Highlights

With the start of the Southwest monsoon on 25 May 2017, Sri Lanka received heavy rainfall in its southern and western regions, with some parts getting over 500 mm rainfall. Flash floods and landslides continue to affect over 603,105 people and displaced over 14,655 people as of 8 June 2017. So far 212 deaths have been reported and 78 people still remain missing due to the disasters. Galle, Kalutara, Matara and Ratnapura are the worst-affected districts.

- As flood waters recede, people return to their houses and the temporary camps in flooded-affected areas are closed. The Disaster Management Centre (DMC) reported a significant decrease in the number of people in safe locations. About 14,655 people remain temporarily displaced in 159 safe locations compared to 75,000 people last week.
- While average rainfall is beginning to decrease, landslide warnings are in effect for Ratnapura, Kalutara, Galle, Kegalle, Matara, Nuwara Eliya and Hambantota districts.
- The DMC reported that the Government has released a grant of LKR 166 million (US$ 1 million) for the flood response, including the provision of cooked meals, dry rations, sanitary goods, and infant food. Meanwhile, the National Insurance Trust Fund has paid LKR 116 million (US$763,000) in compensation for damaged houses in a few districts while assessments are underway in others.
- To date, UNICEF has mobilized US$ 1,111,570 for emergency response ensuring the safety and security of children and women affected by disasters through the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) and the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT).

(Source: Disaster Management Center as of 8 June 2017, 09:00hrs)
Situation Overview & Humanitarian Needs

With the onset of the Southwest monsoon over Sri Lanka, torrential rains – the worst to hit the country since 2003 – inundated the western and southern regions of the country. Many incidents of deadly landslides had been reported along with flash floods causing 212 deaths and 78 people missing to date. Currently, 14,655 people are reported as displaced in 159 evacuation centres. However, this number does not include the people who were stranded in their homes without access to safe locations or those who are sheltering at host families. Therefore, the actual number of people displaced and affected could be significantly higher than reported.

By 10 June the Department of Meteorology predicts a temporary reduction in showery conditions over southern and western parts of the island. On 7 June, the Department of Meteorology announced that there is currently no cyclone or tsunami threat to Sri Lanka, and requested the general public not to panic.

The majority of the schools closed in the severely affected districts during 29 May – 2 June, were re-opened by 5 June. Approximately 15 schools are still being used as temporary evacuation shelters in Sabaragamuwa and Southern provinces. Media reports\(^1\) that 29 schools in the Southern Provinces are unable to re-open due to the extensive damage caused by floods and landslides. Many other schools were being cleaned during this week. One school in Deniyaya, Matara district had been closed due to severe landslide risk.

Based on available information, at least 16 hospitals were evacuated fully or partially as facilities were directly affected by the floods or exposed to landslides according to the World Health Organization (WHO) and partners. Affected hospitals are evacuating critical patients with the support of the Sri Lanka Armed Forces. Several hospitals in the affected areas are without electricity which has critically impeded their operability.

In the absence of a proper Government-led needs assessment, the initial humanitarian response was planned based on estimations derived from analysing/paring the demographic data (Census, 2012) and historical flood/landslide statistics (especially May 2016).

On 29 and 30 May, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) conducted field visits and initial assessments in the worst affected divisions (covering about 104,000 people) in Galle, Kalutara, Matara and Rathnapura. Emergency shelter, NFIs, and health services were identified as immediate needs. In assessed safe locations, overcrowding, lack of privacy, lack of NFIs and water and sanitation facilities are key issues.

Humanitarian leadership and coordination

Sri Lanka’s disaster management framework and structure was established legally in 2005 after the Asian Tsunami. The National Council for Disaster Management (NCDM) chaired by the President of Sri Lanka assumes all powers of humanitarian leadership and coordination at the national level during a state emergency. The NCDM was convened by the President for the first time since January 2015, on 30 May 2017 to discuss emergency response coordination for the current disaster. The NCDM will be convened bi-weekly until the situation is normalized. The Ministry of Disaster Management (MDM) is mandated to reach out to the humanitarian community and to provide emergency response coordination services. The Disaster Management Center (DMC), an organization under the

\(^{1}\) http://newsfirst.lk/english/2017/06/extreme-weather-predictions-warnings/168268
purview of the Ministry of Disaster Management, requested UNICEF support for overall coordination and information management since the onset of the disaster.

The UN Resident Coordinator leads the humanitarian community through the HCT with active secretariat support from UNICEF. UNICEF provides humanitarian monitoring and advice to the RC and the HCT. A HCT meeting was called on 29 May and 30 May 2017 to discuss the collective emergency response from the humanitarian community. Following the meeting, the sector coordination groups, consisting of both UN and non-UN agencies, were established to enhance accountability and partnership. UNICEF leads the protection coordination group and co-leads the WASH, education, and food security and nutrition coordination groups.

In addition, UNICEF Sri Lanka provides technical support to the National Child Protection Authority (NCPA) by coordinating the Child Protection sector response and liaising with other children agencies (World Vision, Save the Children, and ChildFund) to ensure that the most vulnerable communities are prioritized in this response. UNICEF also participates in the WASH and Health sector coordination meetings (led by the Government).

Humanitarian Strategy

The Government of Sri Lanka did not declare a national emergency. However, on 27 May 2017, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) officially requested the UN to mobilize international search and rescue support as well as relief assistance. UN Resident Coordinator, a.i. requested the International Search and Rescue Advisory Group (INSARAG) to keep the relevant teams on standby which later stood down on 28 May 2017 upon government request.

The Government of Sri Lanka prioritized saving lives through search and rescue missions conducted by the Tri Forces and the military. However, many media reports indicated that the government teams could not access specific areas and hence the communities executed search and rescue for people buried under mud from earth slips. As a second step, the Government identified water and NFIs as priorities based on previous emergencies. With access gradually being restored, field teams from UN agencies, NGOs, and the International Federation of the Red Cross confirmed that emergency shelter, NFIs, water, sanitation and hygiene, and health services are key immediate needs in the worst-affected divisions of Galle, Kalutara, Matara and Ratnapura.

Disease surveillance and vector control is also a priority with the risk of communicable diseases. Over the past few months, health partners have recorded a significant increase in dengue cases (53,200 cases with over 125 deaths) compared to annual data from 2016. The Ministry of Health has deployed medical teams mainly in Kalutara, Ratnapura and Galle districts.

A preliminary economic assessment of the recent floods and landslides was conducted by the Economic Research Department and the Statistics Department of the Central Bank of Sri Lanka. Although recovery costs have been estimated for several sectors (e.g. agriculture, education), an overall figure is yet to be calculated.

International Assistance

Pledges of support continue to be received from international partners. As of 8 June, 20 countries have provided in-kind donations, expert support and funding to the relief operations.

- Indian Search and Rescue teams from the first naval ship have been deployed and are currently assisting Sri Lanka Tri-Forces in affected areas.
- Australian Search and Rescue teams remain on standby.
- China, Japan and the Republic of Korea announced donations of emergency relief goods (including tents, blankets, plastic sheets, sleeping pads, tarpaulins, rain boots and life jackets) to help the disaster-affected people.
- On 31 May, a Pakistan naval ship arrived in Sri Lanka with dry rations, medicines, de-flooding pumps and other relief items. The ship also has the capability to provide search and rescue assets including helicopter, rescue boats, medical teams and expert divers.
- Bangladesh has committed US$500,000 to the Government of Sri Lanka and is also working to collect medical donations from Bangladeshi pharmaceutical companies.
Humanitarian response

On 2 June, the HCT released an Emergency Response Plan (ERP) to address the immediate needs of the flood and landslide affected communities. To complement the ongoing Government-led response, the HCT is seeking funding to provide critical life-saving and protection needs for 374,000 people from 1 June to 31 October 2017, covering 7 sectors.

Timeline of Events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25 May</td>
<td>Heavy Rains and Flooding</td>
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<tr>
<td>26 May</td>
<td>MOFA request for International Assistance</td>
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<tr>
<td>27 May</td>
<td>Emergency UNCT meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>28 May</td>
<td>Regional Surge</td>
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<tr>
<td>29 May</td>
<td>Ad-hoc HCT meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>30 May</td>
<td>HCT Meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 June</td>
<td>CERF Prioritization meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 June</td>
<td>Inter-agency Flood Response Plan published</td>
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A sectoral approach to coordinate the international community’s immediate response was also endorsed. In the most-affected districts of Galle, Kalutara, Matara and Rathnapura, a total of 23 HCT partner agencies have been implementing food security and nutrition, health, WASH, emergency shelter and NFIs and child protection activities in 9 districts.

Civil society continues to provide relief to affected communities through organized and coordinated responses online. The Seals Volunteer Search and Rescue Team (SVERT) coordinated with the Asia-Pacific Alliance for Disaster Management (A-PAD), have ceased daily rescue operations, as have animal rescue teams.

As of 27 May, WFP and UNDP are providing support to the DMC with information management. WFP linked up with its relief Hub in Malaysia to obtain an inventory of relief items available and to compile a stock list that can be referred to, if needed. WHO is providing support to the Ministry of Health in coordinating the medical team deployment to affected areas. The Ministry of Health has issued a bilateral request for 10,000 dignity kits and 2,000 maternity kits, UNFPA is working to meet this request.

Summary Analysis of Programme Response

**Water, sanitation and hygiene:** UNICEF prioritized the provision of WASH supplies as immediate response (see section below for more details). UNICEF surge support for WASH arrived in the country on 4 June to support the emergency response.

**Health and nutrition:** Joint statement of Ministry of Health (MoH), WHO and UNICEF was released to appeal to all relevant parties to be mindful of the continued need for breastfeeding infants during the current flood and landslide emergency, and caution against unnecessary and potentially harmful donations and use of infant formula and powdered milk.

**Child protection:** In addition, UNICEF mobilized around 200 government officials attached to Divisional Secretary Offices, who were trained on child-friendly camp management, information management and basic First Aid in 2016, as surge capacity to severely flood/landslide affected areas. Currently UNICEF is partnering with international and local NGOs (including World Vision, leads, Sarvodaya) to establish child-friendly spaces in camps and children’s clubs/networks in affected areas and provide psychosocial support services to children. UNICEF also works with Government and non-government partners to support provision of lost legal documentation (such as birth certificates, identity cards etc.) for affected children.

**Education:** UNICEF supports the MoE team with technical advice on database development for capturing the education emergency needs. UNICEF also engages with Sarvodaya (a local NGO) to assess the destroyed and damaged schools and pre-schools in the most affected districts as well as provide technical and financial assistance to repair/renovate and refurbish schools.
Sri Lanka Country Office plans to respond comprehensively in education, child protection, health and nutrition and WASH sectors once more information is received from the field and a better analysis of the situation is conducted.

Supply and Logistics

As initial response, UNICEF provided the following supplies to the Ministry of Disaster Management (MDM) and Ministry of Health (MOH) for distribution to affected communities: 1,260 10L Jerry cans; 1,000 tarpaulins; and 100,000 water purification tablets.

In addition the following supplies are being procured: an additional 1,000,000 water purification tablets; 10 Submersible water pumps; 6 sludge water pumps; 6 6,000l water bowser; and 20,000 chlorine tablets.

Media and External Communication

On 31 May, the Emergency Communications Group was activated to ensure coordinated inter-agency messaging on the response.

UNICEF Sri Lanka’s Communications Specialist is liaising with the programme team as well as the Emergency Communication Team in developing key messages, producing communication materials and shaping a social media communication strategy.

Funding

UNICEF Sri Lanka developed an emergency response plan and a funding concept note highlighting the needs of disaster-affected children which was shared with donors. UNICEF currently requires a total of US$3.3 million to meet needs in nutrition, health, education, child protection and WASH.

UNICEF Sri Lanka received earlier this year US$900,000 from the Emergency Fund (EPF) to respond to the prolonged drought situation which continues to affect over 1 million people in North central and Northern provinces. A portion of the EPF amount has been reprogrammed and the Regional Office for South Asia (ROSA) has allocated another US$70,000 to support the scaling up of the response. The funds covered urgent supply procurement and freight costs.

Norway has expressed interest in funding UNICEF’s response in the sectors of WASH, child protection and education.

UNICEF Sri Lanka received US$111,000 from the Australian Department for Foreign Aid and Trade (DFAT) and is partnering with them to respond on WASH and child protection.

Furthermore, UNICEF Sri Lanka has received US$ 1,000,570 from the CERF aimed at ensuring that communities affected by floods and landslides have access to safe water supply and adequate sanitation services together with best hygiene practices. The interventions will be implemented in Galle, Kalutara, Matara and Ratnapura in partnership with Oxfam and World Vision.

On 29 May, UNICEF Sri Lanka launched its first ‘text-to-donate’ fundraising appeal, designed to enable individuals to directly support UNICEF’s flood emergency response. By texting ‘UNICEF 300’ to short code 77100, supporters are able to donate 300LKR (approximately US$1.96), and receive a confirmation message from UNICEF on completion. Currently the service is available to Dialog and Hutch users within Sri Lanka only.

Next SitRep: 16/06/2017

UNICEF Sri Lanka: https://www.unicef.org/srilanka/

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