

Cyclone Ditwah, Sri Lanka 2025

# Post Disaster Needs Assessment

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY | March 2026



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## FOREWORD

The landfall of Cyclone Ditwah on 28th November 2025 precipitated extensive and far-reaching impacts across Sri Lanka, affecting lives, livelihoods, ecosystems, and critical infrastructure within twenty-two (22) severely impacted districts. Beyond the tragic loss of life and the displacement of populations, the cyclone caused profound disruptions to housing, essential service delivery, and the nation's socio-economic stability. Throughout the emergency response phase, the inherent resilience and adaptive capacity of affected communities, first responders, and national and local institutions were prominently demonstrated, even as substantial challenges to long-term recovery remain.

The Post-Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA) was conducted under the leadership of the Government of Sri Lanka, as mandated by the 'Rebuilding Sri Lanka' Presidential Task Force and the National Council for Disaster Management. This comprehensive exercise was made possible through the collaborative support of the World Bank, the European Union, the United Nations, the Asian Development Bank, and the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center. The resulting report provides a systematically quantified, evidence-based analysis of disaster impacts, consolidating findings on physical asset damages, direct and indirect economic losses, and multi-sectoral recovery requirements. Consequently, it serves as a unified foundation for coordinated recovery planning, the prioritisation of interventions, and the strategic mobilisation of resources.

The findings herein highlight the critical urgency of restoring safe, resilient housing and re-establishing essential services, including healthcare, education, water supply, energy, and transportation networks. Simultaneously, the report emphasises the revitalisation of local economies through the restoration of employment and the provision of targeted support to Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), which often possess limited coping capacities and restricted access to financial capital. Central to this strategy is the requirement for recovery interventions to be inclusive, equitable, and person-centred. Particular attention is directed towards groups experiencing heightened vulnerability, including female headed households, the elderly, persons with disabilities, marginalized communities, and young children.

Across all thematic areas, the PDNA advocates for recovery investments that move beyond mere restoration. By applying 'Build Back Better' principles, the proposed interventions aim to enhance long-term resilience against climate change and future disaster risks, ensuring that reconstructed systems are more robust than those they replace.

The Government of Sri Lanka, in partnership with international development partners, remains steadfast in its commitment to translating these findings into tangible recovery actions and measurable outcomes. Through decisive national leadership, effective inter agency coordination, and decentralized implementation

mechanisms that uphold transparency and community participation, Sri Lanka is presented with an opportunity to emerge from the aftermath of Cyclone Ditwah as a more resilient nation. In doing so, the country reaffirms its dedication to sustainable development and the fundamental principles of long-term disaster risk reduction.

**Deputy Minister Defence**

Chairman to the Sub-Committee of Post Disaster Needs Assessment  
Presidential Task Force on Rebuilding Sri Lanka

**Director General**  
Disaster Management Centre  
Ministry of Defence

**Director General**  
Department of National Planning  
Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic  
Development

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This Post Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA) for Cyclone Ditwah 2025, prepared by the Government of Sri Lanka, serves as a strategic framework for recovery planning and resource mobilization; all findings, damages, and loss estimates provided herein are indicative and intended solely for planning purposes, and thus may not be utilised as an evidentiary basis for individual compensation claims or legal proceedings. The Government and its partners assume no liability for errors, omissions, or discrepancies, or for any use or failure to use the information and processes set forth herein. While every effort has been made to ensure accuracy, the responsibility for the authenticity, credibility, and accountability of any third-party reports, data, or sources cited within this document remains exclusively with the original authors and institutions. The Government of Sri Lanka assumes no liability for the accuracy of external data or its interpretation, and the inclusion of such sources does not reflect the official opinions or viewpoints of the Government unless explicitly stated. The boundaries, colours, denominations, and other information shown on any map in this work do not imply any judgment on the part of the Government of Sri Lanka or its partners concerning the legal status of any territory or the endorsement of such boundaries. All financial projections, expressed in LKR and USD, are subject to revision based on evolving market conditions and detailed feasibility studies, and the Government reserves the right to update recovery strategies as more comprehensive information becomes available.

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### **Post-Disaster Needs Assessment**

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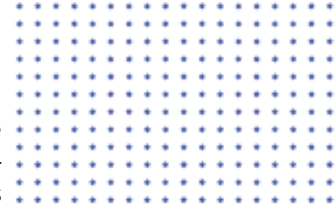
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# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



The Post-Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA) for Cyclone Ditwah was prepared under the steadfast leadership of the Government of Sri Lanka. The Chairperson of the PDNA Sub-committee and Deputy Minister of Defence extends profound gratitude to the numerous institutions, coordinating committees, and technical teams whose data provision, stakeholder engagement, and rigorous field analysis made this comprehensive assessment possible.

Sincere appreciation is offered to His Excellency the President of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka and the members of the National Council for Disaster Management for their overarching vision and guidance. Furthermore, the Honourable Prime Minister and the members of the Presidential Taskforce on Rebuilding Sri Lanka are thanked for the strategic guidance and leadership that remained invaluable throughout this critical process.

The oversight provided by the members of the PDNA Sub-committee was instrumental in coordinating multi-sectoral assessments and shaping the strategic direction of this report. Vital policy support and the facilitation of sectoral inputs were further enabled through the commitment of the Cabinet Ministers and Deputy Ministers of the respective line ministries.

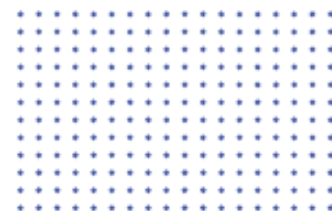
A deep debt of gratitude is owed to the Secretary of Defence, the Secretary to the Treasury, and the Secretaries, Director Generals, and Heads of various Government agencies. Their swift mobilisation and the provision of critical sector data were fundamental to the success of the overall report. Specifically, the strategic input and technical leadership of the Director General of the Disaster Management Centre (DMC) and the Director General of the National Planning Department, alongside their senior directorates, are recognised as indispensable to the assessment's integrity.

The Government of Sri Lanka remains immensely grateful to its international partners for their unwavering technical and financial support. Special recognition is due to the members of the high level PDNA Steering Committee, comprising senior representatives from the United Nations, the European Union, the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank, and the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center. A Special appreciation is extended to UNDP for its overall technical coordination of the PDNA 2026.

Furthermore, the specialised technical input and coordination provided by United Nations specialised Agencies, International and Intergovernmental Organizations, International Non-Governmental Organizations (INGOs), Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), and the private sector proved vital across the assessment and recovery planning phases.

Finally, the production of this robust assessment was made possible by the tireless efforts of the operational and drafting teams. Heartfelt appreciation is extended to the Editorial Board, the PDNA Coordination Team, the designated focal persons from all lead and co-lead agencies, and the dedicated staff of the Disaster Management Centre and the National Planning Department. Their commitment to rigorous data collection and analysis underpins the findings of this report and the future resilience of the nation.

# KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS



**Damage:** The value of completely or partially destroyed or damaged infrastructure and physical assets caused by the disaster, measured in physical and monetary terms and valued at replacement or rehabilitation cost.

**Losses:** Changes in economic flows resulting from the disaster until recovery is achieved. These include disruptions to production and services, additional administrative costs, and increased expenditure related to managing risk and vulnerability.

**Recovery Needs:** The financing required to restore and improve assets and systems over the determined recovery time period. This includes reconstruction, service restoration, economic recovery, and capacity strengthening, incorporating Build Back Better principles.

**Post-Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA):** A structured assessment that estimates damages, losses, and recovery needs across sectors to inform resilient (BBB) recovery planning, prioritisation, and resource mobilisation, using internationally recognised methodology developed jointly by the European Union, the World Bank, and the United Nations.

**Build Back Better (BBB):** An approach to recovery that improves the quality, resilience, and safety of rebuilt assets. In this PDNA, reconstruction costs include a 15–25% adjustment to integrate risk reduction and resilience measures.

**Recovery Strategy:** A comprehensive, state-led and risk-informed approach to recovery that aims to restore infrastructure, livelihoods, and services while strengthening resilience, inclusion, and sustainability over the recovery period.

**Disaster Recovery Framework (DRF):** A follow-on planning framework that operationalises PDNA findings by defining priorities, financing arrangements, sequencing, and implementation mechanisms for recovery.

**Recovery Horizon:** The timeframe over which recovery is planned and costed.

**Total Effect:** The combined effects of the disaster, calculated as the sum of damages and losses.

# KEY HIGHLIGHTS



On 28 November 2025, **Cyclone Ditwah struck Sri Lanka's east coast**, resulting in intense rainfall, strong winds, storm surges, widespread flooding, and an estimated 1,800+ landslides. At the peak of the emergency, 1.1 million hectares were inundated and 232,752 people were displaced. By late January 2026, **646 people had died, 173 were missing, and more than 169,642 remained displaced** in safety centres or with host families.

A rapid Post-Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA) was launched on 5 January 2026 by the Government of Sri Lanka, mandated by the “Rebuilding Sri Lanka” Presidential Task Force, and supported by World Bank, EU, UN, ADB, ADPC and other development partners. The PDNA covers 22 severely impacted districts and provides a time-bound, evidence-based assessment of damages, losses, and recovery needs. The PDNA provides the evidence base to inform the Government’s national recovery vision under the Rebuilding Sri Lanka initiative, ensuring that reconstruction efforts are strategic, risk-informed, and aligned with long-term resilience objectives.

Cyclone Ditwah is estimated to have caused **LKR 618.1 billion (USD 2 billion) in damages** and **LKR 416 billion (USD 1.4 billion) in economic losses**. Total resilient recovery and reconstruction needs are estimated at **approximately LKR 1,022.5 billion (USD 3.4 billion)** over a three-year period.

**Recovery needs are assessed to be geographically concentrated.** The districts of Kandy (approximately LKR 154.6 billion), Nuwara Eliya (approximately LKR 126.1 billion), Badulla (approximately LKR 97.9 billion), Puttalam (approximately LKR 78.4 billion), and Kegalle (approximately LKR 63.8 billion) account for a substantial share of total requirements, with Colombo also recording estimated needs of approximately LKR 44.4 billion. This concentration suggests that recovery financing and resource allocation must be deployed using a transparent, data-driven methodology that correlates directly with the assessed spatial distribution of damages and verified sectoral needs.

Sectoral recovery needs are concentrated in **transport (estimated at LKR 397.1 billion), housing and settlements (approximately LKR 275 billion), commerce and industry (approximately LKR 119 billion), and agriculture and food systems (LKR 51.3 billion)**. Together, these sectors account for 83 % of the total requirements. Damage to an estimated 1206.33 km of national roads and approximately 750 bridges across the wider network disrupted mobility and supply chains. An estimated 113,777 houses sustained damage, and approximately 11,000 households are assessed to require resilient relocation. More than 45,000 enterprises are estimated to have experienced damage or operational disruption, particularly informal, micro and small businesses. In agriculture, losses are estimated at LKR 136.6 billion, reflecting damage to crops, livestock, fisheries, plantations, and productive assets, with significant implications for rural incomes and food security.

**Critical infrastructure impacts extended beyond transport.** Approximately 1,400 hydraulic irrigation structures are estimated to have been fully damaged and more than 6,300 partially damaged, heightening risks to agricultural production and downstream safety. Water supply and sanitation systems are estimated to have been disrupted for more than 750,000 rural residents and essential facilities. Electricity generation, transmission, and distribution assets sustained damage that resulted in outages affecting an estimated 4.1 million consumers. Damage to administrative infrastructure disrupted local operations, underscoring the necessity to integrate disaster-resilient architectural standards and robust business continuity planning into the reconstruction of public sector facilities.

**The disaster represents a major infrastructure shock, a significant livelihoods crisis and a degradation of essential ecosystems functions.** Approximately 149,400 workers are assessed to have experienced

employment disruptions. Informal workers and women—who are disproportionately represented in lower-paid and insecure employment—are estimated to face heightened recovery challenges. Disruptions to health, education, WASH, energy, and transport services had differentiated impacts on women, children, elderly, persons with disabilities, and marginalised communities, particularly where displacement and overcrowded shelters increased potential protection and psychosocial risks.<sup>1</sup> Environmental losses are estimated at approximately LKR 65 billion, reflecting ecosystem degradation, loss of topsoil, watershed damage, and weakened natural flood protection functions.

**Resilient recovery will require risk-informed reconstruction, strengthened governance and disaster risk reduction systems, climate adaptation measures, and inclusive approaches that integrate gender equality, disability inclusion, protection safeguards, nature-based solutions, and meaningful community participation.** Strong national leadership, decentralised implementation, devolved structures and a transparent financing framework will be critical to ensure that recovery reduces underlying vulnerabilities and supports long-term resilience. It is recommended that recovery interventions are underpinned by rigorous technical investigations, including multi-hazard risk assessments, hydrological and basin-wide studies, urban flood defence and drainage system performance assessments, geotechnical and slope stability assessments, climate projections, and updated exposure and vulnerability mapping, to ensure that infrastructure and DRR investments are evidence-based, risk-informed, and grounded in verified data.

The PDNA identified recovery strategy will be further operationalized through the development of a Disaster Recovery Framework (DRF) to be led by the Government of Sri Lanka through the National Planning Department of the Ministry of Finance. The DRF will build on the PDNA findings to prioritize and sequence recovery investments, define institutional arrangements, and clarify recovery financing pathways.

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<sup>1</sup> United Nations Population Fund Sri Lanka (2025). Report on Gender-Based Violence (GBV) Safety Verification – #1 and UN Women (2025). Gender Alert No. 1: Early Gendered Risks – Sri Lanka Tropical Cyclone Ditwah.

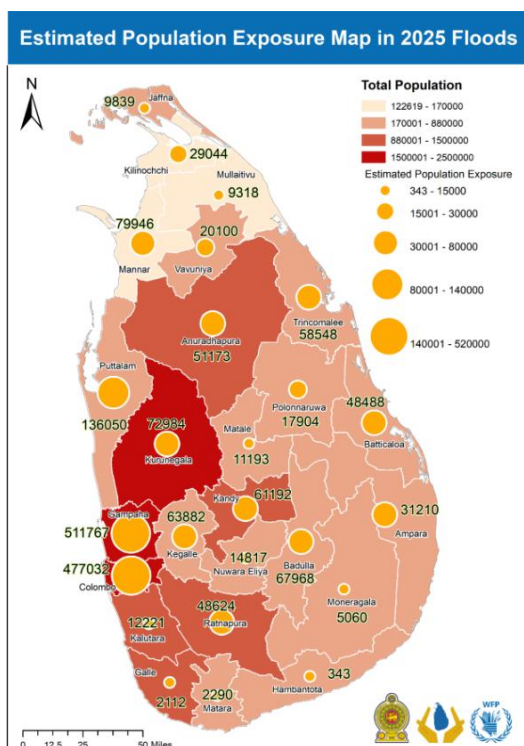
# INTRODUCTION



Cyclone Ditwah hit Sri Lanka on 28 November 2025, with intense rainfall, strong winds, and storm surges that triggered widespread flooding and landslides across large parts of the country. In response, the “Rebuilding Sri Lanka” Presidential Task Force was established through a Gazette notification on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2025, mandating, among other its many tasks, the conduct of a Post-Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA) covering the 22 most severely impacted districts.

The PDNA was launched on 5 January 2026 to generate a timely, reliable, and evidence-based assessment of damages, losses, and recovery needs. Under the direction of the Presidential Task Force, a sub-committee chaired by the Deputy Minister of Defence was established to oversee the assessment. The PDNA was undertaken with technical leadership from the Disaster Management Centre of the Ministry of Defence and the National Planning Department of the Ministry of Finance, with support from development partners including the World Bank, European Union, United Nations, Asian Development Bank (ADB), and the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center.

## Disaster events



Cyclone Ditwah made landfall on Sri Lanka’s eastern coast on 28 November 2025, bringing intense rainfall, ranging from 150–500 mm across affected areas and exceeding 300 mm within 24 hours in several districts, along with sustained winds of around 65–90 km/h, triggering widespread flooding and landslides. Nearly 1.1 million hectares were inundated, and over 2.2 million people were exposed across 22 districts<sup>2</sup>.

The disaster impacts were amplified by Sri Lanka’s steep central highlands and low-lying coastal floodplains, where intense rainfall rapidly channeled runoff into densely populated river basins<sup>3</sup>. Major rivers, including the Kelani, Kala Oya, Malwathu Oya and Mahaweli, overflowed, severely affecting districts such as Colombo, Gampaha, Anuradhapura, Trincomalee, Puttalam, and Mannar. In December 2025, the National Building Research Institute (NBRI), formerly known as the National Building Research Organisation (NBRO) documented 1,991 landslide events, due to the extreme rainfall.

On 17 December 2025, the DMC reported 643 deaths, 183 missing persons, 1.2 million affected people, and 66,132 people in government-run safety centres. By 19 January 2026, total fatalities had risen to 646, with 173 persons still missing, 8,294 people remaining in 113 safety centres, and 169,642 people staying with host families or in rented accommodation<sup>4</sup>.

A World Weather Attribution (WWA) report (December 2025) indicates that climate change–influenced La Niña conditions and a consequent negative Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD) contributed to enhanced rainfall during Cyclone Ditwah. The analysis also finds that human-induced warming has increased the intensity of heavy multi-day rainfall events over Sri Lanka, with the rainfall associated with Ditwah now estimated to correspond to approximately a 1-in-30-year event in today’s climate, though local return periods may be higher<sup>5</sup>.

2 DMC Situation Report 19 Jan 2026; HPP; World Bank (2025). Global Rapid Post-Disaster Damage Estimation (GRADE) Report: Cyclone Ditwah. Online: <https://documents.worldbank.org/en/publication/documents-reports/documentdetail/099122225074016363>; Disaster Management Center (2025). Situation Report on 2025.12.17. Online: [https://www.dmc.gov.lk/images/dmcreports/Situation\\_Report\\_at\\_1600hrs\\_on\\_2025\\_1765970343.pdf](https://www.dmc.gov.lk/images/dmcreports/Situation_Report_at_1600hrs_on_2025_1765970343.pdf)  
3 Kew, S. et al., (2025): Increasing heavy rainfall and extreme flood heights in a warming climate threaten densely populated regions across Sri Lanka and the Malacca Strait (WWA scientific report No. 78) World Weather Attribution. Online: <https://doi.org/10.25560/126259>  
4 DMC Situation Report, 19 January 2026. Online: Situation Report - Sri Lanka 19th January 2026 at 1000hrs - Sri Lanka | ReliefWeb  
5 Kew, S. et al., (2025): Increasing heavy rainfall and extreme flood heights in a warming climate threaten densely populated regions across Sri Lanka and the Malacca Strait (WWA scientific report No. 78) World Weather Attribution DOI: <https://doi.org/10.25560/126259>

## Humanitarian response

The Government of Sri Lanka, through the Disaster Management Centre and the National Disaster Relief Services Centre, led large-scale evacuations and relief operations following Cyclone Ditwah. By 2 December 2025, 233,015 people had been evacuated to 1,441 government-run safety centres, reflecting the scale of displacement nationwide.<sup>6</sup> A State of Public Emergency was declared on 28 November 2025, enabling expedited relief operations, enforced evacuations, and rapid mobilisation of resources.<sup>7</sup> Relief operations were centrally coordinated by the National Disaster Relief Service Centre, which processed over 40,000 emergency assistance requests.<sup>8</sup> By 15 December 2025, the Industry Disaster Support Center of the Ministry of Industry and Entrepreneurship Development had received more than 18,000 reports of affected businesses.<sup>9</sup>

Government-led efforts were reinforced by international support. Notably, this included immediate search and rescue deployments from key neighbouring and regional partners alongside specialised medical, engineering, and WASH assistance from international agencies. Relief assistance—comprising food rations, hygiene kits, water purification packages, and temporary shelter materials—was channelled through established government systems to ensure alignment with national emergency priorities.<sup>10</sup>

On 11 December 2025, under the leadership of the UN Resident Coordinator, the humanitarian community launched the Humanitarian Priorities Plan (HPP), targeting 658,000 of the most vulnerable people out of an estimated 1.2 million in need, with a funding requirement of USD 35.3 million.<sup>11</sup> The UN Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) allocated USD 4.5 million to support urgent life-saving assistance.<sup>12</sup> Approximately US\$23.9 million has been pledged or received to the HPP. Underfunded sectors include Health, Agriculture, Early Recovery and Nutrition.<sup>13</sup> Despite declining displacement, by January 19<sup>th</sup>, over 169,642 people remained displaced or continue to live with host families, while around 113 people are still in safety centres.<sup>14</sup>

The Government introduced extensive financial and administrative support to stabilise affected households and livelihoods. Immediate cash assistance included LKR 25,000 for household cleaning, LKR 50,000 for repairs to kitchens and living areas, and up to LKR 25,000 per month for temporary accommodation.<sup>15</sup> Housing reconstruction assistance ranged from LKR 250,000 for partially damaged houses to LKR 5 million for fully destroyed homes. Livelihood support included crop compensation of LKR 150,000–200,000 per hectare, LKR 20,000 per livestock animal, up to LKR 200,000 per affected SME, depending on the size, and up to LKR 400,000 per fishing vessel.<sup>16</sup>

Additional social protection measures included LKR 15,000 grants for affected school children and LKR 1 million compensation for families of deceased or fully disabled persons. Administrative procedures were streamlined through a Ministry of Defence circular issued on 6 January 2026, standardising damage assessments and housing assistance, with implementation channelled through Divisional Secretariats to ensure local-level delivery.<sup>17</sup>

6 Disaster Management Centre (2025). Situation Report on 2025.12.02 at 1000hrs. Online: [https://www.dmc.gov.lk/images/dmcreports/Situation\\_Report\\_at\\_1000hrs\\_on\\_2025\\_\\_1764654146.pdf](https://www.dmc.gov.lk/images/dmcreports/Situation_Report_at_1000hrs_on_2025__1764654146.pdf)

7 Department of Government Printing (2025). The Gazette of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka: Extraordinary No. 2464/31 – Friday, November 28, 2025. Online: [https://documents.gov.lk/view/extra-gazettes/2025/11/2464-31\\_E.pdf](https://documents.gov.lk/view/extra-gazettes/2025/11/2464-31_E.pdf)

8 Disaster Management Centre (2025). Joint Rapid Needs Assessment: Phase II December 2025. Online: [https://www.dmc.gov.lk/images/pdfs/Joint%20Rapid%20Needs%20Assessment%20\(JRNA\)%20report%20LR.pdf](https://www.dmc.gov.lk/images/pdfs/Joint%20Rapid%20Needs%20Assessment%20(JRNA)%20report%20LR.pdf)

9 Newswire (2025). Over 18,000 industry disaster inquiries recorded. Online: <https://www.newswire.lk/2025/12/15/over-18000-industry-disaster-inquiries-recorded-ministry/>

10 Disaster Management Centre (2025). Joint Rapid Needs Assessment: Phase II December 2025. Online: [https://www.dmc.gov.lk/images/pdfs/Joint%20Rapid%20Needs%20Assessment%20\(JRNA\)%20report%20LR.pdf](https://www.dmc.gov.lk/images/pdfs/Joint%20Rapid%20Needs%20Assessment%20(JRNA)%20report%20LR.pdf)

11 OCHA (2025). Sri Lanka Humanitarian Priorities Plan - Cyclone Ditwah (Dec 2025 - Apr 2026 | issued 11 December 2025). Online: <https://www.unocha.org/publications/report/sri-lanka/sri-lanka-humanitarian-priorities-plan-cyclone-ditwah>

12 CERF (2025). CERF Allocation: Sri Lanka, Flood, 05 Dec 2025. Online: <https://cerf.un.org/what-we-do/allocation/2025/summary/CERF-LKA-25-RR-1500>

13 OCHA (2026). Sri Lanka Humanitarian Priorities Plan Cyclone Ditwah 2026. Online: <https://fts.unocha.org/plans/1565/summary>

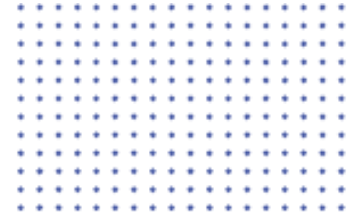
14 Disaster Management Centre (2026). Situation Report as at 1000hrs on 19th January 2026. Online: [https://www.dmc.gov.lk/images/dmcreports/Situation\\_Summary\\_Report\\_at\\_0600hrs\\_on\\_2026\\_\\_1768801860.pdf](https://www.dmc.gov.lk/images/dmcreports/Situation_Summary_Report_at_0600hrs_on_2026__1768801860.pdf)

15 Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (2025). Budget Circular No. 08/2025. Online: <https://www.treasury.gov.lk/api/file/a50e4973-227b-4b84-acf2-42748ac25738>

16 Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (2025). Budget Circular No. 08/2025. Online: <https://www.treasury.gov.lk/api/file/a50e4973-227b-4b84-acf2-42748ac25738>

17 Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (2025). Budget Circular No. 08/2025. Online: <https://www.treasury.gov.lk/api/file/a50e4973-227b-4b84-acf2-42748ac25738>

# OBJECTIVES, SCOPE AND TIMELINE



The **overall objective of the PDNA** conducted under the leadership of the Government of Sri Lanka with support from the United Nations (UN), the European Union (EU), the World Bank (WB), the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC) and other development partners is to: (i) estimate the effects of the Cyclone Ditwah including the financial costs for restoration of basic services, the repair or reconstruction of infrastructure and assets in most affected and priority socio-economic sectors and inform resilient recovery planning and donor engagement, and (ii) promote and inform enhanced climate and disaster resilience.

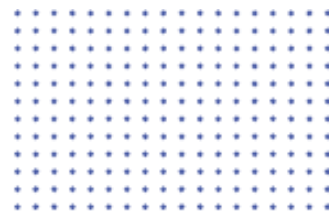
The specific objectives of the PDNA are to:

- **Generate credible, time-bound and disaggregated evidence-based estimates** of damages, losses and recovery needs across the most affected sectors and districts, ensuring analysis, where possible, reflects differentiated impacts on women, men, children, older persons, persons with disabilities, and other vulnerable and marginalized groups to the extent possible.
- **Assess the overall socio-economic impact of the Cyclone** on people, livelihoods, and the national and local economy, with particular attention to gender-differentiated impacts, social vulnerabilities, poverty dynamics, and risks of exclusion
- **Identify and prioritize inclusive recovery requirements** of affected communities and key sectors, and formulate a strategy with costed and sequenced resilient recovery needs that incorporates the Build Back Better (BBB) principle, while promoting gender-responsive, socially inclusive, and risk-informed recovery.

The **geographical scope** of the PDNA encompassed 22 districts, as follows: *Kandy, Nuwara Eliya, Badulla, Kurunegala, Matale, Kegalle, Gampaha, Mullaitivu, Anuradhapura, Colombo, Jaffna, Polonnaruwa, Mannar, Puttalam, Ratnapura, Monaragala, Batticaloa, Ampara, Trincomalee, Kilinochchi, Vavuniya, and Kalutara.*

The **sectoral scope** of the PDNA encompassed analysis of the human development impact, the macro-economic impact, social sectors (housing, health, education), productive sectors (agriculture, tourism, commerce & industry), infrastructure sectors (irrigation, transport, water, energy) sectors, alongside cross-cutting sectors (environment, governance, disaster risk reduction (DRR), employment and livelihoods). The PDNA includes recommendations for strengthening resilience in each sector. Cross-cutting priorities—gender, youth, disability inclusion, employment and livelihoods, environment and DRR/climate resilience—are addressed in all sectors.

# METHODOLOGY



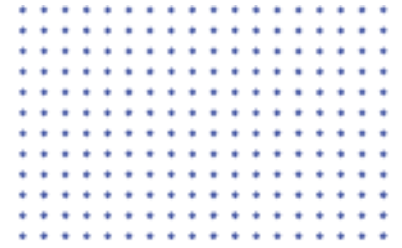
The assessment applies the **PDNA methodology** developed by the European Union, World Bank, and United Nations, with a focus on the 22 most affected districts. The Disaster Data Collection System (DDCS) of the Department of National Planning serves as the primary data source, complemented by government administrative data and sector reports, JRNA II, GRADE and RAPIDA assessments, partner assessments, as well as remote sensing and targeted field verification. Damages, losses, and recovery needs are quantified using the Damage, Loss, and Needs framework, **covering short-term (< 12 months) and medium – long term (12-36 months)** resilient recovery.

Consistent with the standard PDNA methodology, the assessment includes damages, losses, and recovery needs affecting both public and private assets, including those belonging to households and businesses. This approach ensures that the PDNA reflects the full economic footprint of the disaster and provides a comprehensive evidence base for recovery planning. The inclusion of private-sector impacts does not imply that all identified recovery needs constitute public fiscal obligations. Rather, the PDNA quantifies total recovery requirements, while subsequent recovery planning within the scope of the Disaster Recovery Framework will clarify public sector financing pathways.

## Limitations

The assessment faced multiple limitations, including time constraints and access restrictions to high-impact areas during data collection. Gaps in pre-disaster baseline data limited the ability to compare conditions before and after the cyclone in some sectors, requiring the use of proxy indicators and assumptions that reduced accuracy. Sectoral data was often fragmented, outdated, or not disaggregated by gender, age, or vulnerability status. The short timeline also constrained the depth of analysis. Despite these challenges, triangulation across data sources, expert validation, and community input helped ensure that the resulting estimates provide a credible foundation for prioritizing early recovery and reconstruction interventions.

# DISASTER EFFECTS



The cyclone that struck Sri Lanka on November 28, 2025, and subsequent landslides, floods, strong winds and storm surges have inflicted an estimated LKR 618.1 billion (USD 2 billion) in damages and LKR 416 billion (USD 1.4 billion) losses across 22 assessed districts.

Recovery and reconstruction needs are LKR 1,022.5 trillion (USD 3.4 billion) over three years, with LKR 391.3 billion required for early recovery interventions in the first 12 months.

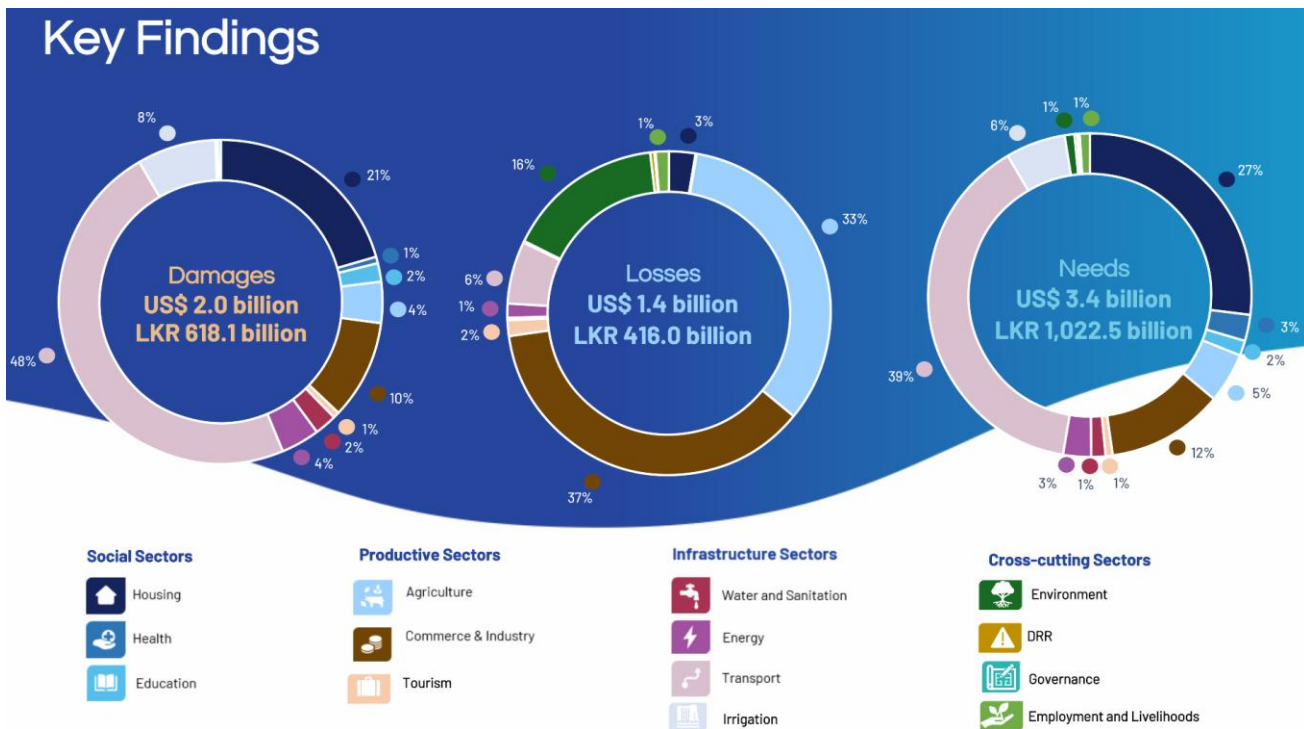
The highest requirements are in the infrastructure sectors (49%), social sectors (31.1%), followed by productive sectors (17.4%).

**Damages:** LKR 618.1 billion (USD 2 billion)

**Losses:** LKR 416 billion (USD 1.4 billion)

**Needs:** LKR 1,022.5 trillion (USD 3.4 billion)

**Figure 1:** Overview of Aggregated Damages, Losses and Recovery Needs

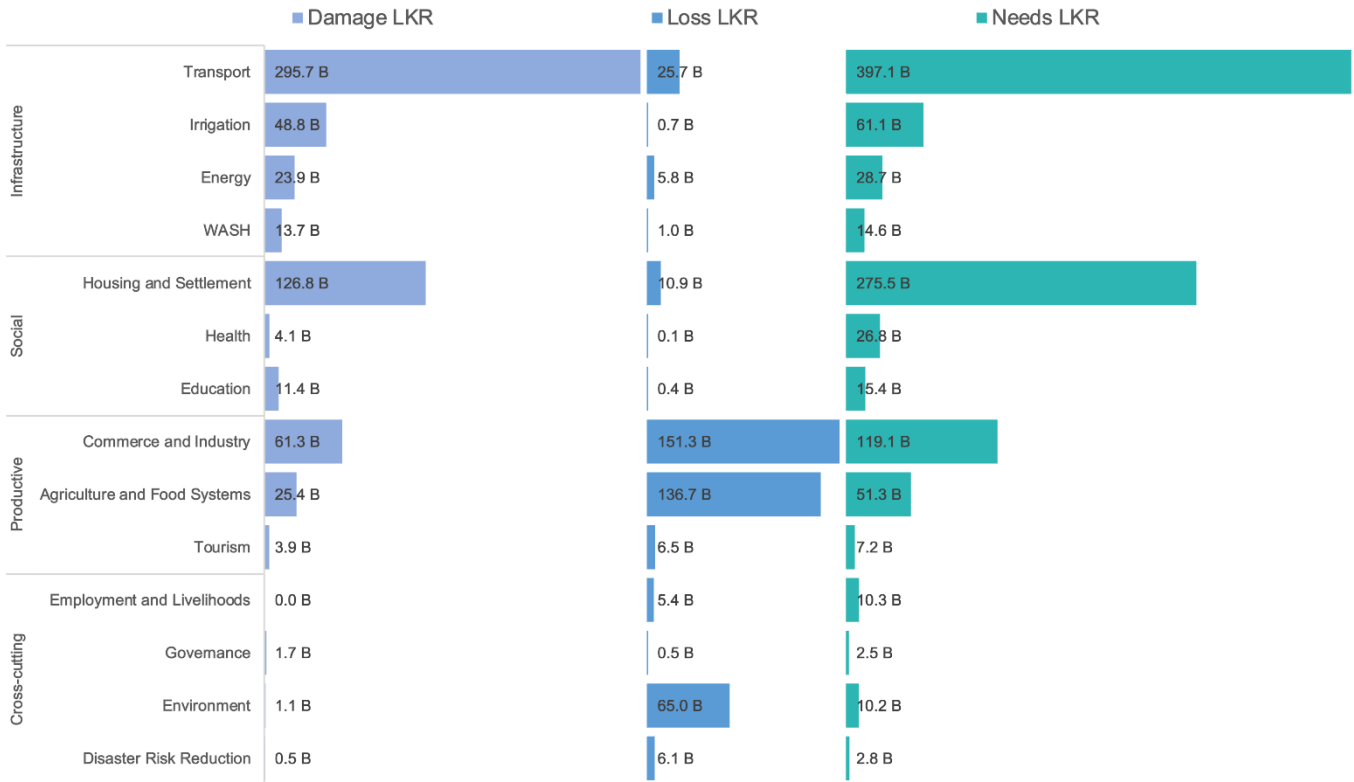


**Table 1: Summary of Damages, Losses and Recovery Needs in LKR**

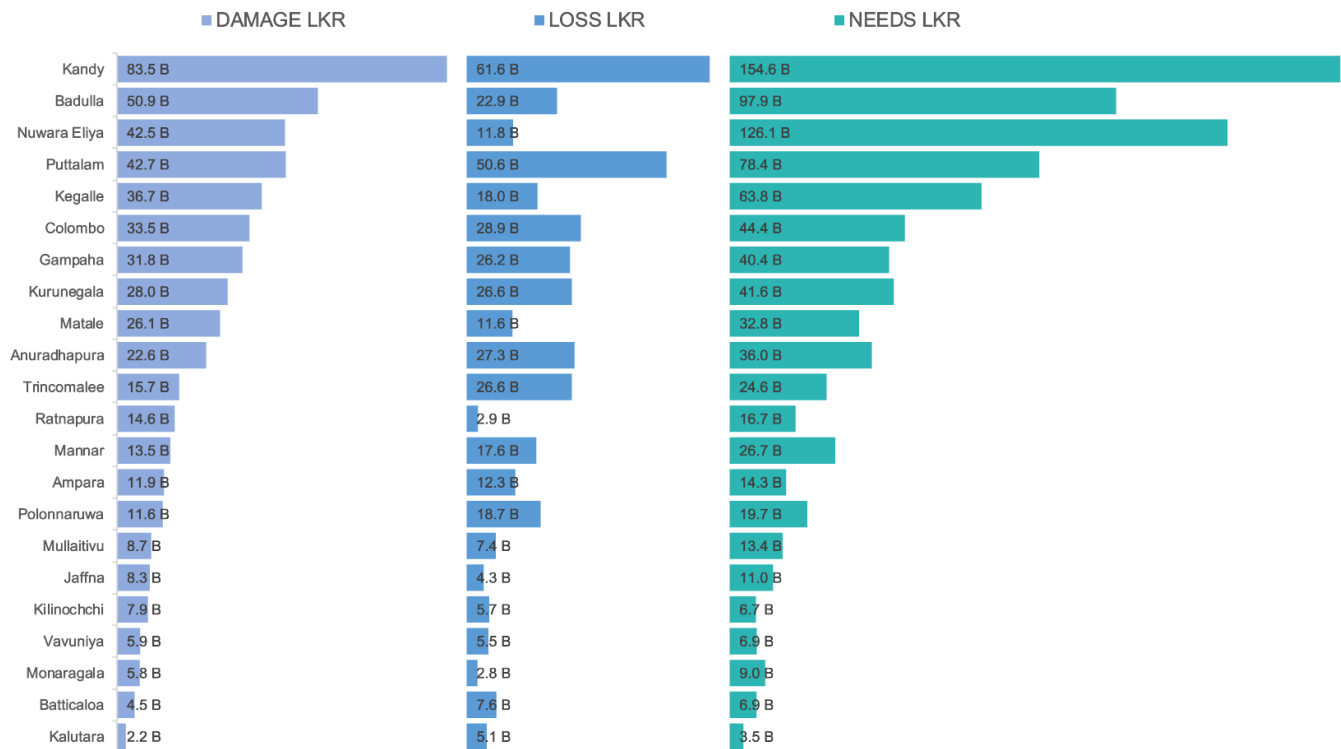
| Sector                              | Damages and Losses (Billion LKR) |                |                  | Recovery Needs (Billion LKR) |                              |                  |                      |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------|------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------|----------------------|
|                                     | Damages                          | Losses         | Total Effect     | Short Term (0-1 year)        | Medium-Long Term (1-3 years) | Total Needs      | Share of Total Needs |
| <b>Social Sectors</b>               |                                  |                |                  |                              |                              |                  |                      |
| <b>Housing and Settlement</b>       | 126.8 B                          | 10.9 B         | 137.7 B          | 72.0 B                       | 203.4 B                      | 275.5 B          | 26.9%                |
| <b>Health</b>                       | 4.1 B                            | 0.1 B          | 4.1 B            | 25.7 B                       | 1.1 B                        | 26.8 B           | 2.6%                 |
| <b>Education</b>                    | 11.4 B                           | 0.4 B          | 11.8 B           | 8.4 B                        | 7.0 B                        | 15.4 B           | 1.5%                 |
| <b>Social Total</b>                 | <b>142.3 B</b>                   | <b>11.4 B</b>  | <b>153.7 B</b>   | <b>106.1 B</b>               | <b>211.5 B</b>               | <b>317.6 B</b>   | <b>31.1%</b>         |
| <b>Productive Sectors</b>           |                                  |                |                  |                              |                              |                  |                      |
| <b>Tourism</b>                      | 3.9 B                            | 6.5 B          | 10.4 B           | 4.5 B                        | 2.7 B                        | 7.2 B            | 0.7%                 |
| <b>Commerce and Industry</b>        | 61.3 B                           | 151.3 B        | 212.5 B          | 39.2 B                       | 79.9 B                       | 119.1 B          | 11.7%                |
| <b>Agriculture and Food Systems</b> | 25.4 B                           | 136.7 B        | 162.1 B          | 22.0 B                       | 29.3 B                       | 51.3 B           | 5.0%                 |
| <b>Productive Total</b>             | <b>90.6 B</b>                    | <b>294.4 B</b> | <b>385.0 B</b>   | <b>65.7 B</b>                | <b>111.9 B</b>               | <b>177.6 B</b>   | <b>17.4%</b>         |
| <b>Infrastructure Sectors</b>       |                                  |                |                  |                              |                              |                  |                      |
| <b>WASH</b>                         | 13.7 B                           | 1.0 B          | 14.6 B           | 2.9 B                        | 11.7 B                       | 14.6 B           | 1.4%                 |
| <b>Transport</b>                    | 295.7 B                          | 25.7 B         | 321.4 B          | 156.8 B                      | 240.3 B                      | 397.1 B          | 38.8%                |
| <b>Irrigation</b>                   | 48.8 B                           | 0.7 B          | 49.5 B           | 18.2 B                       | 42.9 B                       | 61.1 B           | 6.0%                 |
| <b>Energy</b>                       | 23.9 B                           | 5.8 B          | 29.7 B           | 27.3 B                       | 1.4 B                        | 28.7 B           | 2.8%                 |
| <b>Infrastructure Total</b>         | <b>382.0 B</b>                   | <b>33.1 B</b>  | <b>415.2 B</b>   | <b>205.2 B</b>               | <b>296.2 B</b>               | <b>501.4 B</b>   | <b>49.0%</b>         |
| <b>Cross Cutting Sectors</b>        |                                  |                |                  |                              |                              |                  |                      |
| <b>Governance</b>                   | 1.7 B                            | 0.5 B          | 2.1 B            | 1.3 B                        | 1.2 B                        | 2.5 B            | 0.2%                 |
| <b>Environment</b>                  | 1.1 B                            | 65.0 B         | 66.1 B           | 4.5 B                        | 5.7 B                        | 10.2 B           | 1.0%                 |
| <b>Employment and Livelihoods</b>   |                                  | 5.4 B          | 5.4 B            | 7.0 B                        | 3.3 B                        | 10.3 B           | 1.0%                 |
| <b>Disaster Risk Reduction</b>      | 0.5 B                            | 6.1 B          | 6.6 B            | 1.5 B                        | 1.3 B                        | 2.8 B            | 0.3%                 |
| <b>Cross-cutting Total</b>          | <b>3.3 B</b>                     | <b>77 B</b>    | <b>80.3 B</b>    | <b>14.3 B</b>                | <b>11.6 B</b>                | <b>25.8 B</b>    | <b>2.5%</b>          |
| <b>Grand Total</b>                  | <b>618.1 B</b>                   | <b>416 B</b>   | <b>1,034.1 B</b> | <b>391.3 B</b>               | <b>631.2 B</b>               | <b>1,022.5 B</b> | <b>100%</b>          |

\*\* The values in table 1 are rounded to the single decimal level and may therefore differ from the chapter totals rounded to 2 decimal points

**Figure 2: Summary of Damages, Losses and Recovery Needs by Sector**



**Figure 3: Summary of Damages, Losses and Recovery Needs by District**



Note: The estimates in figure 3 exclude losses in the Railway sub-sector and in the Energy Sector. DRR and health recovery needs are not included in the district-level figures because the district level breakdown is not available.

Distribution of Available Losses by District

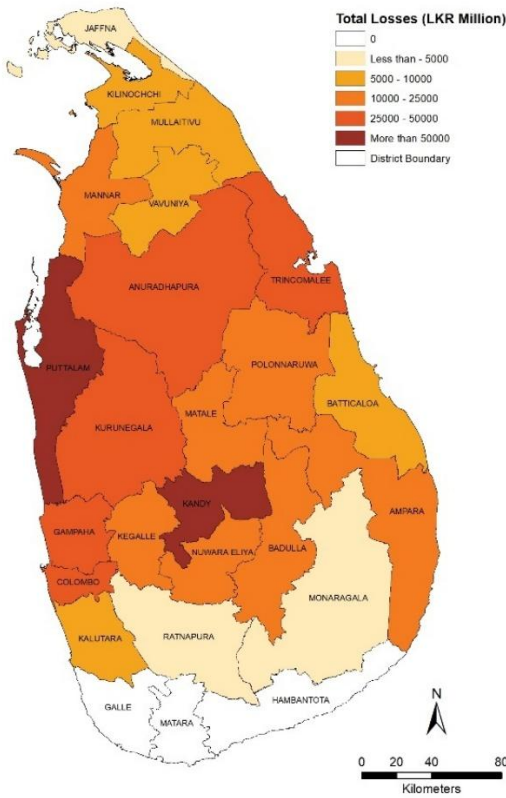


Figure 4: Distribution of loss by district

Distribution of Available Damages by District

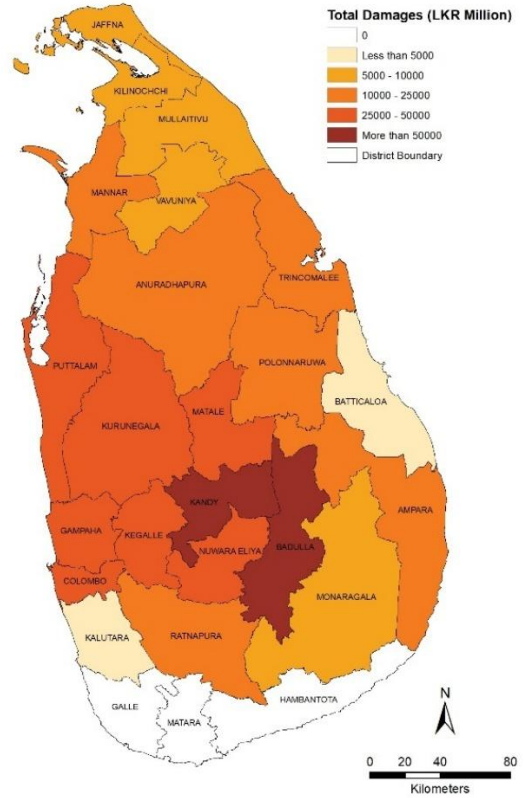


Figure 5: Distribution of Damage by District

Distribution of Available Recovery Needs by Category and District

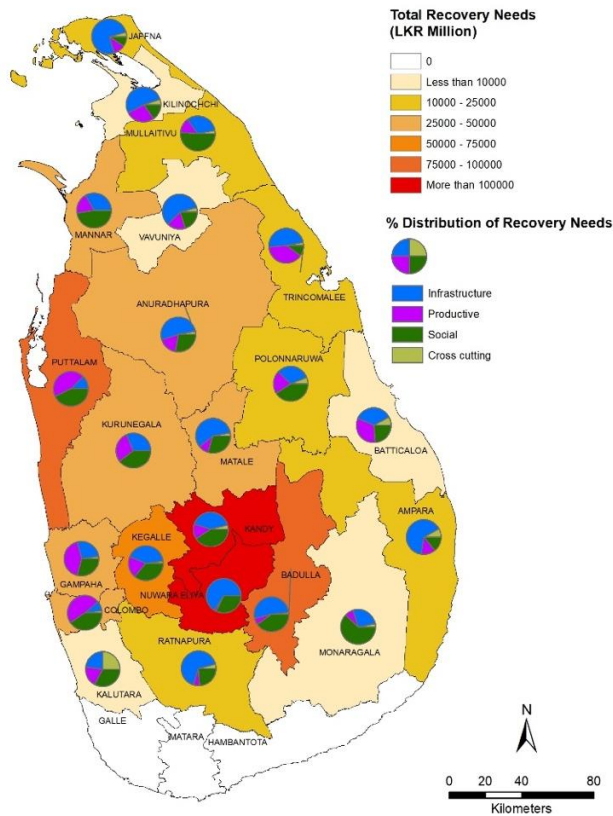
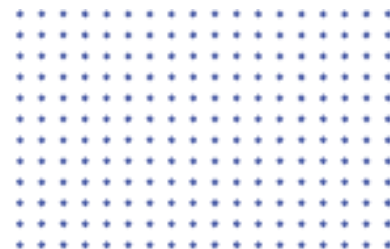


Figure 6: Distribution of recovery needs by district (Health, Energy, and DRR not included)

# SOCIAL SECTORS

Housing | Health | Education



## Housing

**Damage:** Estimated LKR 126.8 billion (USD 416.9 million), driven by extensive destruction to housing stock and household assets, with the highest impacts recorded in Kandy, Colombo, Kegalle, Puttalam, and Gampaha. At the time of the assessment a total of 113,777 houses were estimated to be affected consisting of 5,945 fully damaged and 107,832 partially damaged houses. The affected number of houses amounts to nearly 2.14% of the total housing stock, consisting of 0.11% of fully damaged houses and 2.03% partially damaged houses.

**Loss:** LKR 10.9 billion (USD 35.9 million) primarily reflecting Government cleaning allowances for affected households.

**The recovery and reconstruction needs for the housing sector are estimated at LKR 275.5 billion (USD 905.5 million),** primarily to support Build Back Better (BBB)-compliant resilient repair, reconstruction, and risk-informed relocation. This includes structural strengthening to hazard-resistant standards, replacement of essential household goods, and targeted non-structural mitigation measures. Costs also cover the relocation of approximately 11,080 partially damaged houses and 9,674 undamaged houses located in high-risk flood and landslide zones, underscoring the importance of ensuring that housing recovery efforts reduce long-term exposure to disaster risks. The regular and systematic updating of hazard and risk maps is therefore a key recovery priority to support safe relocation, informed land-use planning, and resilient future development.

## Health

**Damage:** Estimated at LKR 4.06 billion (USD 13.3 million) almost entirely borne by the public sector. Eight healthcare institutions require immediate relocation of which three are in Uva, four in Central and one in North-Western provinces. Another three major hospitals have sustained partial damages and more than 160 health care institutions minor damages affecting service continuity.

**Loss:** Additional expenditure of approximately LKR 64 million (USD 0.21 million) was incurred by the Ministry of Health to sustain and scale up services during the cyclone, including the establishment of temporary facilities and deployment of mobile medical units.

**The recovery and reconstruction needs for the health sector are estimated at LKR 26.8 billion (USD 88 million)** to restore full functionality, rebuild and relocate damaged facilities to safer locations, and strengthen system resilience. Strengthening essential health services should be a core priority of the recovery process, with particular emphasis on maternal and child health, non-communicable disease (NCD) management, emergency and trauma care, and enhancing preparedness capacity to withstand future shocks. Furthermore, resilient reconstruction needs have been identified for key hospitals considered as partially damaged – Base Hospital Mahiyanganaya, District General Hospital Chilaw, and District General Hospital Nuwara Eliya. These facilities, together with those sustaining minor damage, require prompt restoration and the replacement of essential medical and non-medical equipment to restore their critical operations. Importantly, all reconstruction efforts should comply with “Build Back Better” standards, ensuring enhanced resilience to climate- and geo-related hazards, safeguarding the continuity of essential health services, and strengthening primary health care and public health systems.

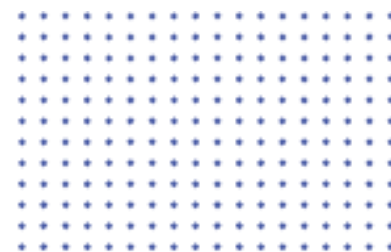
## Education

**Damage:** Estimated at **LKR 11.4 billion** (USD 37.4 million) in PDNA targeted 22 districts and LKR 11.5 billion (USD 37.7 million) in all districts, accounting for 1,806 schools (18.0%), 984 preschools (5.1%), 30 TVET centres, 13 university facilities, and 3 SLIATE institutes. Almost half of these damages are concentrated in Kandy District, primarily due to extensive damage to the University of Peradeniya, followed by Badulla and Nuwara Eliya. Overall, the most significant damages were observed in these three districts, with 75% of the most heavily 24 affected schools located in the Uva and Central provinces. Schools used as safety centres sustained additional damage, particularly to WASH facilities.

**Loss:** Estimated at **LKR 401 million** (USD 1.3 million) in 22 districts / LKR 410 million (USD 1.4 million) in all districts, losses are primarily associated with operational disruptions across the education system, including school cleaning and debris removal, temporary relocation of classes, replacement of learning materials, and other immediate measures required to restore inclusive access to schools. These estimates capture only the direct economic costs of disruption and do not account for non-economic losses such as lost learning hours and impacts on education outcomes, though these are reflected in the recovery needs identified for the sector. The cyclone affected an estimated 226,935 primary and secondary school, with impacts likely to persist beyond the immediate emergency period. Learning disruptions resulted from school closures, relocations, overcrowding, loss of learning materials, longer commutes, and impacts on teacher availability and wellbeing.

The recovery and reconstruction needs for the education sector are estimated at LKR 15.4 billion (USD 50.6 million) in 22 districts / LKR 15.6 billion (USD 51.2 million) in all districts. **When focusing on the directly affected schools (irreparably, severely, or partially damaged), the recovery needs for general education amount to LKR 5.9 billion (USD 19.2 million) in all districts, consisting of LKR 653 million (USD 2.2 million) for national schools and LKR 5.2 billion (USD 17.1 million) for provincial schools.** Short term recovery requires humanitarian education responses to ensure immediate safe access to learning and continuity of education. In the medium to long term, recovery efforts are recommended to focus on resilient reconstruction, upgrading and strengthening of education infrastructure, restoration of WASH facilities, psychosocial support for students and teachers, system strengthening, and school relocations where heightened risks render existing facilities unsafe. The recovery strategy aims not only to restore pre-disaster functionality but to enhance resilience, preparedness, and risk-informed planning across the education system.

# PRODUCTIVE SECTORS



Agriculture | Commerce & Industry | Tourism

## Agriculture

Cyclone Ditwah had significant impacts on Sri Lanka’s agriculture and food security sector, primarily through disruptions to production cycles, income flows and market access rather than widespread destruction of productive assets. **Total sector damages in the agriculture sector are estimated at LKR 25.40 billion (USD 83.51 million), while losses amount to LKR 136.66 billion (USD 449.25 million),** confirming the predominantly loss-driven nature of the disaster. Damages were concentrated in livestock, fisheries and aquaculture infrastructure, and plantation systems, while crop damages were comparatively limited. Losses were highest in Trincomalee, Anuradhapura, Mannar, Kurunegala and Puttalam, reflecting the exposure of major paddy, vegetable, livestock and fisheries production zones to flooding and prolonged access constraints during the Maha season. Paddy and high-value vegetable crops accounted for a large share of crop-related losses, while fisheries and aquaculture experienced substantial income disruptions due to damaged equipment and restricted access.

The January 2026 WFP Food Security Survey suggested a deterioration in food security occurred following the Cyclone<sup>18</sup>. The survey further suggests that moderately acute food insecurity doubled from 16% pre-shock to 32% immediately after the event. Thirty-nine percent of households reported inadequate food consumption in December 2025. Although conditions improved modestly by January 2026, food insecurity and coping levels remain above pre-cyclone levels, particularly among smallholders, fishers, low-income households and female-headed households.<sup>19</sup>

**The recovery and reconstruction needs are estimated at LKR 51.37 billion (USD 168.86 million).** Priorities focus on restoring seasonal production, livestock productivity, fisheries and aquaculture operations, and plantation systems, while embedding climate resilience and disaster risk reduction across interventions. Short-term measures emphasize livelihood stabilization and rapid production recovery, including replanting, livestock support and cash-based recovery modalities (e.g. cash-for-work, multipurpose cash assistance, vouchers). Medium- to longer-term investments prioritize resilient infrastructure, strengthened climate information and early warning systems, improved risk information and expanded shock-responsive social protection and agricultural insurance.

The recovery strategy applies a Build Back Better and climate-smart approach, aligned with national development and adaptation frameworks, to support a transition toward more resilient, risk-informed and sustainable agrifood systems.

## Commerce & Industry

**Damage:** Estimated at LKR 61.3 billion (USD 201.4 million) caused by widespread impact on business facilities, equipment and machinery, raw material and finished goods. Around 75% of damages are concentrated in six districts, including Puttalam, Colombo, Kandy, Gampaha, Kegalle, Kurunegala, and Trincomalee.

<sup>18</sup> WFP (2026). Remote Household Food Security Survey Brief (m-VAM). Sri Lanka. December 2025. Online: <https://api.godocs.wfp.org/api/documents/WFP-0000171465/download/>

<sup>19</sup> Government of Sri Lanka and UNOCHA (2025). Cyclone Ditwah Joint Rapid Needs Assessment: Phase II, December 2025. Online: <https://reliefweb.int/report/sri-lanka/cyclone-ditwah-joint-rapid-needs-assessment-phase-ii-december-2025>

**Loss:** Estimated at LKR 151.3 billion (USD 497.3 million), losses are driven primarily by sustained business disruptions expected to last until mid-2026. Informal sector enterprises have sustained lower absolute losses compared to their formal sector counterparts; however, this largely reflects pre-disaster structural differences, as informal enterprises typically operate with smaller capital bases and lower productivity levels. Despite the lower monetary value of losses, the impacts on employment, income and livelihoods are often more severe for informal operators, who typically have limited savings, little access to credit or insurance, and fewer means to absorb shocks.

The recovery and reconstruction needs for the Commerce and Industry sector amount to LKR 119.1 billion (USD 391.6 million) and must prioritize the rehabilitation of micro and small enterprises that provide the majority of employment and services, but have fewer resources to cope with the effects of Cyclone Ditwah. Targeted recovery measures include among others technical assistance for business continuity planning, the establishment of disaster-resilient industrial zones with improved infrastructure and climate-adaptive design standards as well as the relocation of some manufacturing facilities.

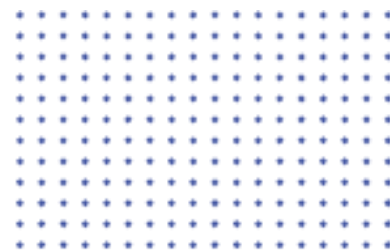
## Tourism

**Damage:** Estimated at LKR 3.9 billion (USD 12.8 million). Of the tourism infrastructure reported as damaged across the affected districts, approximately 95% sustained partial damage, while the remaining 5%, primarily accommodation facilities, were fully damaged.

**Loss:** Estimated at LKR 6.48 billion (USD 21.3 million), driven mainly by disrupted road and rail access, landslides, and blocked routes to key attractions such as Galle Fort (Galle), Ella (Badulla), Sigiriya Rock Fortress (Matale), and the Temple of the Tooth (Kandy), which together account for over 50% of inbound visits. Losses were amplified by tourism’s spatial and seasonal concentration, leading to cancellations, reduced arrivals, and lower entrance-fee revenues.

The recovery and reconstruction needs for the tourism sector are estimated at LKR 7.2 billion (USD 23.5 million) to repair and upgrade assets using Build Back Better (BBB) principles and restore connectivity and services. It is recommended that recovery interventions prioritize targeted marketing in major source markets to rebuild confidence in Sri Lanka as a safe destination.

# INFRASTRUCTURE SECTORS



Irrigation | Transport | Energy | WASH

## Irrigation

**Damage:** Estimated at LKR 48.8 billion (USD 160.5 million), reflecting extensive effects on irrigation infrastructure; over 1,400 hydraulic structures were fully damaged and more than 6,300 partially damaged. This disruption affects irrigation for around 100,000 ha of agricultural land, heightening risks to food security and downstream community safety. The highest damage values were recorded in Badulla, Anuradhapura, Kandy, Mannar, Kurunegala, and Trincomalee districts, driven by damage to tanks, canal systems, access roads, and associated structures. Ditwah critically undermined the functionality of irrigation systems and dam safety curtailing the delivery of reliable irrigation services, and weakening structural functions such as flood moderation, hydropower generation, and potable water supply services, particularly in rural and urban low-lying areas. The unprecedented scale of Cyclone Ditwah also exposed and amplified pre-existing vulnerabilities, including aging infrastructure, sedimentation, and limited operational capacity, increasing the risk of secondary failures under future rainfall events.

**Loss:** Estimated at LKR 0.7 billion (USD 2.2 million), due to disrupted irrigation service delivery and increased emergency expenditure to stabilise damaged structures, restore minimum service continuity, and re-establish governance and coordination.

The recovery and reconstruction needs for the irrigation sector are estimated at LKR 61.1 billion (USD 200.7 million). The recovery strategy adopts build back better with a phased approach: immediate needs of LKR 18.2 billion (US D58 million) focus on urgently stabilizing structures at risk of secondary failure in the next rainy season and sustaining irrigation services. Medium to long term recovery with LKR 42.8 billion (US D135 million) centers on rebuilding resilient infrastructure and institutions, including rehabilitating damaged and aged structures using updated hydrological designs, strengthening non-structural measures such as watershed management and early warning systems, enhancing operational capacity, and advancing sector-wide policy reforms.

## Transport

**Damage:** Estimated at LKR 295.7 billion (USD 972.7 million), transport sector damages encompass approximately 1,206 km of national roads (9.42% of the network), 1,956 km of provincial roads, 3,650 km of rural roads, 19.78 km of estate roads, and 8.4 km of agricultural roads, as well as 805.24 km of railway tracks and 750 bridges. The Central Province experienced the highest damage of any single province.

**Loss:** Estimated at LKR 25.7 billion (USD 84.57 million), reflecting reduced road functionality, non-trafficable critical links, and major disruption to passenger mobility, freight movement, and access to essential services. Losses also stem from emergency works (debris clearance, drainage improvements, temporary diversions and basic engineering), asphalt plant non-operation, and expressway toll waivers.

The recovery and reconstruction needs for the transport sector are estimated at LKR 397.1 billion (USD 1.3 billion) of which 50% are required for permanent solutions to rehabilitate and newly constructed road infrastructure based on resilient designs. Additional recovery priorities include slope stabilisation (formation cutting, retaining/toe walls and landslide mitigation), improved surface and sub-surface drainage, riverbank protection, and reconstruction/rehabilitation of 40 bridges.

## Power, Energy and Telecommunications

**Damage:** Estimated at LKR 23.9 billion (USD 78.5 million), driven by critical damage across electricity generation, transmission and distribution and affecting hydropower, wind and solar assets, as well as transmission towers and lines. Around 3% of damage relates to the petroleum sub-sector, primarily fuel stations. Most damaged assets were publicly owned (92%), concentrated in Badulla, Nuwara Eliya, Kandy, Kegalle and Matale districts. Telecommunications infrastructure, such as towers and antenna systems, fibre optic routes and switching centres sustained damage, however it was not possible to establish the associated monetary costs within the timeframe of the PDNA.

**Loss:** Estimated at LKR 5.8 billion (USD 19.2 million), reflecting outages of up to 14 days and disrupted supply to over 4.1 million consumers, critical facilities (hospitals, water supply), and key manufacturing and agricultural activities. Revenue losses are estimated at LKR 2.6 billion for electricity (occurring during the first two weeks after the disaster) and LKR 32 billion for petroleum. All documented losses were borne by the public sector. Private retailer revenue losses are not covered by the assessment.

The recovery and reconstruction needs for the energy sector are estimated at LKR 28.7 billion (USD 94.2 million) of which an estimated LKR 23.8 billion has already been spent by the Ceylon Electricity Board to restore the network to pre-disaster levels. Remaining priorities focus on Build Back Better upgrades, such as greater network redundancy, elevated substations, improved hydropower intakes, and renewable energy storage integration, to reduce future climate and disaster risks and strengthen long-term sustainability.

## Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)

**Damage:** Estimated at LKR 13.6 billion (USD 44.9 million), causing severe disruption to urban and rural water supply and sanitation systems across all 22 affected districts. Urban systems saw 413,003 household connections interrupted (over 14% of NWSDB clients nationwide), with the most severe impacts in Kandy, Mannar, Badulla, Puttalam and Kegalle. In rural areas, 538 community-managed schemes were damaged, restricting access for around 751,000 people. Flooding and contamination of dug wells heightens risks of diarrhea and other waterborne diseases, with disproportionate impacts on women and girls due to reduced water access, unsafe sanitation, and constraints on menstrual hygiene management.

**Loss:** Estimated at LKR 0.96 billion (USD 3.1 million), driven by reduced billing revenue and higher operating and emergency response costs (energy/fuel, chemicals, water trucking and emergency distribution, WASH supplies, cleaning of intakes and treatment units, debris removal, and urgent repairs). Service interruptions affected hospitals, schools, nutrition services, and livelihoods. Highest district losses were documented in Kandy, Badulla, and Puttalam.

The recovery and reconstruction needs for the WASH sector are estimated at LKR 14.6 billion (USD 48 million) to restore and rehabilitate climate-resilient water and sanitation services, prioritising resilient reconstruction of damaged rural and urban schemes, rehabilitation of intake and treatment facilities, repair of distribution networks, restoration of community water points and strengthened water quality monitoring, alongside risk-informed design standards, improved materials and technologies, and enhanced operational capacity to reduce vulnerability to future shocks.

# CROSS CUTTING SECTORS

Environment | DRR | Governance | Employment and Livelihoods



## Environment

**Damage:** Estimated at LKR 1.1 billion (USD 3.5 million). Landslides and flooding caused damage to approximately 587 hectares of forest land and about 32 km of forest roads, tracks, and trails, while more than 860 km of electric fencing, installed to prevent human–elephant conflict were destroyed or damaged. Storm surges, strong waves, flooding, and landslides affected coastal ecosystems, wetlands, river basins, reservoirs, and highland forests, with localized impacts on mangroves, coral reefs, and other biodiversity assets, including flooding of greenhouses and orchid nurseries and substantial damage to the Royal Botanic Garden in Peradeniya, where floodwaters damaged facilities and caused the collapse of a hanging bridge. Moreover, environmental sector infrastructure, including laboratories, monitoring stations, vehicles, nurseries, and administrative buildings, also incurred damage.

**Loss:** Estimated at LKR 65 billion (USD 213.6 million), more than 60 times higher than the recorded damages, reflecting the widespread disruption to ecosystem functions and services that support human livelihoods, fauna, and flora. The largest share of losses relates to the degradation of terrestrial and marine ecosystems caused by floods and landslides (86%), followed by reduced carbon sequestration, debris disposal and salvaging costs, and lost revenues from botanical garden ticketing. Cultural ecosystem services and landscape impacts were not costed within the scope of this assessment.

The recovery and reconstruction needs for the environment sector are estimated at LKR 10.2 billion (USD 32.9 million). Immediate priorities include asbestos sanitation and secure debris disposal. Medium- long term investments focus on terrestrial and freshwater ecosystem restoration, coastal and marine habitat rehabilitation, wildlife recovery, and strengthened environmental valuation and biodiversity impact assessment systems, positioning nature as critical infrastructure for long-term resilience.

## Disaster Risk Reduction

**Damage:** Estimated at LKR 519.8 million (USD 1.71 million). Damage occurred to weather observation and early warning equipment, hazard monitoring systems, emergency coordination facilities, evacuation centres, and other disaster management support infrastructure. Flooding, landslides, and limited accessibility impeded the operation of several disaster risk reduction (DRR) systems during the response phase. Moreover, damage to flood and slope mitigation infrastructure heightened exposure to ongoing flood and landslide risks in the affected areas, extending into the recovery period.

**Loss:** Economic losses are estimated at LKR 6.12 billion (USD 20.13 million), driven mainly by the costs of emergency response and relief operations, including evacuations, operation of safety centres, logistics, emergency deployments, and extended coordination arrangements. Additional expenditures were required for rapid safety assessments and emergency operational measures required to manage evolving flood and landslide risks.

**Recovery needs:** The total recovery needs are estimated at LKR 2.81 billion (USD 9.25 million). Immediate priorities include repairing damaged weather observation and hazard monitoring equipment and undertaking technical assessments required to strengthen these systems, alongside restoration of critical emergency logistics and coordination infrastructure. Recovery must also prioritize rehabilitation of flood and landslide mitigation measures, upgrading multi-hazard early warning systems, and strengthening preparedness and emergency management capacities.

The event highlighted the need to shift from managing disasters to managing disaster risk through a stronger multi-hazard risk management architecture that addresses prospective, corrective, and residual risk. In line with Build Back Better (BBB) principles, recovery must prioritize systemic strengthening rather than simple asset replacement, including improved early warning reach, climate-resilient design, anticipatory action, and integration of displacement risk considerations to support safer return, durable solutions, and more resilient livelihoods for affected communities.

## Governance

**Damage:** Estimated at LKR 1.67 billion (USD 5.5 million), driven mainly by damage to government and administrative offices, local authority facilities, community halls/multipurpose buildings, and justice and public security infrastructure (courts, prisons, police stations), including significant non-structural impacts to IT, electrical systems, equipment, furniture, and critical records. The most affected districts were Kandy, Badulla, and Gampaha (each exceeding LKR 100 million in reported damages).

**Loss:** Estimated at LKR 0.48 billion (USD 1.6 million), reflecting immediate fiscal pressures to maintain essential governance and rule-of-law service, such as immediate debris clearance, overtime, fuel, temporary arrangements, and specialised measures for court record preservation. However, loss reporting remains uneven and incomplete across institutions; to address gaps, a proportional estimation approach was applied where verified loss data was unavailable.

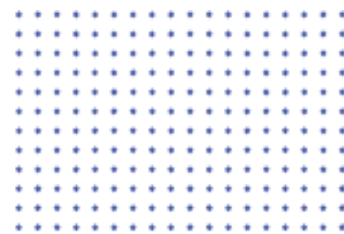
Total recovery and reconstruction needs are estimated at LKR 2.48 billion (USD 8.2 million) prioritising risk-informed repair/reconstruction and selective relocation of key facilities; restoration of service continuity for administrative, justice, and public security functions; and protection/digitisation of critical legal and administrative records. Short-term “soft” measures include establishing a crisis governance coordination mechanism, strengthening accountability and procurement safeguards, improving business continuity planning (particularly for courts and detention facilities), and reinforcing information integrity and public communication systems to support inclusive, trusted recovery delivery.

## Employment and Livelihoods

**Loss:** An estimated 149,400 workers were affected by Cyclone Ditwah through temporary work stoppages, resulting in 5 million lost workdays and LKR 5.5 billion (USD 17.8 million) in lost income. The highest losses occurred in Colombo, Kandy, Gampaha, Kegalle and Puttalam, reflecting both employment concentration and higher average daily earnings compared to other districts. The services sector account for the largest share of income losses (LKR 3.4 billion), while industry contributes around LKR 1.5 billion and agriculture LKR 547 million. Although the absolute income losses are comparatively lower in the agriculture sector, they are relatively more severe for rural and estate households, where baseline incomes are low and opportunities for livelihood diversification are limited.

Recovery needs for the employment and livelihoods sector are estimated at LKR 10.32 billion (USD 33.9 million) to finance a combination of employment generation measures, skills training, entrepreneurship support, support to plantation workers, and support to crucial institutions such as local employment service centres, and TVET schools. Implementing these needs requires a coordinated effort involving national and district authorities, workers' and employers' organizations, the private sector, including financial service providers, civil society organizations, and international agencies.

# HUMAN IMPACT



**Cyclone Ditwah struck Sri Lanka at a time when household resilience had already been severely eroded by the 2022 macroeconomic crisis.** National poverty stood at 25.9% and only 41.3% of the population was covered by social protection<sup>20</sup>. These pre-existing conditions meant that a large share of Sri Lanka's population entered the cyclone period with depleted savings, elevated debt burdens, and limited capacity to absorb further shocks. The cyclone affected an estimated 1.2 million people across the country. Among those affected were approximately 522,000 children, 263,000 older persons, and more than 21,000 pregnant women<sup>21</sup>. The PDNA highlights that the most severe effects were recorded across the Central, Uva, North-Western, Western, and Northern provinces, where the intersection of geographic exposure, infrastructure vulnerability, and pre-existing socio-economic disadvantage amplified the human impact of the disaster. The assessment analyses the effects of the cyclone across five pillars:

**Living Standards, Health, and Education:** Cyclone Ditwah disrupted the systems upon which households depend for their daily needs. It is estimated that the cyclone damaged more than 113,000 houses, disrupted water supply for 838,000 people, affected 2,600 schools and 160 health facilities, and cut electricity to 4.1 million consumers for up to two weeks. According to the energy, housing, and education sector assessment findings, the estate-sector communities in the central highlands endured the longest outages and the highest rates of housing damage, while women absorbed increased unpaid care burdens as health, water, and education services collapsed simultaneously.

**Livelihoods:** An estimated 5 million workdays were lost, with the heaviest impact on informal workers, plantation labourers, and own-account workers. Women's livelihood vulnerability may have been further compounded by a pre-existing 27% gender wage gap, their concentration in informal employment and a dramatic increase in care responsibilities which constrained opportunities to re-engage in paid work during the recovery period<sup>22</sup>.

**Food Security:** It is estimated that food insecurity doubled from 16% to 32% of households, with 59% resorting to food-based coping strategies including consuming less nutritious food, reducing portion sizes, and skipping meals<sup>23</sup>. According to UNICEF, an estimated 281,830 children under five, 19,021 pregnant women, and 96,637 breastfeeding women were identified as nutritionally at risk, compounded by the impact of Cyclone Ditwah<sup>24</sup>.

**Gender Equality:** The cyclone may have exacerbated pre-existing gender inequalities, with indications that protection risks increased in displacement settings, particularly where gender-segregated sanitation, adequate lighting, and safe spaces for women and girls were limited.<sup>25</sup> An estimated 21,000 pregnant women were reported to have faced disrupted antenatal care and maternal referral pathways, while women's increased unpaid care work and the liquidation of personal assets such as gold jewellery may have further eroded their economic autonomy and decision-making agency<sup>26</sup>.

**Social Inclusion:** The PDNA highlights that multilingual and rural communities in the hardest hit districts were notably affected by the cyclone, including through power outages, housing damage, and disruptions to key services. It further notes that language differences may have influenced access to early warnings and recovery information for vulnerable multi-lingual communities, while documentation requirements may have posed challenges for some households in accessing reconstruction support.<sup>27</sup>

20 World Bank (2024). Sri Lanka Development Update: Opening Up to the Future. Online: <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/099654510092428580/pdf/IDU-d5aa8c92-ec43-44c8-b75b-7ddf3456747e.pdf>

21 Disaster Management Center. Cyclone Ditwah Joint Rapid Needs Assessment: Phase II, December 2025. Online: [https://www.dmc.gov.lk/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=1752&Itemid=287&lang=en#20251224-165206](https://www.dmc.gov.lk/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1752&Itemid=287&lang=en#20251224-165206)

22 PDNA Sri Lanka (2026). Employment and Livelihoods Sector Assessment.

23 PDNA Sri Lanka (2026). Health and Nutrition Sector Assessment.

24 UNICEF Sri Lanka (2022). Humanitarian situation report: Sri Lanka economic crisis and nutrition response. Online: <https://www.unicef.org/documents/sri-lanka-humanitarian-situation-report-economic-crisis-july-2022>

25 PDNA Sri Lanka (2026). Housing and Settlements Sector Assessment; PDNA Sri Lanka (2026). Power and Energy Sector Assessment

26 WFP (2026). Remote Household Food Security Survey Brief (m-VAM). Sri Lanka. December 2025. Online: <https://api.godocs.wfp.org/api/documents/WFP-0000171465/download/>

27 International Organization for Migration (IOM), Mar 04, 2026. DTM Sri Lanka — Cyclone Ditwah: Protection Needs and Concerns (January - February 2026). IOM, Sri Lanka and The New Humanitarian (2025). Lost in translation: How Sri Lanka's Tamils face repeated disaster warning failures. Online: <https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/news-feature/2025/12/18/lost-translation-how-sri-lankas-tamils-face-repeated-disaster-warning>



**The assessment findings suggest that affected households adopted a range of coping strategies in response to the cyclone's impact.** Available evidence suggests that some households reduced expenditure on food, health, and education to prioritise immediate shelter and essential needs. Increased reliance on borrowing was noted, particularly among informal workers with limited financial buffers, potentially heightening longer-term vulnerability. There are also indications that children in vulnerable households, particularly in estate and rural areas, may face heightened risk of being withdrawn from school to contribute to household income<sup>28</sup>.

**The Human Impact Assessment identifies seven recovery priorities that address the multidimensional nature of the human impact.** These include embedding gender and inclusion criteria in recovery targeting and financing; treating protection and social safeguarding as core recovery functions; supporting durable solutions for displaced populations; designing livelihood recovery to address informality, care burdens, and asset gaps; restoring nutrition safety nets for women and children; strengthening inclusive recovery governance; and integrating labour migration considerations into recovery planning.

## MACROECONOMIC IMPACT

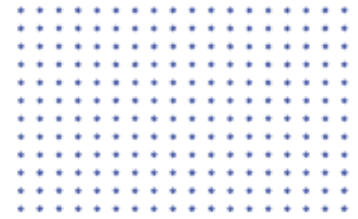
Despite the infrastructure shock and adverse livelihoods impact, the impact on overall macroeconomic activity (flow) is likely to be limited in the immediate term, due to Sri Lanka's strong pre-cyclone economic trajectory, economic resilience of key sectors, the presence of adequate fiscal and external buffers, and near-term support from remittances. Preliminary estimates indicate a limited impact on GDP, with growth expected to approximately be 3.6% (Y-O-Y) for 2026, as the damage to infrastructure, housing, and agriculture may be counteracted by the recovery in construction, and the pace and scale of government post-cyclone reconstruction efforts, amid positive economic momentum in the face of external shocks. However, the impact on livelihoods will depend on the short-term responsiveness of the safety net system.

The government's fiscal response needs to be carefully managed to provide relief to impacted communities and support reconstruction needs, while ensuring that the scale of the response is in line with economy's absorptive capacity. In the medium-term, growth and poverty impacts hinge on continued macro-fiscal stability in the face of external shocks, adequate support for households and employment and livelihoods recovery, and implementation of structural reforms that enhance economic growth and resilience.

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<sup>28</sup> PDNA Sri Lanka (2026). Education Sector Assessment; Employment and Livelihoods Sector Assessment and UNDP RAPIDA Assessment

# RECOVERY STRATEGY



**Based on the damage and loss findings, the PDNA proposes a recovery strategy that supports Sri Lanka's return to a resilient and sustainable development trajectory.** The strategy aims to restore productive capacity, safeguard social welfare and ecosystem services, and strengthen public systems. The strategy recommends a state-led, inclusive approach that addresses urgent recovery needs while progressively embedding long-term disaster and climate resilience, institutional strengthening, and risk-informed development across all sectors.

**Recovery calls for actions beyond physical reconstruction.** It should restore livelihoods, protect human development gains, reinforce social protection systems, implement environmental safeguards and nature-based solutions, rebuild institutional capacity, and address underlying structural risks. Given the scale of estimated needs relative to fiscal space, implementation will require prioritisation, phased sequencing, and coordinated mobilisation of domestic and international financing.

In alignment with the mandate of the **Presidential Task Force for Rebuilding Sri Lanka**, recovery is structured around four mutually reinforcing pillars, supported by cross-cutting enablers that promote inclusion, transparency, financial sustainability, and long-term resilience. This framework strengthens government leadership, enhances inter-ministerial coordination, and improves alignment between sector investments, financing mechanisms, and national resilience objectives.

**Across all sectors, resilient recovery necessitates adopting a risk-informed and systems-based approach** that recognises the interdependence of natural systems, infrastructure, economic activities, and communities. Updated hazard and risk assessments, climate projections, environment valuations, biodiversity assessments, hydrological and geotechnical analyses, and performance evaluations of existing assets should inform investment decisions. This evidence base is essential to shape not only the rehabilitation of damaged infrastructure, but also housing reconstruction, urban development planning, employment and livelihood restoration, ecosystem protection, and public service delivery.

**In high-risk areas, including flood- and landslide-prone catchments, recovery investments should integrate basin-level risk understanding with coordinated planning across administrative and sectoral mandates.** Structural and non-structural measures can be strengthened by clearly defined safety standards and comprehensive, climate-informed design parameters. This includes the upgrading of embankments, urban drainage and stormwater systems, reservoirs, slope stabilisation works, and catchment management measures, alongside strengthened land use planning, soil conservation measures and risk governance mechanisms. Social sustainability demands that recovery programming actively reaches women, informal workers, persons with disabilities, and geographically isolated communities to restore livelihoods. Recovery works must apply stringent occupational health and safety standards for workers. Environmental sustainability requires that recovery plans integrate ecosystem restoration, sustainable resource management, and nature-based solutions.

**Overall, the strategy advocates for integrating disaster risk reduction and climate adaptation across all resilient recovery investments,** thereby reducing future exposure and vulnerability while supporting inclusive, fiscally responsible, and environmentally sustainable and resilient development outcomes.

**The recovery priorities and approach outlined in this report will also provide the analytical foundation for the development of a National Disaster Recovery Framework** in line with the Rebuilding Sri Lanka Initiative, as requested and led by the National Planning Department of the Ministry of Finance. Drawing on the PDNA results and methodology, the DRF process should ensure strong continuity with the PDNA findings and recommendations, clearly identify priority interventions and sequencing of implementation,

integrate with the national budgetary process and systems, and support policy dialogue on key reforms and financing options to enable a resilient recovery.

**Recovery Vision:** A renewed Sri Lanka — rebuilt stronger, fairer, and more sustainable.

**Mission:** To bring people, resources, and ideas together to rebuild Sri Lanka through inclusive, transparent, and sustainable action.

## Guiding Principles

Recovery must be anchored in:

- Trust, accountability, and good governance
- Leaving no one behind, with a focus on vulnerable populations
- Inclusive and participatory approaches
- Building back better through climate-resilient reconstruction
- Sustainable development and environmental stewardship
- Devolved structures, decentralised and accountable implementation

## Recovery Pillars

- **Pillar 1: Resilient Public Infrastructure:** Restore, upgrade, and future-proof critical infrastructure systems — including transport, energy, water supply, irrigation, and telecommunications — through risk-informed reconstruction
- **Pillar 2: Human Settlements and Housing:** Rebuild safer, more inclusive settlements while reducing long-term disaster risk
- **Pillar 3: Economic Revitalization, Employment and Livelihoods:** Restore employment and income-generating activities and catalyse a resilient labour market and economic recovery.
- **Pillar 4: Social Infrastructure and Essential Services:** Ensure the rapid restoration and strengthening of critical social services to protect human development gains

## Enablers

- **Sustainable Finance and Funding:** Mobilize, manage, and transparently allocate resources to support recovery at scale
- **Data, Digital Systems, and Risk Information:** Institutionalize data-driven decision-making across the recovery lifecycle
- **Strategic Communication and Engagement:** Establish a credible and sustainable recovery financing framework
- **Inclusion, Gender Equality, and Protection:** Embed gender-responsive, protection-centered, and inclusive approaches across all recovery policies, investments, and delivery mechanisms to ensure that no one is left behind.
- **Ecosystem Services and Nature-Based Resilience:** Integrate ecosystem protection and restoration such as watersheds, wetlands, forests, and coastal buffers, into recovery planning, recognizing their role in flood regulation, slope stabilisation, climate adaptation, and livelihood security, strengthening ecosystem-based disaster risk reduction as a foundation for long-term resilience.

## Recovery Objectives

**Overall objective:** To deliver a coordinated, inclusive, and risk-informed recovery within three years that restores living standards, fortifies the economy, strengthens institutions, and reduces future disaster and climate risk.

- Restore safe and resilient housing
- Rehabilitate resilient infrastructure and essential services
- Revitalise employment, livelihoods and local economies
- Strengthen disaster preparedness and risk reduction across sectors
- Reinforce public institutions and recovery governance
- Establish a credible and sustainable recovery financing framework

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# ANNEX



## SECTOR LEAD AND CO-LEADS

| Sector             | Government Lead  | Development Partner<br>Co-Lead  | List of contributors   |
|--------------------|--|---|--|
| Housing            | Ministry of Housing,<br>Construction and Water<br>Supply | UN-Habitat  | Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation, Land,<br>and Livestock, NDRSC, NHDA, NBRI,<br>Ministry of Plantation  |
| Social Sectors     | Health & Nutrition                                       | Ministry of Health and<br>Mass Media                                    | WHO<br>EU, IOM, ADB, JICA<br>Insurance Regulatory Commissions of<br>Sri Lanka,<br>UNICEF (Nutrition), IOM, ILO (OSH),<br>UNFPA   |
|                    | Education  | Ministry of Education,<br>Higher Education, and<br>Vocational Education | UNICEF<br>Department of Examinations, Provincial<br>Department of Education, NIE, VTA, UGC<br>UNESCO, ILO, JICA  |
|                    | Agriculture & Food<br>Security                           | Ministry of Agriculture,<br>Livestock, Land and<br>Irrigation           | FAO<br>Department of Agrarian Development,<br>Department of Export Agriculture,<br>Ministry of Industry and Enterprise<br>Development, Hector Kobbekaduwa<br>Agrarian Research and Training<br>Institute, Ministry of Plantation and<br>Community Infrastructure, Ministry of<br>Fisheries, Aquatic and Ocean<br>Resources, NAQDA, CCD |
| Productive sectors |  |   | WFP, World Bank, ADPC  |



|                        |                                    |   |  |   |
|------------------------|------------------------------------|---|--|---|
| Infrastructure sectors | Commerce & Industry                | Ministry of Industry and Entrepreneurship Development       | UNDP   | NEDA, IDB, Insurance Regulatory Commission of Sri Lanka   |
|                        | Tourism                            | Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Employment and Tourism | EU   | ADPC, ILO, UNIDO, and ADB<br>SLTDA, Provincial Tourism Development Authorities  |
|                        | Transport                          | Ministry of Transport, Highways and Civil Aviation          | World Bank   | UNESCO, UNDP, ADPC<br>Road Development Authority, National Transport Commission   |
|                        | Power, Energy & Telecommunications | Ministry of Energy  | ADB<br>Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure | ADB (railways), EU<br>Ceylon Electricity Board, LECO, SLSEA   |
|                        | Irrigation                         | Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Land and Irrigation     | World Bank   | Irrigation Department, Department of Agrarian Development   |
|                        | Water & Sanitation                 | Ministry of Housing, Construction and Water Supply          | UNICEF   | ADB, IWMI<br>National Water Supply and Drainage Board, Department of National Community Water Supply  |
| Cross-Cutting Sectors  | Environment                        | Ministry of Environment                                     | EU   | UNDP<br>Department of Wildlife Conservation, Waste Management Authority - Western Province, Ministry of Public Administration, Provincial Councils and Local Government, Central Environment Authority, Department of Forest Conservation, Marine Environment Protection Authority, Coastal Conservation and Coastal Resources Management Department. |
|                        |                                    |   |  | UNDP, ADPC, ADB   |

|            |                          |   |            |   |
|------------|--------------------------|---|------------|---|
| Analytical | Disaster Risk Reduction  | Ministry of Defence - Disaster Management Division                                      | ADPC       | DMC, NBRI, Department of Irrigation, Department of Meteorology, NDRSC, Ministry of Justice and National Integration, Ministry of Public Administration, Provincial Council, and Local Government, Sri Lanka Land Development Corporation, UDA, Army, Navy and Air Force<br><br>UNDP, World Bank, ADB, JICA, IWMI, IOM |
|            | Governance               | Ministry of Public Administration, Provincial Councils & Local Government               | UNDP       | Ministry of Justice and National Integration  |
|            | Employment & Livelihoods | Ministry of Labour  | ILO        | Ministry of Fisheries Aquatic and Ocean Resources, NAQDA, CCD<br><br>UNDP   |
|            | Human Impact             | Department of National Planning, Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development | UNDP       | Minister of Rural Development, Social Security and Community Empowerment<br><br>UNWOMEN, UNICEF, UNFPA, IOM   |
|            | Macro-Economic Impact    | Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development                                  | World Bank | ADB, UNDP   |

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