



This report is produced by OCHA Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, in collaboration with humanitarian partners. It covers the period from 15 May 2016 to 22 May 2016.

## Highlights

- Floods and landslides in Sri Lanka have affected 340,150 people according to information from the Government of Sri Lanka Disaster Management Centre, 84 people are known to have died and 116 people are still missing.
- As a result of the floods, 237,240 people have been displaced from their homes and have moved to 376 'safe locations', including camps as well as schools, temples, community centres, with host families or in other temporary accommodation.
- At least 503 houses are reported to have been destroyed with a further 3,793 partially damaged, although extent of damage is likely to be higher.
- Flood waters are not likely to recede for several days and landslides warnings remain in place in nine locations.
- These are reportedly the worst floods in 25 years, with further heavy rains and flooding likely as the monsoon continues.

**340,000**

Affected people

**237,000**

Internally displaced

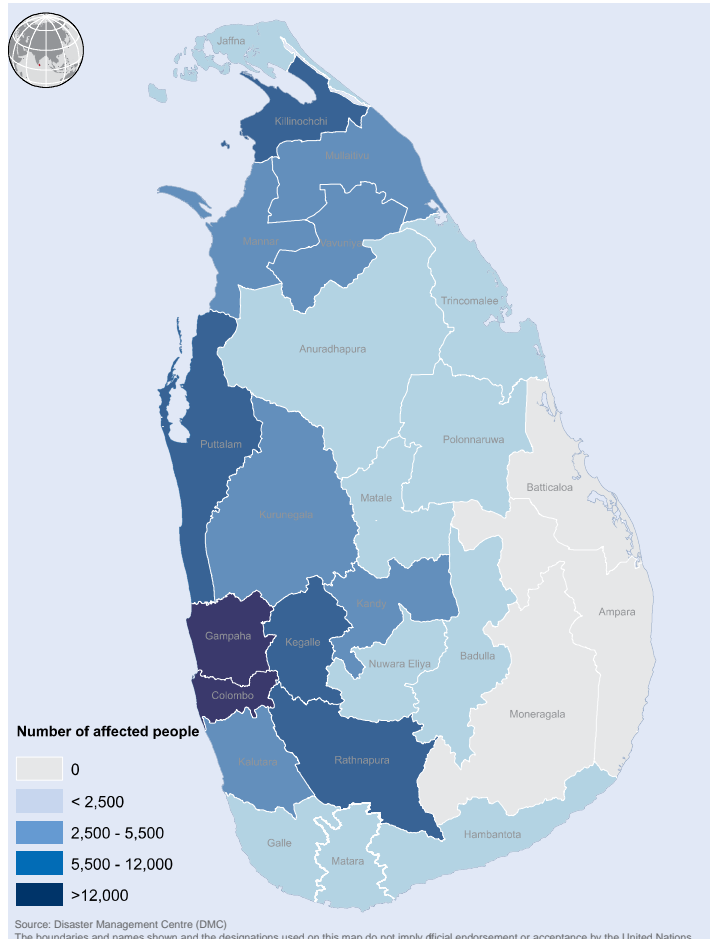
**4,296**

Houses damaged

**84**

People dead

Sri Lanka: Number of people affected by floods and landslides (as of 22 May 2016)



## Situation Overview

On 15 May 2016 Sri Lanka was hit by a severe tropical storm that caused widespread flooding and landslides in 22 districts of the country destroying homes and submerging entire villages. At least 84 people are known to have died as a result of Tropical Storm Roanu and a further 116 people are still missing, many as the result of a landslide that struck Aranayake, Kegalle district on 17 May 2016; this was followed by a second landslide in the same area four days later and landslides warning remain in place in nine areas of the country.

Currently 237,240 people are displaced from their homes and living in a variety of safe locations including camps, schools, temples, with host families and in other temporary accommodation. The majority of these displaced people are in Colombo and Gampaha districts in the south-west of the country where floodwaters still remain high. As a result of heavy rains, several major reservoirs overflowed and flood gates were fully opened to avoid a dam breach, causing flooding downstream. Areas downstream of two large rivers to the north and south of the capital city

Colombo, the Kelani river and the Kalu river, remain flooded with the possibility of further floodwaters flowing from upstream areas should heavy rains persist.

It is expected to take several days for floodwaters to recede and in some areas water levels remain as high as the roofs of people's houses with access only possible by boat or by air. Many of the affected population, particularly in the rural areas, were already amongst the most vulnerable in the country and have now lost everything, including their homes, possessions, agricultural land and means of making a living. In the urban areas there are growing health concerns related to the quantity of so much standing water in highly populated areas and the destruction of much of the water and sanitation infrastructure, which could lead to serious public health issues.

While Tropical Storm Roanu has now passed over Sri Lanka, the Department of Meteorology predicts more rain over the island in the coming days as normal south-west monsoonal rains settle in. This could cause additional flooding and landslides in many of the same areas which are still waterlogged, with those who have lost their homes and who are living in temporary shelters the most vulnerable to the potential impacts.

The Government of Sri Lanka is leading the response to the floods; Tri Forces are fully engaged in search and rescue, and evacuation missions as well as distributing relief items to those people still trapped by the flood waters, and the Sri Lankan Army are working to recover the bodies of those missing in the Aranayake landslide. Local organisations, faith groups, youth groups and businesses are actively involved in the provision of aid. Priority needs are for WASH, health, shelter and food assistance, and current requests include the provision of emergency items including clothing, water purification tablets, temporary latrines, hygiene and cooking equipment, and boats. UN agencies and NGOs are providing items from existing stocks.

## Humanitarian Response

### Education

#### Needs:

- Relevant provincial authorities are still in the process of collecting information on the impact of floods and mudslides on schools. Preliminary information is expected by the end of the month.
- Most of the 376 safe locations in all the 22 affected districts are schools where classrooms, WASH facilities and other buildings have been used by the displaced people. Before returning back to education, these schools and other affected schools need to be cleaned and repaired.
- The current situation affected the teaching/learning practices of schools as it happened during the school term. Confirmation on the date of commencement of the school in severely affected areas is still pending.
- School packs (uniforms, supplies etc.) will be needed for children returning to school. Similarly teaching/learning materials may be required.

#### Response:

- Based on the rapid needs assessments (currently going-on), UNICEF will support the National Child Protection Authority (NCPA) and the Ministry of Education in ensuring adequate protection and safety of all children affected by floods, especially those living in the camps, and ensuring that they get back to school as soon as possible.
- UNICEF is partnering with the Australian Department for Foreign Aid and Trade (DFAT) to focus on the needs of affected children in the camps, and their return to education. This includes some of the immediate needs – protection and psychosocial support for all children, in particular those separated from their families, unaccompanied children and children who have been orphaned. Support will likely include education services. The main partners for UNICEF are the Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs (through their National Child Protection Authority) and the Ministry of Education.

### Food Security

#### Needs:

- The Government has indicated that the food needs of affected populations are met for the next five days. In the longer term, individuals who have lost their assets, sources of livelihood and agricultural land will need support to ensure access to adequate food.

**Response:**

- WFP is supporting the Ministry of Disaster Management to conduct a rapid needs assessment by providing staff and vehicles and will lead the data analysis and reporting to be finalized by 24 May.
- WFP stands ready to support cash assistance for the purchase of food as and when food needs arise from the assessments.
- World Vision and ChildFund Sri Lanka have provided dry and cooked food rations to flood affected people in Mullaitivu and Gampaha districts, both directly and to the Government's Disaster Management Centre (DMC.)

**Gaps & Constraints:**

- There have been significant donations of cooked food by local organisations and groups to flood affected people. However, there are issues around the coordination of these donations leading to waste in some areas, with the potential to cause further environmental and public health concerns.

**Health****Needs:**

- Information on how many of the health/medical centers have been adversely affected is not available, although early indications are that no Ministry of Health (MoH) institutions are reported as damaged and hospitals continue to remain operational, providing the necessary care.
- As a result of the large quantities of standing water, communities are increasingly at risk of leptospirosis and water-borne, skin diseases and vector-borne diseases.
- Early detection of dengue, measles, diarrhea, pneumonia symptoms is important.
- Pregnant and lactating women, and children under five who have been displaced from their homes and are living in temporary accommodation are especially vulnerable to waterborne and communicable diseases.
- Affected populations are vulnerable to psychosocial distress and trauma as a result of the disaster.

**Response:**

- The current health response is coordinated by the Disaster Preparedness and Response Division of the Ministry of Health, Nutrition and Indigenous Medicine (MoH) with the Emergency Operations Room functioning 24/7.
- The MoH has issued relevant guidelines and has provided vital support in the form of personnel, medical supplies and financial assistance to the affected Regional Directorates.
- WHO has provided emergency funds of 1million Sri Lankan rupees (LKR) to MoH as well as technical support and equipment.
- WHO has provided 1,500 hygiene kits and 2,000 bottles of drinking water to be distributed through DMC.
- World Vision has provided hygiene kits to 600 families in Kegalle and Puttalam districts.

**Gaps & Constraints:**

- Many areas remain inaccessible and without health support.
- Provision of water and sanitation to the health facilities/hospitals that are catering to the medical needs of the affected population.
- Ensure existing health facilities have access to sufficient medical supplies – including essential medicines - to treat the affected population groups
- Provision of health measures to prevent vector-borne and water-borne diseases, especially in the areas are prone to leptospirosis and dengue.
- Appropriate mental health and psychosocial services for flood affected populations.

**Protection****Needs:**

- Children are very much vulnerable due to current flooding and landslides. There have been growing concerns on missing, unaccompanied and separated children as currently no formal registration system exists; the number of children displaced and temporarily settled in camps is not known/confirmed yet. Protection of children should be given high priority especially those living in camp settings.

- To date, no children were reported as separated, unaccompanied or orphan children in flood affected areas.
- There are growing concerns for the psychosocial well-being of flood-affected children, especially in Colombo and Gampaha Districts.

#### Response:

- UNICEF will support the National Child Protection Authority (NCPA) and the Ministry of Education in ensuring adequate protection and safety of all children affected by floods, especially those living in the camps, and ensuring that they get back to school as soon as possible.
- Protection and psychosocial support for all children, in particular those separated from their families, unaccompanied children and those who have been orphaned, will include education services, safe water, sanitation and hygiene, and health services for those living in the camps. The main partners for UNICEF are the Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs (through their National Child Protection Authority) and the Ministry of Education.
- UNICEF CP staff are providing technical inputs and coordination support to the relevant Ministries to ensure quality and timely responses to those affected by the floods and landslides.



#### Shelter

#### Needs:

- At least 476 houses have been destroyed and 3,699 homes damaged. This number is expected to rise as more information is available from inaccessible rural areas and assessments are conducted in the more vulnerable urban and peri-urban areas.

#### Response:

- 236,240 people are being housed in 376 safe locations, which are primarily public buildings
- Governments of India and Japan provided tents and tarpaulin sheets.
- World Vision and ZOA have provided emergency non-food items including tarpaulins/plastic sheeting to repair damaged roofs and walls, as well as sandbags to protect homes.

#### Gaps & Constraints:

- In landslide affected areas, communities will not be able return to their place or origin because of the ongoing threat from further landslides. There is therefore a need for longer term alternative shelter options.
- A sizeable segment of the flood affected population are squatters living in vulnerable areas prone to frequent flooding. Therefore transitional shelter arrangements may be required until suitable land is identified for relocation.
- Identification of suitable locations for transitional shelter arrangements is challenging in the densely populated urban areas of Colombo and Gampaha



#### Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

#### Needs:

- In flood affected locations in urban areas, such as Colombo, the water and sanitation infrastructure has been overwhelmed. Human and animal waste is being deposited in the standing water causing concern for immediate and longer term health problems.
- Many wells and other sources of drinking water have been damaged or destroyed, and populations require access to sources of clean, safe water as well as sanitation facilities.

#### Response:

- Unicef has provided support to the MoH with supplies of 500,000 water purification tablets to ensure safe drinking water and 12.5 tons of chlorine to disinfect contaminated wells and homes.
- UNICEF is working closely with the National Water Supply and Drainage Board to procure 80 water tanks (1,000 litres) and 20 pumps, which will be distributed in the next few days based on the needs of the affected districts.

- UNICEF WASH staff are providing technical inputs and coordination support to ensure quality and timely responses to those affected by the floods and landslides.
- World Vision has provided seven emergency mobile latrines in Kandy and Gampaha, as well as bottled water in Colombo and Puttalam.

## General Coordination

An inter-agency, multi-sector needs assessment was conducted on 21 May, the results of which will support the humanitarian response going forward.

A massive influx of cooked food, non-food items and relief from the general public and private sector was noted in urban and rural areas affected by floods and landslides. This has resulted in difficulties of crowd controlling, effective relief distribution and limited coordination of relief donation.

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