

# INFORMATION BULLETIN



International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies  
Fédération Internationale des Sociétés de la Croix-Rouge et du Croissant-Rouge  
Federación Internacional de Sociedades de la Cruz Roja y de la Media Luna Roja  
الاتحاد الدولي لجمعيات الصليب الأحمر والهلال الأحمر

## SRI LANKA: FLOODS

November 24 2005

The Federation's mission is to improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity. It is the world's largest humanitarian organization and its millions of volunteers are active in over 181 countries.

### In Brief

This Bulletin (no. 01/2005) is being issued for information only, and reflects the status of the situation and information available at this time. The Federation is not seeking funding or other assistance from donors for this operation at this time.

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All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the [Code of Conduct](#) and is committed to the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response \(Sphere\)](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

For longer-term programmes in this or other countries or regions, please refer to the Federation's Annual Appeal. For support to or for further information concerning Federation programmes or operations in this or other countries, or for national society profiles, please also access the Federation's website at <http://www.ifrc.org>

### The Situation

Heavy rains over the past six days over Sri Lanka have caused widespread flooding in at least ten districts across the country.

An estimated 29,000 families have been affected, six people have been killed and some 2,000 homes have been damaged or destroyed. A non-stop 24-hour spell of torrential rain from 21 to 22 November caused considerable disruption particularly in the western, Sabaragamuwa and north-eastern regions of the country. Although rains have now eased and water levels have fallen in most affected areas, government officials



A beneficiary receiving non-food items from a Sri Lanka Red Cross Society relief volunteer.

and representatives of the Red Cross Movement continue to assess flood damage whilst also meeting current humanitarian needs.

### Red Cross and Red Crescent action

In Colombo, a coordination team comprised of Federation and Sri Lanka Red Cross Society (SLRCS) national headquarters staff is coordinating the Red Cross response to the floods across several districts of the island. SLRCS branch officials from Colombo, Gampaha, Jaffna, Kalutara, Killinochchi, Mannar, Mullaitivu, Nuwara Eliya and Trincomalee districts have been undertaking needs assessments and distributing relief materials to communities that have been evacuated from their homes or whose lives have been disrupted by floodwaters. Based on assessments received to date, the SLRCS is aiming to assist approximately 6,000 families in all affected districts. To date, Sri Lanka Rupees 3.6 million (CHF 46,581) have been released by the Federation to SLRCS in support of branch relief activities.



*Sri Lanka Red Cross Society volunteers preparing non-food items for distribution to floods beneficiaries.*

SLRCS have been supported by the Federation as well as various participating national societies that have an operational presence in some of the affected areas. In and around Colombo, 32,000 people have been assisted in six divisions with two cooked meals each day which will continue over a five-day period. Distributions began on 21 November and will end on 25 November. Seventy-five tents have been provided by SLRCS to tsunami-affected families who were living in temporary shelters in the Ratmalana area. On 23 November, SLRCS volunteers provided first aid services to 550 people and will continue to operate in affected areas until 25 November. In the neighbouring district of Gampaha, SLRCS volunteers provided 1,350 people with cooked food.

cooked food for 60 families living in temporary camps. These distributions will continue for a two-day period.

Following a request for support to the SLRCS Kalutara branch, the Belgian and French Red Cross have provided funding to support distributions of

In Nuwara Eliya, SLRCS requested immediate support for 150 families. Sufficient non-food relief stocks comprising bed sheets, sleeping mats, laundry soap and ten-litre plastic jerry cans were dispatched on 23 November from the SLRCS regional warehouse in Ampara for immediate distribution.

Heavy rains since 19 November caused major disruption in five divisions of Trincomalee district. Many roads, including some in Trincomalee city, were under water but despite logistical difficulties, over the past four days teams from the SLRCS Trincomalee branch together with the Federations disaster management delegate in Trincomalee, have carried out needs assessments in all affected divisions. On 21 November, 56 families in Kuchavali division who were evacuated from their homes to a nearby school were given a one-day ration of cooked food. From 23 to 25 November, 206 families in Town and Gravets and Kuchaveli divisions will be provided with cooked food packets. The same families will be provided with two bed sheets, two sleeping mats, one kitchen set, one baby parcel, laundry soap and a five-litre plastic jerry can.

In Jaffna district, an estimated 8,000 families living in welfare centres and transitional camps were affected. This population includes families affected by the conflict in the north as well as some families affected by the tsunami. On 22 November SLRCS Jaffna branch deployed a five-person assessment team with the Federation's water and sanitation delegate to assess camps in the Point Pedro area. The branch aims to assist 1,000 families in the area; the Federation has sent non-food relief items from the regional warehouse in Ampara. These stocks are sufficient for 800 families and include bed sheets, plastic sleeping mats, jerry cans and soap.

The Australian and Canadian Red Cross teams in Killinochchi are providing support via the SLRCS branch in Killinochchi. The Canadian Red Cross has contingency stocks of 17,000 hygiene kits and is providing funding for non-food relief packages for up to 2,000 families in four divisions. The Australian Red Cross is expected to fund relief items for approximately 260 families in the Vadamarachchi East division. These items include lanterns, bed sheets, mosquito nets, plastic jerry cans and hygiene items. Amongst the recipients are future beneficiaries of housing programmes carried out by the two national societies in the district under the Red Cross Red Crescent tsunami recovery programme. The SLRCS Killinochchi branch has also distributed an existing stock of clothing to 300 families. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) also has stocks of plastic sheeting available for 16,000 families if required.

### **Coordination**

SLRCS branches are undertaking assessments and coordinating relief distributions closely with the local authorities in all areas. Red Cross representatives are participating in information sharing and coordination meetings hosted by government agents in all districts and by the planning and development Secretariat in Killinochchi and other affected districts in the north. In the north, various local and international non-governmental organizations, including the Tamil Rehabilitation Organization, UNICEF and Care International, are distributing food and non-food relief supplies.

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