

Satellite picture - Nov.28th 2025

Rising beyond
Ditwah
Rebuilding lives,
restoring hope



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Rebuilding lives, restoring hope

In partnership with



myriad
australia
for borderless giving



With assistance from local government authorities



A COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES (CDS) RESPONSE TO CYCLONE DITWAH

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Copyright: Community Development Services (CDS)
Colombo, Sri Lanka
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Acknowledgements

At the outset, we would like to express our sincere gratitude for the partnership with Myriad Australia, which enabled us to secure funding aimed at providing immediate relief to families affected by Cyclone Ditwah. On November 28, 2025, Ditwah unleashed its devastation across the country, impacting all 25 districts and leaving some of them unrecognisable.

Our focus was on four severely affected districts: Colombo, Gampaha, Kegalle, and Kandy. In Kandy, we collaborated with two civil society organisations: the Young Men's Muslim Association (YMMA) and the Community Development Centre (CDC) based in Aranayaka, Kegalle.

In Colombo and Gampaha, we partnered with the Ministry of Health's divisional office in Mulleriyawa, as well as the public health inspectors. Additionally, in Gampaha, we worked closely with the Gampaha District Secretariat and the Mayor's office.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to every staff member of these institutions and organisations for their unwavering support, which was crucial in ensuring the success of the distribution drive conducted by the CDS team.

Lastly, we owe a special thanks to the CDS staff and two of its board members who tirelessly worked around the clock to ensure the goods were procured, stored, transported, and distributed to the affected families with exceptional coordination.

Andrew Samuel



Community Development Services (CDS)

Gazetted in 1978 as an Approved Charity by an Act of Parliament
(Gazette No.15 of 15/12/1978)
Certificate of Incorporation under the Companies Act No.7 of 2007.
New No. G.A 295

Mission

For a better life — uniting people from all segments of society, especially vulnerable, at-risk, and underserved groups, regardless of cultural, religious, ethnic, gender, or sexual orientation, to be recognised and respected as equal citizens through a movement that promotes human rights, health rights, and integrated social development via national and international cooperation.

Key Objectives

Guided by a rights-based and gender-sensitive framework, CDS pursues the following objectives:

- Promote Rights and Welfare – Protect and advocate for communities excluded from mainstream society, including low-skilled women migrant workers, micro and small entrepreneurs (MSMs), LGBTIQ individuals, slum dwellers, and socio-economically vulnerable women.
- Strengthen Resilience – Enhance livelihoods, skills, and reintegration support to enable families to live with dignity and independence.
- Advance Health Rights – Ensure access to HIV prevention, sexual and reproductive health (SRH), occupational health, and tuberculosis (TB) services, NCDs, and mental health.
- Champion Safe Migration – Provide knowledge and advocacy on safe labour migration, migrant workers' rights, and prevention of trafficking, smuggling, and cyber trafficking.
- Build Community and Institutional Capacity – Strengthen grassroots groups and local institutions to deliver inclusive services.
- Address Stigma and Discrimination – Confront social prejudices and systemic injustices that perpetuate violence and exclusion.
- Advocacy and Policy Engagement - CDS leverages its grassroots experience to inform national dialogue and influence policy. Key advocacy areas include trafficking prevention, migrant worker protections, women and youth in development, child nutrition and equitable access to health services. By engaging stakeholders at multiple levels, CDS amplifies the voices of marginalised populations.

Our Strategic Focus

Strategic areas of engagement

Working with inadequately served and
vulnerable population groups
for a better life

Strategic Pillar 1

Labour migration
& health

Strategic Pillar 2

Labour migration
& rights

Strategic Pillar 3

Climate impact
and livelihood

Strategic Pillar 4

Child welfare,
protection, rights,
and nutrition

Strategies

(Within a rights-based framework)

Engage in Evidence-based programming / Participatory action research / multi-stakeholder & multi-sectoral engagement / Scaling up capacity enhancement skills of civil society organisations / Advocate for national policy engagement / Governance / Promote international instruments / Active engagement in regional and international development processes

Ditwah – a climate fury

The weather began to change its course around the 25th of November in Sri Lanka, as we anxiously awaited the arrival of Tropical Cyclone Ditwah. When it finally made landfall on the 28th, we were caught off guard by its sheer ferocity. Although we had anticipated the cyclone, the extent of its destruction was beyond anything we could have imagined, impacting over 2 million lives across our beautiful nation.

The devastation wrought by Ditwah was heart-wrenching. Nearly 1,000 lives were lost or turned into bittersweet memories, as families faced the unimaginable pain of losing their loved ones to relentless floods, landslides, and mudslides wreaking havoc in the hill-country districts of Kegalle, Kandy, Matale, Nuwara-Eliya, and Badulla. The cries of those affected echoed through the valleys, while Kurunegala, too, bore the brunt of nature's fury. In the Colombo and Gampaha districts, the Kelani River overflowed, swallowing homes and livelihoods, leaving countless families adrift in despair.

Yet, amidst the sorrow, a remarkable spirit of resilience and compassion emerged from the shadows. Relief efforts surged forth from every corner, but it was the local communities that truly shone in their darkest hour. Neighbours banded together, reaching out to one another without hesitation. Churches, temples, mosques, and schools opened their doors wide, transforming into sanctuaries for those displaced by the disaster.

The sight of strangers becoming friends, coming together to provide shelter, food, and comfort, was a poignant reminder of our shared humanity. In the face of tragedy, it was the unbreakable bonds of community that offered a flicker of hope, lighting the way for those lost in the turmoil of loss. We are eternally grateful to the security forces personnel who braved the rising flood waters and ferocious winds to save lives.

With water levels surging to 5-8 feet, countless homes and townships were engulfed, leaving families to grapple with unimaginable loss. As they returned to their neighbourhoods, the sight of their cherished belongings swept away by the relentless waters filled their hearts with sorrow.

These families, now faced with the daunting task of starting anew, found solace in the swift response of the community. With government assistance available, clean up crews began the painstaking work of restoring their homes, but the emotional toll lingers. Each battered wall and abandoned toy tells a story of hope and resilience in the face of adversity. Together, they are not just rebuilding structures; they are rekindling the spirit of their lives, drawing strength from one another as they navigate this difficult journey towards recovery.

Sri Lanka finds itself in the throes of a historic crisis, a situation exacerbated by the economic turmoil of 2022 and the devastating aftermath of Tropical Cyclone Ditwah. This relentless storm has effectively stalled both the nation's economic and social lifelines, plunging the country into disarray.

Cyclone Ditwah has unleashed its fury, inflicting substantial devastation on over 576,626 families, or over 2 million individuals, resulting in the tragic loss of 611 lives and leaving 213 individuals unaccounted for. UNICEF reports that the storm's ravages have uprooted more than 275,000 children, as documented by the Disaster Management Centre and UNICEF.

The landscape was marred by the swift rise of rivers and reservoirs, which have transformed serene areas into chaotic flood zones, inundating vast stretches of the country. As the waters began their slow retreat, the looming threat of landslides and mudslides emerged, exacerbated by the onset of the north-east monsoons. The country's river basins remain on high alert, a tense watch for further calamity. Entire neighbourhoods, villages, and towns have been devastated, with homes, schools, places of worship, and community centres destroyed. The country's critical infrastructure, including the road network, railroads, and electricity supply, has also suffered significant damage. The damage to agriculture was significant, especially in paddy and vegetable cultivation, and it also affected micro, small, and medium industries. The World Bank estimates that total economic losses range between USD 6 billion and 7 billion.

In response to this unfolding humanitarian crisis, Community Development Services (CDS), in partnership with Myriad Australia, local government authorities, and civil society organisations, identified the most affected families and distributed essential relief items in the hardest-hit districts. This initiative was executed with the primary objective of restoring dignity, stability, and hope to those affected while ensuring transparency, accountability, and community involvement throughout the process.

Our partnership effort successfully provided five essential categories of goods as immediate cyclone and flood relief to the selected families, which were verified and given to us by the local authorities in the four districts.

1. Cooking utensils comprising a set of 5 cooking pans and a kettle,
2. Household plastic products comprising a wash basin, bucket, a water jug, a set of six water tumblers and plates, four dishes and six bottles to store dry condiments, sugar, and milk powder,
3. Bedding set comprising a latex mattress, two pillows, bed linen, two pillowcases, and two towels,
4. A back-to-school pack comprising a school bag, ten exercise books and CR books, six pens and pencils, a drink bottle, and a lunch box,
5. A voucher valued at Rs.3,500.00 to purchase their immediate food, hygiene products and dry rations from a leading supermarket chain.

District	Products				
	Back-to-school packs	Bedding packs	Cooking utensils pack	Household plastic products	Vouchers for dry rations
Colombo	90	50	50	50	70
Gampaha	80	24	36	36	21
Kandy	68	64	65	65	49
Kegalle	56	50	50	50	50
Total recipients	294	188	201	201	190

On receipt of the funds, CDS worked with two of its partner organisations, the Young Men's Muslim Association (YMMA) in Kandy, and the Community Development Centre in Kegalle, to identify the most affected households with the assistance of the local authorities in the two districts and their divisions.

In Colombo, we were assisted by Public Health Inspectors of the Ministry of Health office in the Kolonnawa and Meethotamulla divisions, which were badly affected.

In the Gampaha district, we were assisted by the Gampaha Municipal Council and the Gampaha Divisional Secretariat Office to identify the recipients. In the Gampaha district, we also assisted a church community that was affected by the floods by offering back-to-school packs and vouchers to purchase dry rations. This event took place on the 4th of January in the church premises in Uswetikeiyawa.

The distribution of goods aimed at restoring households affected by the cyclone and floods, along with their resettlement, took place on the following dates: January 6th and 7th in Kandy, January 9th in Kegalle, January 13th in Gampaha, and January 16th in Colombo, as instructed by the local authorities.

Our Observations

In our assessment across the four districts of Colombo, Gampaha, Kandy, and Kegalle, where we implemented flood and cyclone relief efforts, we noted the persistent establishment of unauthorised structures, even within designated protected areas. This trend suggests a decline in the effectiveness of regulatory authorities in enforcing existing land-use regulations over time.

The mountainous areas of the Kandy and Kegalle districts were mainly affected by floods and landslides. These events occur when seasonal weather patterns are harsh. The tropical cyclone Ditwah was an exception, with property damage and even loss of life as was experienced. Landslides are a common phenomenon in these areas because the rich vegetation and forest cover on the mountains have been destroyed for unauthorised construction and development, causing immense harm to lives.

"The Kandy district, because of its mountainous terrain, was one of the most badly affected districts. We witnessed unprecedented floods and landslides, losing lives in many divisions. We are happy to engage with Community Development Services in the distribution of urgent relief to selected families. We also thank the development officers of the divisional secretariat offices for their assistance," – Nazar Mohideen Nifraz, Vice President, YMMA, Kandy

"I was personally very happy to hear Andrew Sir calling me to find out if we were safe from the floods and landslides. A few days later, he called again and asked me to identify 50 families that were badly affected. We distributed urgent goods. But we also distributed empathy," - Damayanthi Pushpakumari, President, Community Development Centre, Aranayaka

The climate dynamics in Gampaha exhibit unique characteristics due to its geographical context, with the town and its surrounding areas encircled by seven rivers and lakes that are frequently susceptible to flooding, as highlighted by the Deputy Secretary of the Divisional Secretariat. Furthermore, the Muthurajawela wetlands, situated within the Gampaha district, face significant threats from anthropogenic activities, particularly the degradation of mangrove ecosystems for development projects. This ongoing environmental degradation has been exacerbated by the negligence of regulatory authorities, resulting in critical habitat loss and increased vulnerability to climate impacts.

"Gampaha is a unique town. There are seven waterways that go through the city and the nearby towns. We experience floods every year. And every year at least 400 families are affected. We must find a permanent solution to this problem. We also must find effective ways to prepare these communities during such climate events," - Additional Divisional Secretary, Gampaha

The Colombo district has faced significant challenges due to cyclonic activity and resultant flooding. The combination of high population density and inadequate urban planning has rendered Colombo particularly susceptible to flooding, especially during monsoon seasons. The disproportionate economic opportunities present in Colombo and its adjacent areas have led to an escalated demand for land, with developments often occurring on parcels as small as 5 perches.

This lack of coherent town planning has contributed to increased congestion and environmental pollution. Specifically, the obstruction of natural drainage systems has resulted in water accumulation, with canals and waterways frequently overflowing into unregulated settlements. The escalation in land prices has fostered illegal construction practices; coupled with political patronage, this has undermined the enforcement of essential regulatory measures, exacerbating flood risks in these urban locales.

"It was coincidental when we met Chathura from Community Development Services (CDS) distributing meals to the affected families in the Mulleriyawa and Kolonnawa areas. What eventually materialised was a wonderful moment of humanity" – Senior PHI, Ministry of Health, Mulleriyawa

We also observed that the impact of climate events of this magnitude, or for that matter, the regular or seasonal climate events like floods, landslides, drought, and heatwaves have a profound impact on women. We are very inclined to believe that such impacts are no longer gender neutral. Women bear a much more significant and profound brunt of climate disasters in their communities. This was very evident in low-income homes.

Considering the unpredictable nature of income among low-income households, women frequently find themselves trapped in a cycle of unpaid care work, prioritising their families' needs over their own economic pursuits. This relentless devotion often sidelines their efforts to build or resume livelihoods.

We observed that there were women who had to deal with this disaster by themselves, as they were single mothers whose partners were not with them. In some homes, they had to manage the elderly, infants, growing children and family members with disabilities. This has brought about tremendous stress that they must deal with.

Our observations reveal a vibrant tapestry of businesses that these women once operated within their communities: the aroma of freshly prepared meals wafting from kitchens, colourful stalls brimming with fruits and vegetables, small grocery shops nestled in cosy corners of their homes, and the rhythmic sound of sewing machines as they undertook various assignments. In areas like Kandy and Kegalle, it was common to see these women nurturing home gardening plots, cultivating patches of green teeming with potential.

However, the landscapes of their livelihoods have been ravaged, leaving a veil of uncertainty hanging over when they might rise again. The looming fear of indebtedness weighs heavily on their shoulders, adding to the anxiety of an already challenging situation.

Disaster Preparedness and Recovery: A Call for Urgent Action

Health: In the aftermath of disasters, particularly those intensified by climate change, the imperative to address health concerns becomes paramount. These health threats encompass a spectrum of issues, including dermal conditions, water- and foodborne pathogens, vector-borne illnesses, as well as risks associated with electrical hazards and injuries stemming from falls.

Trauma & counselling: Cyclone Ditwah has inflicted severe damage, notably in regions already predisposed to the ramifications of climate impacts. Affected families face significant loss and psychological trauma. Prioritising comprehensive psychosocial support and trauma counselling is essential for fostering resilience and enabling individuals to navigate their recovery processes effectively.

Health & hygiene: The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the crucial role of preventive health measures, such as consistent use of face masks and strict adherence to hand hygiene, in mitigating viral transmission. Furthermore, populations affected by climate-induced disasters must be equipped with well-stocked emergency kits to promote hygiene and health.

Community preparedness: Education in first aid and essential life-saving skills, including cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), is critical for communities frequently facing disasters. Moreover, establishing clear emergency response and evacuation protocols is vital for enhancing community preparedness. Such initiatives should be implemented in vulnerable village communities and educational institutions, leveraging the structures of the Scout and Girl Guide movements.

Data collection & mapping: Robust data collection to evaluate disaster magnitudes and resultant damage is imperative for enhancing resilience to future climate events. Investment in advanced data technologies, such as drone monitoring and geographic mapping of at-risk areas, can facilitate more informed planning and response.

Demographic concerns: Our strategic planning must account for the diverse needs of various demographic groups, particularly the elderly, persons with disabilities, pregnant women, infants, and children, especially in the context of evacuation procedures and immediate healthcare responses during climate emergencies.

Early warning systems: Sri Lanka serves as a critical case study of a nation significantly vulnerable to climate change, facing severe alterations in seasonal patterns that result in extreme weather phenomena like floods, landslides, and heatwaves. The establishment of effective early warning systems and maintaining open communication channels during these events is not merely advisable—it is essential.

Legal & regulatory frameworks: Additionally, we must advocate for the development of robust legal frameworks and regulations aimed at improving climate event management, with particular emphasis on safeguarding essential natural resources—such as waterways, mangroves, and urban forests. It is crucial to integrate climate considerations into urban and infrastructure development planning, supported by substantial investments in waste management and disposal systems.

Restoration of life & livelihoods: In the post-resettlement phase, revitalising affected families and bolstering micro, small, and medium enterprises—often vital to local economies—should be prioritised. Ensuring recovery and sustainability requires the government to deliver targeted and strategic support tailored to the specific needs of these businesses.

Equipped shelters: Furthermore, shelters must be equipped to address urgent requirements, including collaboration with local government institutions to enhance their capacity for managing climate events, backed by the engagement of local communities.

Let us act decisively and compassionately to equip our communities for a resilient future. Together, we can build a pathway from disaster response to proactive recovery, ensuring that no one is left behind.

Final Thoughts

Sri Lanka has faced significant challenges in recent years, such as the 2019 Easter attacks, the COVID-19 pandemic, and the 2022 economic downturn. These events underscore the importance of robust preparedness for future incidents. The implications of Tropical Cyclone Ditwah further emphasise the importance of effective disaster management.

As climate change leads to more frequent hazards like flooding, landslides, droughts, and heatwaves, it is crucial to focus on proactive planning and preparedness. A collaborative effort among government entities and relevant institutions is essential for building community resilience and minimising negative impacts.

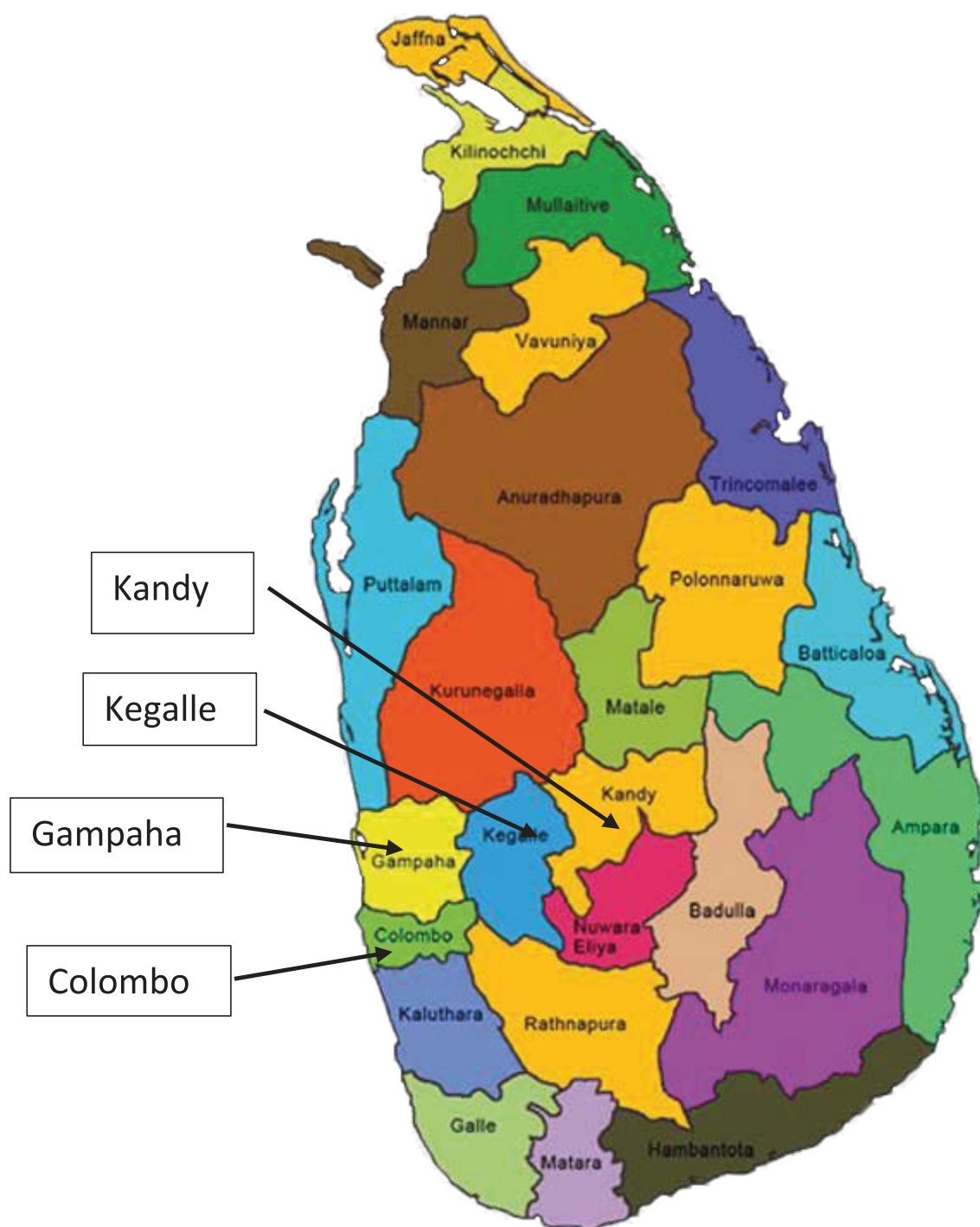
It is crucial to approach climate events and their impacts with a perspective that goes beyond merely building resilience. In Sri Lanka, we are seeing how our nation-building efforts are continually undermined by frequent climate disruptions, especially since we are recognised as one of the most vulnerable countries to extreme weather.

We must emphasise that effective disaster preparedness, investing in reliable climate data, and committing to sound climate governance are essential steps in managing these events. Quick fixes will not lead us to lasting solutions.

As we approach the targets set by the 2030 Agenda, it is imperative that we, as a nation, intensify our commitment to climate action. This responsibility extends not only to our national interests but also to the broader regional context in which we operate. The urgency of this political commitment demands that all stakeholders engage proactively in developing and implementing strategies aimed at mitigating climate change and fostering sustainable development. We must, therefore, address SDG 13 with purpose and commitment.

Moving forward, we must convert discussions and policies into actionable strategies. Protecting lives and livelihoods should be our top priority. By fostering accountability and climate governance, we can better manage future challenges and strengthen our ability to adapt.

Appendices Districts covered



Impact of Cyclone Ditwah in the selected districts

Rank	District	People Affected	Deaths / Missing	House Damage (Total)	People in Shelters	Key Notes
1	Kandy	Very high (161,140)	232 deaths, 81 missing	14,844 (1,800 fully + 13,044 partially)	30,870	Most severely impacted overall
2	Puttalam	433,036	35 deaths, 2 missing	5,269	1,881	One of the highest populations affected
3	Gampaha	362,664	13 deaths, 2 missing	5,352	1,259	High population impact, moderate housing damage
4	Badulla	58,699	90 deaths, 11 missing	7,695	16,750	Severe damage + significant fatalities
5	Kegalle	72,583	32 deaths, 39 missing	11,875	11,408	Heavy damage + high fatalities and displacement

IOM, cyclone Ditwah situation report. 8th December 2025

Kandy District

DS Division	GN Division	Number of families
Thalathuoya	Athulgama	07
Minipe	Ulpathgama	26
Pathadumbara	Panwila	16
Udapalatha	Bothalapiyaya	20
Total		69

Statements from some recipients in Kandy

"My name is Samanmali, and I live in the Narangala GN Division near Nawaguna Waterfall. I'm 54 years old, and I live with my husband, 27-year-old son, and my blind, elderly mother. On the night of the cyclone, my husband was out, leaving my son, mother, and me at home. Around 1:30 a.m., we heard a loud noise and saw boulders rolling down the mountain. My son and I quickly carried my mother to shelter under a tree until morning. By 5:00 a.m., the road to our village was blocked, and we were unable to contact anyone. Eventually, some young villagers rescued us with ropes, and we were taken to an emergency shelter for a month before receiving tents in Siyapatha Village. We lost everything that night except the clothes we were wearing".

“My name is Pushpakumara, and I am 27 years old. I live in Narangala, Bangalamaale Hill, with my parents, wife, and child in a small mud hut. During the Ditwah cyclone, a landslide near our home forced us to evacuate to a relative's house. While we tried to divert floodwaters, I went to secure my bicycle. When I returned, the mountain collapsed, burying my father and three neighbours under debris. After days of searching, two neighbours' bodies were found, but my father's remained missing. I kept returning to the site, and one day I spotted clothing near a muddy pit. We dug and discovered only his bones. Our mud hut was destroyed, and we are now living in a rented house”.

Colombo District

DS Division	GN Division	Number of families
Kolonnawa	Salamulla	07
Kolonnawa	Wadulla	06
Kolonnawa	Weraharagodella	07
Kolonnawa	Dhampura	06
Kolonnawa	Wellampitiya	09
Kolonnawa	Sedawala	06
Kolonnawa	Udumulla South	09
Total		50

Statements from some recipients in Colombo

“I am Chandrawathi, 51, living in Wennawatta GN Division with my husband and three children, aged 22, 18, and 11. I am a cancer patient receiving treatment at Maharagama Cancer Hospital. Due to financial issues, my eldest son went abroad six months ago. When the floods approached, my husband took us to a friend's house in Maharagama to keep us safe. The floodwaters rose about 10 feet, destroying our small wooden house. We have since rebuilt it using salvaged materials”.

“I am Fathima, 32 years old, with two children aged 12 and 6. My 12-year-old daughter cannot speak. We live in Kolonnawa, and my husband is in prison for drug addiction. I run a small business making string hoppers at home since I can't leave my children alone. Recently, our house was flooded, but I managed to save our television and some clothes by moving them to a neighbour's house. After four days, I returned to find everything in my home destroyed, including my children's clothes and books. A church helped with a gas stove and dry rations. Now, we're back in our old house with very little left.

Gampaha District

Gampaha Divisional Secretariat list of beneficiary school children

GN Division	Number of school children
Makewita North	12
Makewita South	23
Mahena	02
Makewita	07
Maheepalagoda	01
Madagama hathara	02
Kirindiwita	01
Usweñkeiyawa	20
Malwana	07
Total	75

Gampaha Divisional Secretariat, Pahalagama GN Division list of beneficiary families

Pahalagama GN Division	Number of families
Kumarathunga Road	24
Oruthota Road	04
Pokuna Road	02
Usweñkeiyawa	20
Malwana	10
Total	60

Statements from some recipients in Gampaha District

“My family includes my parents, brother, and sister. My father runs a small plant nursery, and my mother is a housewife. I am a Year 10 student at Anura National School, and we live in Yakkala, Gampaha, near the Attanagalu Oya. Recently, due to heavy rain, the river overflowed, flooding our home. We quickly gathered important documents, some money, and clothes, and fled to a relative's house on higher ground. When we returned, my father's nursery was destroyed, and all our school supplies were ruined. This loss has made it hard for my father to earn a living”.
(Nethikala)

“I am Shriyani Renuka, a 62-year-old grandmother from Pahalagama, living with my daughter and two young grandchildren. The recent flood was the most terrifying experience of my life. I had to leave my home, where I had lived for decades, and escape to my brother's house as the waters rose. When I returned, I found my belongings destroyed and my house feeling broken. At my age, starting over feels exhausting, and I feel weak and vulnerable. The flood not only took my possessions but also my sense of safety. I now live in constant fear, especially when it rains, and the emotional scars seem impossible to heal, though I am grateful to be with my family”.

Kegalle District

GN division	Number of families
1. Apalawa	02
2. Ruwandeniya	01
3. Galbokka	01
4. Salawa West	05
5. Salawa East	01
6. Debathgama	05
7. Gammannagoda	01
8. Gavilipeeya	02
9. Narangammana	02
10. Añapiñya	03
11. Narangala	10
12. Jambugasmada	04
13. Iddawala	01
14. Horewala	01
15. Arama Udagammadda	02
16. Narangalawañña	04
17. Ambadeniya	05
Total	50

Statements from some recipients in Kegalle District

“My name is Udayakumari, and I am 46 years old, living in Debathgama village with my husband and our son, who is in Year 11. One evening during a heavy rainstorm, while my son and I were at home, we noticed the bricks in the wall breaking. We fled to a neighbour's house, fearing for our lives, leaving everything behind. The next day, we found our upper floor had collapsed, and the only items we salvaged were my son's school books. We spent a month in the Debathgama emergency shelter, as everything we owned was destroyed. The trauma affected my son deeply, and I am doing my best to support him. We are currently living in a rented house”.

“I am K. R. D. A. Chandrawathi from Gammannagoda Division. My family includes my 79-year-old husband, me at 69, and our 27-year-old son with special needs. Our village has faced landslides three times, and Cyclone Ditwah worsened our situation. On November 28, 2025, I was hospitalised, and while my husband and son were home, a landslide partially destroyed our house. Our neighbours helped them find temporary shelter, and I rushed home upon hearing the news. Most of our belongings were ruined, and we could only salvage a few clothes. Currently, we cook on the verandah and sleep in a nearby house, as we cannot stay in someone else's home for long”.

Kegalle District

GN division	Number of families
1. Apalawa	02
2. Ruwandeniya	01
3. Galbokka	01
4. Salawa West	05
5. Salawa East	01
6. Debathgama	05
7. Gammannagoda	01
8. Gavilipeeya	02
9. Narangammana	02
10. Añapiñya	03
11. Narangala	10
12. Jambugasmada	04
13. Iddawala	01
14. Horewala	01
15. Arama Udagammadda	02
16. Narangalawañña	04
17. Ambadeniya	05
Total	50

Statements from some recipients in Kegalle District

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Distribution of relief goods to the affected communities



A COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES (CDS) RESPONSE TO CYCLONE DITWAH

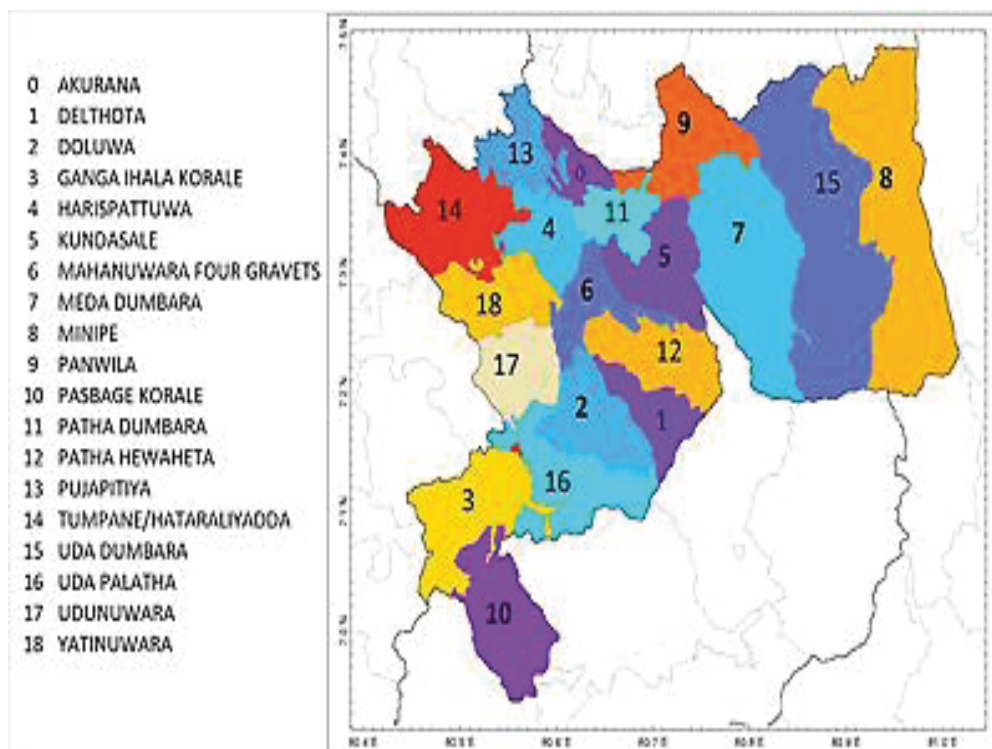
The ceremonies to distribute the relief items to the affected communities were organised by the CSO partners and government officials in their respective districts. CDS staff attended all the ceremonies and handed over relief items to the affected communities.

Relief distributions were carried out in the presence of government officials, with the participation of CDS representatives and through a household-level verification system to ensure correct targeting. All relief items reached the intended beneficiaries directly, maintaining dignity, equity, and accountability.

Kandy

In the Kandy district, four ceremonies had to be organised on the 6th and 7th January 2026 as the communities represented people from different areas, which were not in proximity to each other. The following table shows the locations where the ceremonies were held, and the Kandy district map shows the locations within the Kandy district.

Date	Place	Venue	Officers who participated
06.01.2026	Program 1 Divisional Secretariat – Pahathahewaheta Grama Niladhari (GN) Divisions - Ethulgama Batahira Grama Niladhari Wasama – 966	Athulugama GS Office Thalathuoya	01. Mr. R.M.M.D. Kumara – Grama Niladari (Ethulgama Batahira Grama Niladhari Wasama) – 966 02. Mr Danushka R Rathnayake - Grama Niladari (Batahira Poornawaŕha Grama Niladhari Wasama) – 240 03. YMMA and CDS Team
06.01.2026	Program 2 Divisional Secretariat – Pathadumbara Grama Niladhari (GN) Divisions - Panvila and Waŕhagama	Waŕhagama Barathi Tamil Maha Vidyalaya	01. Mr. Thiyagaraja Chandrakumar – Principle Waŕhagama Barathi Tamil Maha Vidyalaya 02. Mrs MPF Humaisara – Teacher Waŕhagama Barathi Tamil Maha Vidyalaya 03. Mr R.G.T.N. Pathirana - Grama Niladari (Panvila) 04. YMMA and CDS Team
06.01.2026	Program 3 Divisional Secretariat – Udawalpata Grama Niladhari (GN) Divisions - Bothalapiŕya	Udawalpata Divisional Secretariat Office Auditorium	01. Mrs. Athma Dilukshi Jayarathne – Divisional Secretary Udawalpata 02. Mr Vijitha Yaŕpansalawa – Administrative Officer Udawalpata 03. YMMA and CDS Team
07.01.2026	Program 4 Divisional Secretariat – Minipe Grama Niladhari (GN) Divisions – Ulpathgama	Ulpathgama Sri Ashokarama Temple Dambepiŕya - Hasalaka	01. Mr. Indika Wijerathna – Administrative Officer (Grama Niladhari) 02. Mrs. Nadishani Rajapaksha – Grama Niladari (Dambepiŕya Grama Niladari Wasama) 03. Mr. Dilipa Nuwan - Grama Niladari (Ulpathgama Grama Niladari Wasama) 04. Mr Danushka R Rathnayake - Grama Niladari (Batahira Poornawaŕha Grama Niladhari Wasama) – 240 05. YMMA and CDS Team



Photos from the ceremonies

Pathadumbara



Udawalatha



Thalathu Oya



Minipe



Kegalle

The distribution of relief goods in the Kegalle district took place on the 9th of January 2026 in the Community Development Centre field office in Aranayaka. The 50 beneficiaries from 16 GN divisions in Aranayaka gathered here to receive the relief items. For the ceremony, the District NGO Coordinator, Ms. K.R.P.S Priyadarshani and Human Resource Officer of the Aranayaka Divisional Secretariat Ms. Amila Jayasena, were present. Staff of both CDS and CDC were also present.





Gampaha

The distribution of relief goods in the Gampaha district took place on the 13th of January in two locations.

Gampaha Municipal Council event

Relief items were distributed to 30 cyclone-affected families with the coordination support of the Gampaha Mayor. This event took place at the Gampaha Municipal Council with the presence of the Gampaha Mayor Hon. Eric Ediriwickrama, his Coordination Secretary Mr. Hemasiri and his Personal Secretary Mr. Ajith Gamage.



Gampaha Divisional Secretariat

Relief items consisting of school items to 48 flood-affected children were distributed at the Gampaha Divisional Secretariat auditorium with the coordination support of the Gampaha Divisional Secretary Ms. Nadeeshani Amarasinghe, Assistant Divisional Secretary Ms. K.A.R.U Kapuru Bandara, Development Officer of Foreign Employment Ms. R. Thisanka and Child Rights Protection Officer Ms. Damayanthi Danapala.



Colombo

The distribution of relief goods in the Colombo district took place on the 16th of January. This was held at the Kolonnawa MoH office premises for 50 beneficiaries with the coordination support of the Medical Officer of Health, Dr Nalinda Gunawardana, Additional Medical Officer of Health Dr. Madushani Manorathna, Administrative Grama Niladari Mr. W.M Seneviratne and Public Health Inspectors Rasidu Janith Kumara, Banuka Pradeep, Anuradha Senarathna and Yapa Bandara.





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A COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES (CDS) RESPONSE TO CYCLONE DITWAH