

[Sri Lanka: UN assists storm victims, seeks to contain diseases 'spiralling out of control'](#)

6 June 2017 – In the aftermath of a devastating tropical storm in Sri Lanka, United Nations agencies are working to provide shelters and other emergency kits while seeking to contain a mosquito-borne disease that is starting to spiral out of control.

Heavy flooding, landslides and flash floods caused by Tropical Cyclone Mora in Myanmar and Bangladesh, and torrential monsoon rains have affected some 684,000 people in south and central Sri Lanka. The flooding, which is believed to be the worst in over a decade, has left at least 212 people dead and 79 missing.

Sri Lanka's Disaster Management Centre (DMC) estimates that over 2,500 houses were destroyed and nearly 15,900 damaged. These numbers could rise as data from damage assessments is compiled in the coming weeks.

The International Organization for Migration ([IOM](#)) plans to provide 3,700 shelter repair kits, 5,000 non-food relief item kits and 250 temporary shelters, with funding sought from the UN Central Emergency Response Fund ([CERF](#)), said the UN migration agency in a [press release](#). The intervention will help an estimated 74,750 people.

Nearly 22,000 people are still sheltering in over 200 overcrowded sites, including schools, temples and churches, the agency said.

In flood-affected areas people are expected to return to their homes as water levels recede. But in landslide-affected areas, people currently staying in evacuation centres or with relatives and friends are unlikely to be able to return to their homes in the short term.

There will likely be a need to track displacement, return, and site closure. People will need shelter and other non-food relief items (when they leave the sites) and we will need to ensure that aid is distributed at the location most useful and appropriate for each affected family," said IOM Sri Lanka Chief of Mission Giuseppe Crocetti.

On Friday, the UN Humanitarian Country Team launched an emergency response plan seeking \$22.7 million to address the critical life-saving and protection needs of 374,000 people in seven districts, targeting four priority sectors, including shelter, food, health and water and sanitation.

IOM will co-lead the emergency shelter and non-food item sector, which is appealing for \$6.5 million.

Meanwhile, the UN Children's Fund ([UNICEF](#)) is calling for \$3.5 million to keep vulnerable children safe.

So far we have delivered water and sanitation supplies, we are working on education supplies, strengthening health systems and rehabilitating basic health services and working on disease control for both diarrhoea and dengue which is starting to spiral out of control," said UNICEF country representative Tim Sutton.

He said flood waters have not receded in the southern district of Matara, raising fears of mosquito-borne disease transmission. He noted that so far this year there have already been more than 53,000 cases of dengue, a mosquito-borne tropical disease, which causes severe flu-like symptoms. It is a leading cause of death among children and adults in Sri Lanka.