

Information bulletin



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Sri Lanka: Floods

Information bulletin n° 01
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04 June, 2008

This bulletin is being issued for information only. Flooding in the west and south of the Island of Sri Lanka has caused for hundreds of thousands of people to be in urgent need of emergency supplies. The Sri Lanka Red Cross Society (SLRCS) has been working in the affected areas since the last three days, with funds made available from its headquarters as well as from the International Federation Office in Colombo and Partner National Societies with presence in the country. The approximately CHF 26,000 received so far have served for the delivery of immediate relief supplies.

The SLRCS, with the support of the International Federation, has determined that external assistance is not required, and is therefore not seeking funding or other assistance from donors at this time.

[click here to view the map of the affected area](#) and [here for detailed contact information](#)



Volunteers at the SLRCS' Colombo branch distributing basic relief items to the displaced population throughout the night

The Situation

The western and southern districts of Sri Lanka have been seriously affected during the past three days due to heavy rains. The low depression in the Bay of Bengal has caused the early monsoon season rains to be more intense than usual, leading to flooding in the districts of Kalutara, Galle, Ratnapura, Gampaha, Colombo, Matara, and Kegalle.

Approximately 90,000 families (around 360,000 people) are believed to have been affected by the torrential rains so far. The highest number of affected people has been reported to be in the western district of Kalutara, where more than 50,000 people are currently in need of immediate relief supplies.

Transportation routes have also been disturbed as a result of the flooding. The main roads that stretch from north to south and from east to west in the Kalutara district are currently under water as the Kalu Ganga river overflowed its banks. Several sections are completely flooded, causing all transportation to be suspended in this and some of the other affected districts.

The Meteorology Department has predicted that heavy rains shall recede in the next few days, but the districts of Kegalle, Ratnapura, Kalutara, Galle and Matara have been identified by the local authorities as landslide prone. Further, according to the Department, the month of June will probably see several such heavy rains.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The Sri Lanka Red Cross Society (SLRCS) has undertaken a number of relief activities in response to the situation through six branches, specifically those of Galle, Kalutara, Gampaha, Ratnapura, Colombo and Colombo city. Assessments of the situation by the SLRCS Branch Disaster Response Teams, in collaboration with the Government of Sri Lanka, have taken place parallel to distributions of food and non-food relief items. The national society has also collaborated in the evacuation of individuals to safer locations and is actively and frequently coordinating with local authorities and the National Disaster Relief Service Centre.

The SLRCS has so far allocated about CHF 5,000 (LKR 500,000) from its disaster relief fund for the six branches. These funds are currently being used for the emergency response carried out by the volunteers from all six branches. However, in order to provide better service, and in line with the needs assessment undertaken, SLRCS has launched a national appeal for CHF 28,000 (LKR 2.9 million).

The SLRCS and other Movement partners with presence in Sri Lanka have joined efforts to meet the funds requested through the national appeal. This appeal has, as a main objective, to cover the relief efforts by continuing the distribution of food, water, blankets and tents as well as clearing and cleaning of houses and wells. The amount appealed for has been almost 100% covered with SLRCS' own funds and hard pledges from the International Federation Office in Colombo, as well as contributions from Partner National Societies working in Sri Lanka.

Breakdown of contributions from Movement partners to the Sri Lanka floods operation

Affected Districts	SLRCS National Appeal	SLRCS Allocation from Disaster Relief Fund	International Federation Contribution	American Red Cross Society Contribution	Belgian Red Cross Society Contribution	Canadian Red Cross Society Contribution	Hard pledges	Remaining funding requests
Galle	3,000	1,000	2,000				3,000	0
Kalutara	7,600	1,000	3,000	2,000				
					1,000			
							7,000	600
Gampaha	6,400	1,000				5,000	6,000	400
Colombo City	4,375	1,000		3,000			4,000	375
Colombo	7,840	1,000				5,000	6,000	1840
TOTAL:	29,215	5,000	5,000	5,000	1,000	10,000	26,000	3,215

Note: Figures are in Swiss Francs as per exchange rate of 3 June 2008 and have been rounded up.

It is expected that with the continued rains and the update of initial assessments, the number of the affected population will rise over the next few days. SLRCS will, therefore, revise the appeal and adapt its plans and requests in the next few days. Both the International Federation and American Red Cross Society have already expressed an increase in their support by CHF 200,000 and CHF 500,000 respectively.

How we work

All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the [Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations \(NGO's\) in Disaster Relief](#) and is committed to the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response \(Sphere\)](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

The International Federation's activities are aligned with its Global Agenda, which sets out four broad goals to meet the Federation's mission to "improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity".

Global Agenda Goals:

- Reduce the numbers of deaths, injuries and impact from disasters.
- Reduce the number of deaths, illnesses and impact from diseases and public health emergencies.
- Increase local community, civil society and Red Cross Red Crescent capacity to address the most urgent situations of vulnerability.
- Reduce intolerance, discrimination and social exclusion and promote respect for diversity and human dignity.

Contact information

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

- In Sri Lanka: Neville Nanayakkara, Director General, Sri Lanka Red Cross Society, Colombo; phone 94.11.269.4487; fax 94.11.269.5434; email: directorgen@redcross.lk,
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[map below; click here to return to the title page](#)

Number of Families Affected by Floods, 02nd June 2008 - 14.00hrs

Sri Lanka

