To identify challenges, gaps, and lessons learned*
To identify operational challenges, implementation gaps, and key lessons learned in order to strengthen the design and delivery of future cash-based humanitarian interventions.

3. Operational Strategy

The implementation of the Emergency Multipurpose Cash Assistance (MPCA) for households affected by Tropical Storm “*Dithwa*” in Trincomalee District was carried out within a short, agreed emergency response timeframe, while ensuring adherence to established standards of quality, transparency, inclusion, and accountability. Despite the time-sensitive nature of the response, SLRCS applied a structured and well-coordinated operational approach to ensure that the assistance was delivered rapidly and responsibly, in line with the humanitarian imperative to act quickly while doing no harm. All activities were implemented in accordance with the operational guidelines of the Sri Lanka Red Cross Society (SLRCS), the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), and donor requirements.

3.1 Beneficiary Identification and Verification

Beneficiary identification was conducted in close coordination with local government authorities, particularly Grama Niladhari (GN) Officers and Divisional Secretariat (DS) Offices, to ensure accuracy and alignment with official disaster impact data. Given the urgency of the response, flood-affected households were rapidly identified based on the severity of impact caused by Tropical Storm Dithwa, including housing damage, livelihood loss, and displacement.

Within the limited timeframe available, community-level (GN Level) household meetings were organized to jointly agree upon and clearly communicate targeting and eligibility criteria. This participatory approach ensured transparency and community acceptance, even under emergency conditions. Preliminary beneficiary lists developed through this process were subsequently verified by the respective SLRCS branches through selected sample household visits conducted within the available time period, as well as through individual discussions with beneficiaries during Grama Niladhari (GN) office-level meetings, particularly in locations where access constraints existed. These verification measures ensured that, despite the compressed implementation timeline, assistance was provided exclusively to households that met the agreed eligibility criteria.

3.2 Compilation and Validation of Beneficiary Lists

Following verification through community-level discussions and with the guidance of government officials, including Grama Niladhari (GN) and Divisional Secretariat (DS) officers, beneficiary information was consolidated into a final validated list within the agreed implementation period. Particular emphasis was placed on including vulnerable groups, such as female-headed households, elderly persons, persons with disabilities, displaced and temporarily relocated families, and households with limited or no income sources. The validated beneficiary list was reviewed and endorsed at the GN, DS, and SLRCS branch levels to confirm compliance with targeting criteria, data accuracy, and protection considerations prior to initiating cash transfers, ensuring that speed did not compromise quality or inclusivity.

3.3 Cash Assistance Transfer Mechanism

The multipurpose cash assistance was delivered through bank transfers directly to beneficiaries, with the National Headquarters (NHQ) depositing the funds into beneficiaries' bank account as a secure, efficient, and traceable modality. This approach enabled rapid disbursement within the short response timeframe. Each eligible household received a one-off emergency cash grant of LKR 27,000 in line with the agreed response strategy. The use of direct bank transfers facilitated timely transfers, strengthened financial accountability and auditability, and reduced protection and security risks for beneficiaries and staff, while allowing households to access assistance with dignity and choice.

3.4 Transparency, Accountability, and Safeguards

Throughout the accelerated implementation period, SLRCS prioritized transparency and accountability. Beneficiaries were clearly informed about the eligibility criteria, assistance amounts, transfer modalities, and implementation timelines. To further ensure transparency and proper communication, both National Headquarters (NHQ) and branch-level teams conducted call verification immediately after cash was deposited into beneficiaries' accounts. This mechanism was particularly important for ensuring that beneficiaries who did not have phone alerts were informed in a timely manner about the receipt of cash assistance.

All processes were implemented in line with Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA) principles, ensuring that beneficiaries fully understood their entitlements and that appropriate safeguards were maintained, even under tight time constraints.

3.5 Community Feedback and Complaints Mechanism

A Community Feedback and Complaints Mechanism (CFCM) was operationalized and communicated to beneficiaries within the agreed response period. Beneficiaries were provided access to the SLRCS National Headquarters (NHQ) hotline, enabling them to safely submit complaints, concerns, suggestions, or requests for clarification related to the cash assistance. All feedback and complaints were logged, reviewed, and addressed promptly in coordination with branch and NHQ teams, reinforcing accountability to affected populations during the emergency phase.

Research Design, Sample Size, and Selected Area

The Post-Distribution Monitoring (PDM) was conducted using a quantitative cross-sectional survey design, complemented by qualitative observation and community feedback mechanisms. The design aimed to systematically assess the effectiveness, relevance, and outcomes of the Emergency Multipurpose Cash Assistance (MPCA) provided to households affected by Tropical Storm “Dithwa” in Trincomalee District.

Data collection was conducted using the KOBO Toolbox, an established digital data collection platform that ensures accuracy, real-time monitoring, and secure storage of survey responses with ensuring data protection. The PDM questionnaire was structured to capture key indicators, including household demographics, assistance receipt, utilization of cash, satisfaction levels, and feedback on communication and accountability mechanisms.



Sample Size and Sampling Method

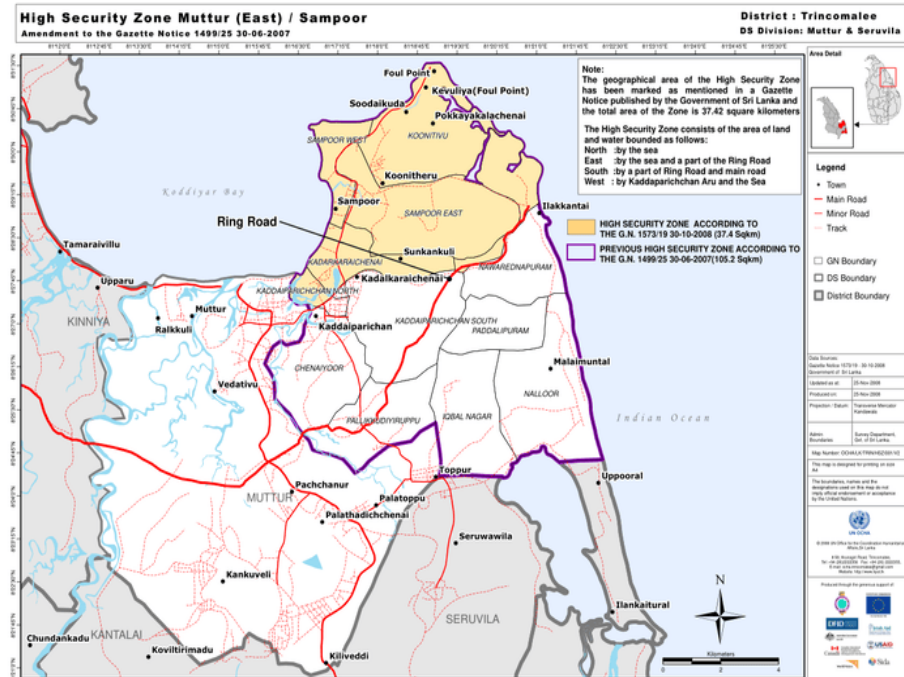
The total number of households targeted for cash assistance in Trincomalee District was 1,600 households, covering Muttur and Seruvila Divisional Secretariat (DS) Divisions. For the PDM, a 10% sample of the total caseload was selected for in-depth monitoring, resulting in 160 households.

A purposive random sampling approach was applied to ensure that the sample was representative of all assisted households and included vulnerable groups, such as female-headed households, elderly persons, persons with disabilities, and displaced families. The sampling was also proportionally distributed across both DS divisions to reflect the geographic spread of assistance.

Selected Area

The PDM focused exclusively on Trincomalee District, specifically within the Muttur and Seruvila DS Divisions, which were the areas most affected by flooding during Tropical Storm Dithwa. Data collection teams conducted household visits across these areas, ensuring accessibility while adhering to safety protocols.

The use of KOBO enabled efficient tracking of surveyed households, real-time data validation, and immediate integration of survey results for analysis. The collected data provided a comprehensive picture of beneficiary experiences and outcomes, informing program accountability and operational learning.



Map of Selected Area

The PDM covered the following DS divisions within Trincomalee District: Muttur and Seruvila. A map illustrating the geographical coverage of the MPCA intervention and the PDM survey locations is included below for reference.

Key Finding:

Demographic Profile of Respondents

The majority of the respondents were female, accounting for approximately 72 per cent of the total sample, while male respondents comprised about 27 per cent. The age distribution indicates a higher concentration among older and middle-aged adults, with the above 57 years age group representing the largest proportion at 30 per cent. This is followed by respondents aged 42–49

years, who account for 20 per cent, and those in the 34–41 years age group, comprising 19.44 per cent of the sample. Participants aged 50–57 years represent 13.33 per cent, while the 26–33 years age group accounts for 12.78 per cent. The 18–25 years age group is the least represented, comprising 4.44 per cent of respondents.

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents		
DREF Operation – Ditwah Cyclone Cash Distribution PDM Survey 2025		
Demographic Variable	Category	Percentage (%)
Sex of Respondent		
Sex	Female	73.33%
	Male	26.11%
Age Group of Respondent		
Age Group	18–25 years	4.44%
	26–33 years	12.78%
	34–41 years	19.44%
	42–49 years	20.00%
	50–57 years	13.33%
	Above 57 years	30.00%

Note: Total respondents = 180. Percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Age Group Distribution

Percentage of respondents per age band



Pre-Flood Income Sources / Occupation

The analysis of respondents' income sources before the flooding indicates a clear pattern of economic vulnerability and livelihood dependency. Daily labour emerges as the dominant occupation, with 82 respondents relying solely on it. When combined with other activities such as farming, small business, or miscellaneous work, the total number of households partially dependent on daily labour rises further, highlighting a heavy reliance on informal and precarious employment.

Agriculture-based livelihoods, including respondents identified as Agriculture Farmers and those engaged in Farming, account for 22 households. A small subset combined agriculture with daily labour or other sources, suggesting partial income diversification but continued reliance on seasonal or unstable work. This indicates that households dependent on agriculture are particularly vulnerable to natural disasters, given the potential for crop damage and income loss.

Small business activities were the primary income source for 24 respondents, with only one respondent reporting small business combined with other work. This suggests that while entrepreneurial activities exist, they are limited in scale and diversification, leaving business owners susceptible to disruption from flooding.

Other occupations, including auto drivers, fishing, and a heterogeneous "Others" category (38 respondents), reflect additional livelihood strategies within the community. These occupations, while varied, are largely informal and vulnerable to economic shocks caused by floods.

Overall, the pre-flood income profile highlights that a majority of affected households depended on low-income, informal livelihoods. The high proportion of daily labourers and limited diversification across agriculture and small business sectors underscores the need for targeted recovery programs that combine immediate financial assistance with long-term livelihood support and diversification initiatives.

Receipt of Cash Assistance

The findings indicate a very high level of coverage of cash assistance among surveyed households. The majority of respondents (97.78%; n = 176) reported that their households recently received the cash grant from the Sri Lanka Red Cross Society (SLRCS). A small proportion of respondents (2.22%; n = 4) indicated that they received cash assistance from the government. However, these respondents appeared uncertain about the source of their assistance, likely due to the fact that affected households had received government support around the same time. As a result, their records were updated accordingly, but they mistakenly believed the assistance came from the government rather than SLRCS.

Among respondents who confirmed receipt of the cash grant, the majority (66.67 per cent; n = 120) reported that they received the assistance within one month, indicating timely disbursement of support. A further 31.11 per cent (n = 56) stated that they received the cash assistance within two months. Overall, the findings demonstrate that cash assistance was delivered within a reasonable timeframe for most beneficiaries, supporting the effectiveness and efficiency of the cash transfer process.

Utilization, Access, and Community Engagement

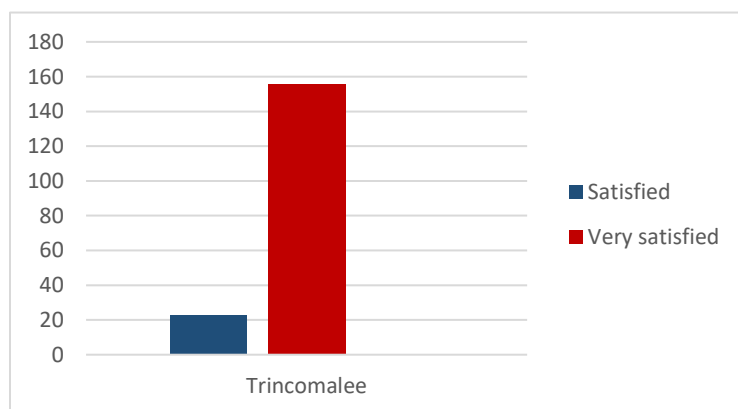
Survey results show that the majority of households primarily used the cash assistance to meet immediate food needs, with 87.78% (n = 158) of respondents reporting this use. Over half of the households (53.89%; n = 97) allocated the funds for basic household items, while 38.89% (n = 70) utilized the assistance for education-related expenses. Medical expenses were covered by 33.33% (n = 60) of households, and hygiene items were purchased by 10.56% (n = 19).

A smaller proportion of households invested the cash assistance in livelihood activities (5.56%; n = 10) or purchased assets such as mobile phones, televisions, and radios (3.89%; n = 7). Similarly, 3.89% (n = 7) used the funds for house repairs, while paying utilities such as water, electricity, and rent was reported by 1.67% (n = 3). Other miscellaneous uses were minimal, with 1.11% (n = 2) specifying other purposes and 0.56% (n = 1) using the cash to repay debts.

Overall, the data indicate that the cash assistance was predominantly directed towards essential household needs, with a smaller share allocated for livelihood support and asset acquisition.

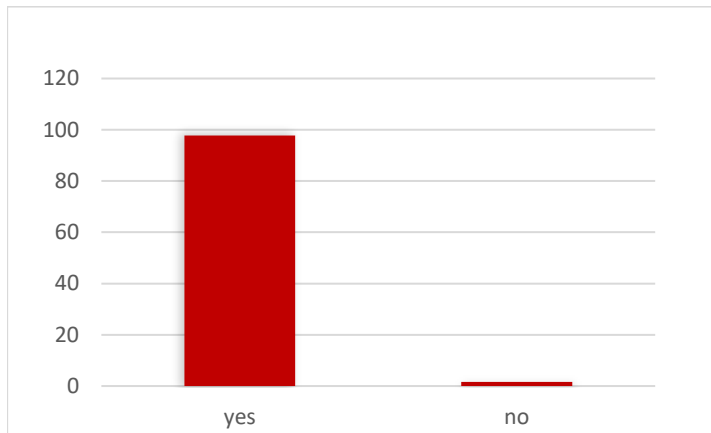
Beneficiary Satisfaction with Red Cross Services

The Post Distribution Monitoring (PDM) results from Trincomalee District indicate a high level of beneficiary satisfaction with the services provided by the Sri Lanka Red Cross Society (SLRCS).



According to the data, the majority of respondents reported being **“Very Satisfied”** with the Red Cross services received. A smaller proportion of beneficiaries indicated that they were **“Satisfied”**, while no significant negative feedback or dissatisfaction was recorded. This demonstrates that the assistance provided met or exceeded beneficiary expectations in terms of relevance, quality, and delivery.

The high level of satisfaction reflects the effectiveness of service delivery, including timely assistance, appropriate support aligned with community needs, and respectful engagement with



Do you feel that the staff treated you with respect during the entire process?

beneficiaries. These findings also suggest that Red Cross staff and volunteers followed accountability and community engagement principles during implementation. Overall, the PDM results confirm that the Red Cross intervention in Trincomalee was well-received by the affected communities and contributed positively to meeting their immediate needs. Continued adherence to Community Engagement and Accountability

(CEA) practices will help maintain and further strengthen beneficiary trust and satisfaction in future interventions.

Additionally, it is important to emphasize that not only were the procedures well-received, but satisfaction with the amount of cash assistance distributed was also remarkably high

Access to Assistance

The majority of beneficiaries (92.22%; n = 166) reported that they did not face any difficulties in receiving the cash assistance via bank transfer. A small proportion (7.78%; n = 14), however, experienced challenges, primarily due to the bank being located far from their homes (5%; n = 9), high transportation costs (3.33%; n = 6), lack of available transport (0.56%; n = 1). Despite these minor challenges, all beneficiaries were aware of the provision of cash assistance and received the support as part of this emergency response.

Feedback Mechanism Awareness

The assessment demonstrates strong beneficiary satisfaction and effective information dissemination during the emergency cash assistance program in Trincomalee. The majority of respondents (86.67%; n = 156) reported being very satisfied with the information they received, while 12.78% (n = 23) were satisfied. Staff interactions were highly appreciated, with 97.78% (n = 176) of respondents confirming that they were treated respectfully throughout the process. Overall satisfaction with the support provided by SLRCS was similarly high, with 88.89% (n = 160) very satisfied, 10% (n = 18) satisfied, and only 1.11% (n = 2) partly satisfied.

The feedback system proved to be accessible and functional. While 93.89% (n = 169) of respondents did not actively use formal feedback channels, 6.11% (n = 11) engaged with SLRCS through the NHQ hotline to clarify details regarding the timing of cash assistance. Among those who reached out, 45.56% (n = 82) reported receiving timely and adequate information or support.

Beneficiaries primarily became aware of available feedback mechanisms through community consultations conducted with the support of area GN officers, local community leaders, and community-level volunteers. Face-to-face interactions with volunteers accounted for 2.78% (n = 5) of awareness, while guidance from GN or government officers contributed 2.22% (n = 4). In the emergency context and given the short time period for assistance delivery, these local-level engagements played a crucial role in ensuring that beneficiaries were informed, confident, and able to use the feedback system effectively.

Overall, the findings highlight the effectiveness of combining community consultations, volunteer outreach, and hotline support to ensure comprehensive information dissemination and beneficiary engagement. This approach not only strengthened trust and transparency but also reinforced positive experiences among affected households during the cash assistance program.

Coping Strategies of Mutur and Seruwila Communities After Cyclone Dithwa

Cyclone Dithwa caused significant disruptions to livelihoods in both Mutur and Seruwila, damaging homes, agricultural lands, fishing equipment, and small businesses. In response, households adopted a variety of coping strategies to meet immediate needs such as food, shelter, and basic household expenses. These strategies ranged from adaptive measures that helped maintain resilience, to negative coping measures that risked long-term vulnerability.

The cash assistance provided by the Sri Lanka Red Cross Society (SLRCS) played a critical role in supporting households affected by Cyclone Dithwa in Mutur and Seruwila Trincomalee District. By providing immediate financial resources, the emergency cash grants enabled families to meet their essential needs such as food, medicine, and shelter repairs, reducing reliance on harmful coping strategies like skipping meals or selling productive assets. In addition, the assistance helped households restore their livelihoods more quickly, such as repairing houses, purchasing seeds or re make livestock, and restarting existing small businesses, thereby supporting longer-term resilience. Beyond meeting material needs, the cash grants also contributed to psychological relief, giving families a sense of control and security during a period of uncertainty. Overall, SLRCS cash assistance acted as both a safety net for survival and a catalyst for livelihood recovery, significantly strengthening the coping capacity of affected communities.

Key Observation

I. Proper Beneficiary Selection

The PDM findings confirm that the selection of beneficiaries for the Emergency Multipurpose Cash Assistance was carried out appropriately and in accordance with the eligibility criteria established in consultation with Grama Niladhari (GN)

recommendations. While a few government pension holders were included, verification during field visits showed that these individuals were primarily female-headed households, widows, or households fully affected by flooding and cyclone impacts.

II. **Coverage of Vulnerable Groups**

Field visits revealed that the households visited represented the most vulnerable groups within the targeted communities. All selected beneficiaries were 100% affected by flooding or cyclone-related damages. No households outside the established vulnerability criteria were included in the assistance.

III. **Community Feedback and Complaints**

During the PDM exercise, a small number of complaints were received from non-beneficiaries, including government employees, requesting consideration in future interventions. These individuals cited low income levels and vulnerability. While they were not eligible under the current targeting criteria, their feedback highlights the need for continued assessment of vulnerable populations-(Government worker specially forces) in future cash-based programming.

IV. **Limitations Due to Resource Allocation**

Although additional suitable households exist in nearby GN divisions, the available donor funding and SLRCS operational capacity required that the intervention focus on the areas most severely affected. Consequently, assistance was limited to the highest-need households across all GNs within the Muttur and Seruwila DS divisions.

V. **Timely Delivery and Beneficiary Satisfaction**

The cash assistance was delivered efficiently within a short timeframe, and 100% of surveyed beneficiaries expressed a high level of satisfaction with the timeliness, amount, and delivery process. The intervention successfully addressed urgent needs while maintaining dignity and accountability standards.

Overall, the PDM confirms that the cash assistance intervention was well-targeted, transparent, and highly effective in reaching the most affected and vulnerable households. Minor concerns raised by non-beneficiaries provide useful guidance for future targeting adjustments, but the operation successfully achieved its primary objective of rapid relief for flood- and cyclone-affected households.

Recommendation for the Future intervention

I. **Maintain Proper Targeting of Vulnerable Households**

Future cash assistance interventions should continue to prioritize the most affected and vulnerable households, including female-headed households, widows, and those fully impacted by disasters. The targeting criteria used in this intervention proved effective in reaching 100% of the intended vulnerable population and should remain the basis for selection in subsequent operations.

II. Consider Inclusion of Marginally Overlooked Vulnerable Groups

While the current intervention focused on the most severely affected areas, feedback from non-beneficiaries, including government officers with limited income, highlights the need to consider allocating a small portion of assistance to low-income government staff or other moderately vulnerable groups in future operations. This could be done while maintaining the primary focus on the highest-need households, ensuring fairness and broader community acceptance.

III. Strengthen Community Engagement and Communication

Continue and expand community consultations at the GN and DS levels to clearly communicate eligibility criteria, selection processes, and the rationale for coverage limitations. This will help manage expectations, reduce grievances, and enhance transparency in targeting decisions.

IV. Expand Geographic Coverage Within Resource Limits

Where feasible, future operations may consider including additional nearby GNs with vulnerable households, particularly if donor allocations or operational capacity allow. This ensures that the intervention reaches as many affected households as possible while maintaining efficiency and accountability.

V. Ensure Timely Delivery and Monitoring

Maintain the practice of rapid cash disbursement, as timely delivery was highly appreciated by beneficiaries and contributed to a positive impact on their coping capacity. In addition to Post-Distribution Monitoring (PDM), it is recommended to implement mid-term monitoring during the intervention period to track the ongoing utilization of cash assistance, identify emerging issues, and make timely adjustments. This dual monitoring approach will enhance accountability, ensure that assistance continues to meet beneficiary needs, and document lessons learned for improved planning and response in future cash-based interventions.

VI. Enhance Flexibility in Assistance Allocation

Consider introducing a small flexible allocation within the budget to allow inclusion of special cases, such as government staff or other marginally vulnerable households identified through GN recommendations, without compromising coverage of the most affected communities.

Conclusion

The Post-Distribution Monitoring (PDM) confirms that the Emergency Multipurpose Cash Assistance (MPCA) implemented by the Sri Lanka Red Cross Society (SLRCS) in Trincomalee District was timely, well-targeted, and highly effective in addressing the urgent needs of households affected by Tropical Storm Dithwa. Beneficiary selection adhered to established vulnerability criteria, prioritizing those most severely impacted, including female-headed households, widows, and fully affected families. Field verification demonstrated that all assisted households met the criteria, and minor feedback from non-beneficiaries provides guidance for potential adjustments in future interventions.

The cash assistance enabled households to meet essential needs such as food, shelter, health, education, and livelihood recovery, reducing reliance on negative coping strategies and enhancing overall resilience. Beneficiaries expressed high satisfaction with both the timeliness and the process of assistance delivery, reflecting the effectiveness of SLRCS operations, adherence to Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA) principles, and transparent communication throughout the intervention.

While resource limitations required prioritization of the most affected areas, the intervention successfully maximized the impact of available funding by covering all GNs under the Muttur and Seruwila DS divisions. Lessons learned from this PDM—including the importance of mid-term monitoring, clear community communication, and consideration of moderately vulnerable groups such as low-income government staff—will inform the design and implementation of future cash-based interventions.

Overall, the PDM demonstrates that the SLRCS MPCA intervention provided critical, dignified, and effective support, strengthening the coping capacity of the most vulnerable households and laying a foundation for sustained recovery and resilience in the affected communities.

Annexes:



