

UNICEF Warns of Rising Child Suffering After Cyclone Ditwah



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COLOMBO, Dec. 2 – UNICEF has raised serious concern over the impact of Cyclone Ditwah in Sri Lanka, where at least 1.4 million people, including 275,000 children, have been affected, according to a statement released Tuesday.

The cyclone has caused widespread damage to essential services, forcing thousands of families

into temporary shelters and increasing the risks of disease, malnutrition, and severe emotional distress among children. UNICEF described the situation as urgent and called for immediate support.

UNICEF Representative in Sri Lanka Emma Brigham said it is now a race against time to reach the most vulnerable families. She added that the destruction of infrastructure has placed even more pressure on communities already facing economic hardship.

Sri Lanka's existing vulnerabilities have made the situation worse. A 2025 World Bank report shows that national poverty has more than doubled since 2019 from 11.3 percent to 24.5 percent, leaving many families with limited resources to cope with disasters.

UNICEF is working closely with the government and humanitarian partners to assess needs and provide essential aid. The agency is scaling up efforts to deliver clean water, nutrition, psychosocial support, and emergency education kits for displaced children and mothers while appealing for additional international assistance.

More than 400 people have died in landslides and floods caused by Cyclone Ditwah, making it one of the most devastating storms to hit Sri Lanka in recent years