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ANTICIPATORY ACTION SIMULATION REPORT

Anticipatory Action Simulation on Flood Hazard: Case Study of Matara District, Sri Lanka

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Introduction

Sri Lanka, an island nation in the Indian Ocean, is no stranger to the devastating effects of natural disasters. Among the recurrent hazards, flooding remains one of the most destructive and frequent, especially in the Southern Province. The Nilwala River basin, which flows through Matara District, has been identified as a high-risk area where monsoonal rains and rapid river swelling frequently inundate communities. Over the past decades, the district has experienced repeated flood events, resulting in loss of lives, destruction of livelihoods, disruption of schooling, damage to infrastructure, and increased vulnerability for already marginalized populations.

The Divisional Secretariat (DS) divisions of Malimboda, Thihagoda and Mulatiyana are among the top three divisions that are highly prone to flood hazard. Seasonal floods have repeatedly disrupted communities in these divisions. Families are often forced to evacuate to temporary shelters, children's education is interrupted, and farmers lose both standing crops and stored harvests. In particular, households located along low-lying areas close to tributaries of the Nilwala River are at greatest risk.

The impacts of these floods are not felt equally across all groups. Children, elderly persons, women-headed households, and Persons With Disabilities (PWDs) face disproportionate challenges during evacuation, access to safe shelters, and recovery processes (Ariyabandu et al, 2025). Children face risks of exploitation and disruption to education, elderly persons often require mobility support, and PWDs are frequently excluded from early warning dissemination and shelter planning. Women, especially those who are caregivers, bear additional burdens of protecting both children and dependent family members.

In light of these recurring challenges, the District Disaster Management Centre (DMC), with technical support from the International Water Management Institute (IWMI) and in close collaboration with Save the Children International (SCI) and the Sahana Social Development Alliance (SSDA), organized a large-scale community flood simulation exercise on 15–16 September 2025.

This exercise was designed as a practical, hands-on simulation to strengthen Locally-Led Anticipatory Action (LLAA) and enhance the disaster readiness of communities. By engaging communities directly in a participatory process, the simulation aimed to test the effectiveness of early warning systems, validate evacuation routes and preparedness measures, and strengthen the operational capacity of Village Disaster Management Committees (VDMCs).

Simulation Objectives

The Anticipatory Action Simulation process focuses on achieving the following key objectives:

- To assess the effectiveness of predefined protocols for early actions for flood events in the Matara District.
- To enhance coordination and communication among key agencies, including the Disaster Management Centre (DMC), Department of Meteorology, and local authorities, for efficient implementation of anticipatory actions.
- To test the operational readiness of the AWARE platform in facilitating real-time data sharing, decision-making, and activation of anticipatory measures.
- To improve the understanding and capacity of district-level officials, humanitarian partners, and community representatives in applying anticipatory action concepts and tools in flood preparedness.
- To identify operational challenges, data gaps, and institutional bottlenecks encountered during the simulation and use the lessons learned to refine Anticipatory Protocoals and future anticipatory action plans.

Study Area

The Matara District, located between latitudes 5° 55′ and 6° 10′ N and longitudes 80° 25′ and 80° 45′ E in the Southern Province of Sri Lanka, is highly flood prone. Geographically, the district encompasses approximately 1,283 km², bordered by Galle District to the west, Hambantota District to the east, and the Indian Ocean to the south. Matara's topography and river network, particularly the Nilwala River Basin, make it one of the most flood-prone districts in Sri Lanka. The Nilwala River, originating from the central highlands, traverses multiple low-lying divisions before discharging into the Indian Ocean at Matara town.

The district's population density, agricultural dependency, and concentration of infrastructure enhance its flood vulnerability (UNDP, 2019). Repeated flood events have caused substantial economic losses, particularly in the agriculture, fisheries, and small enterprise sectors, while damaging public assets such as roads, schools, and health facilities. Key flood-affected areas include Malimboda, Thihagoda, and Mulatiyana, Divisional Secretariats Division (DSD) area, where floodwaters are frequently very high (Figure 1).

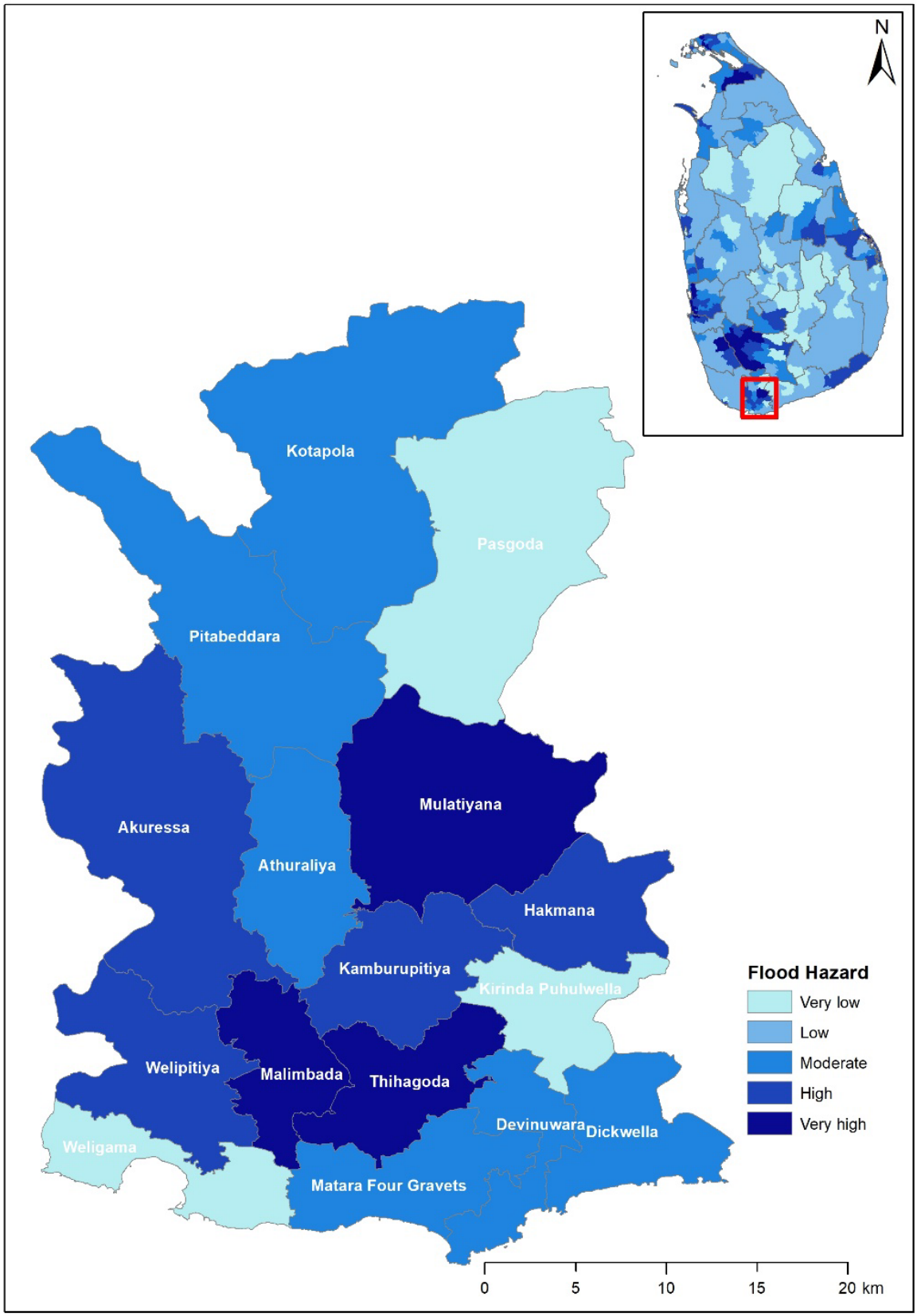


Figure 1: Flood hazard map of Matara district. Source: Authors produced using the Disinvetra database for Sri Lanka

Anticipatory Action Simulation for Flood Hazards

Anticipatory action simulation for flood hazard was carried out in a structured manner with the participation of 240 community members (Annexure 1), 141 government officials (Annexure 2), under the coordination of Save the Children and the International Water Management Institute (IWMI).

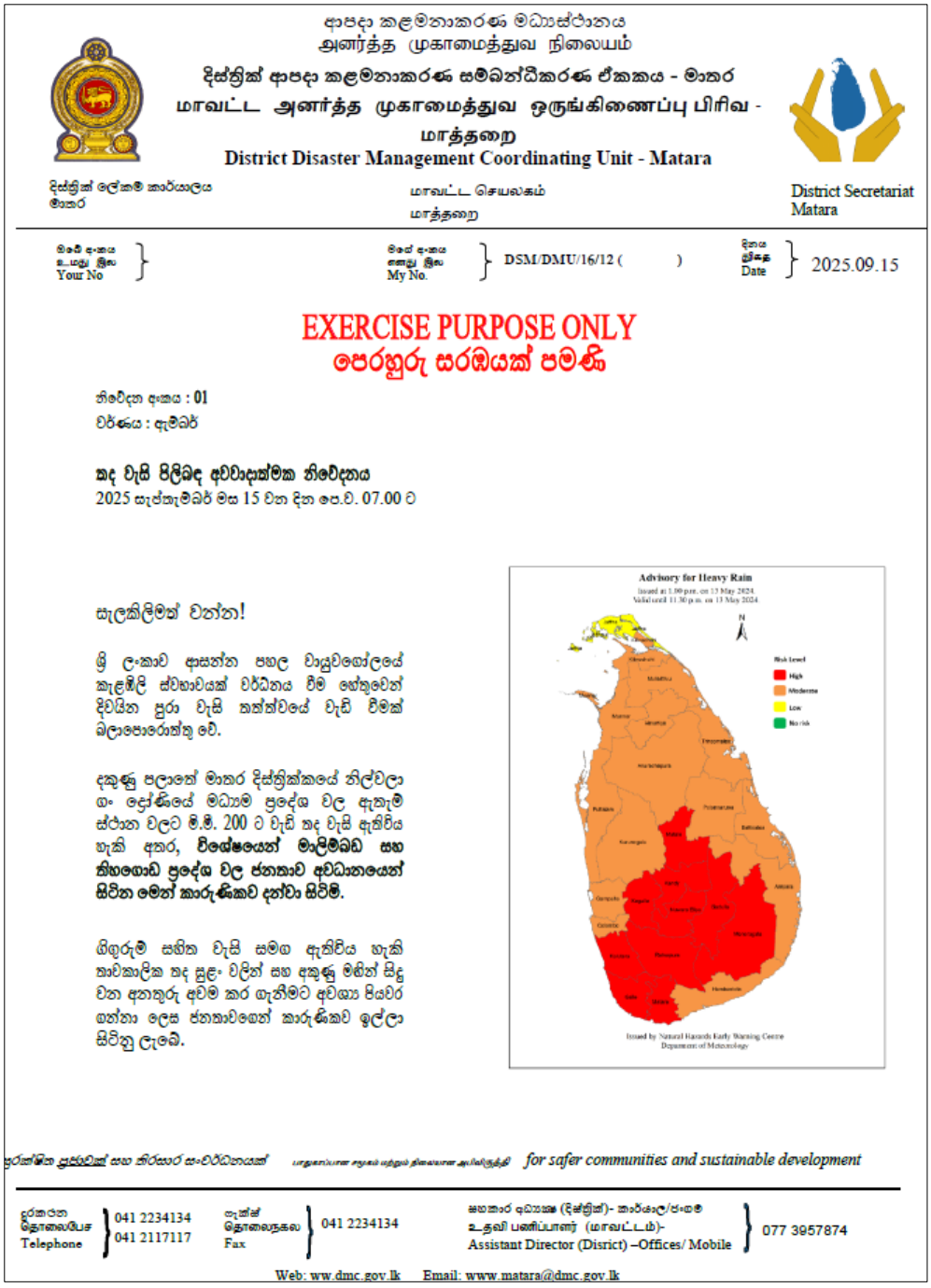
Simulation Preparation

A large-scale community-level flood simulation exercise was conducted on the 15th and 16th of September 2025 in the Wellathota and Katuwangoda Grama Niladhari (GN) Divisions of Thihagoda and Malimboda Divisional Secretariats (DS), Matara District. Both areas have been heavily affected by recurring floods in recent years, making them ideal sites for a practical, community-driven preparedness initiative. The simulation was not merely a routine drill but a capacity-strengthening process designed to test real-world responses, validate existing preparedness measures, and highlight areas needing improvement. The objectives included: testing the early warning dissemination chain from the DMC to households; validating preparedness measures such as evacuation routes, shelters, communication protocols, and stockpiling; assessing the operational capacity of Village Disaster Management Committees (VDMCs); providing hands-on training in the use of boats, life jackets, stretchers, and indicator poles; promoting inclusive disaster response with attention to women, children, elderly persons, and persons with disabilities (PWDs); and identifying strengths and gaps in coordination, communication, shelter management, and safeguarding.

Method of Simulation

The methodology and process involved careful pre-planning through a series of coordination meetings facilitated by Save the Children International (SCI), International Water Management Institute (IWMI), and Sahana Social Development Alliance (SSDA) under the leadership of the DMC, engaging the District Secretary (GA), Divisional Secretariat DS, Grama Niladari (GN) officers, and Village Disaster Management Committees (VDMC) leaders. These discussions clarified roles and responsibilities, mapped out early warning flows, identified accessible shelters, and defined the contributions of youth volunteers in first aid and evacuation support (Alahacoon et al., 2023; Alahacoon & Amarnath, 2024). Preparations also included pre-positioning critical resources such as boats, life jackets, megaphones, and safeguarding mechanisms to ensure protection for children and persons with disabilities (PWDs).

The simulation was initiated with information from technical agencies indicating the development of a low-pressure zone in the Bay of Bengal, closer to Sri Lanka, as shown in the Figure 2. The information is communicated with local communities in the local language.



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Web: ww.dmc.gov.lk Email: www.matara@dmc.gov.lk

Figure 2: The first Early Warning Message from the Disaster Management Centre (DMC) is for disaster preparedness measures among communities and local government officials.

"An increase in rainfall is expected across Sri Lanka due to the development of an atmospheric disturbance in the lower atmosphere of the Sri Lanka region. In the central areas of the Nilwala river basin in the Matara district of the southern province, more than 200 mm of rain may occur, especially in Malimboda and Thihagoda. People are kindly informed to be careful.

We kindly ask the people to take necessary measures to reduce the dangers caused by temporary heavy rains and lightning that may occur with thunderstorms."

The event was observed by a wide range of government and institutional representatives, including the Matara District Secretary, Additional District Secretary, Assistant District Secretary, and the Assistant Director of the Matara Disaster Management Unit, together with Army officers and all civil officers. Lecturers and students from the Cultural Centre at the University of Ruhuna joined the exercise, alongside the Assistant Divisional Secretary of Thihagoda, Disaster Officers, and GN officers from Narangala, Aththudawa, Nayimbala 1 & 2, Kithalagama Central, Western, Kithalagama East 1 & 3, Nadugala 1, Bandaththara 1, and Pahala Witiya North & Central.

Economic Development Officers also extended their participation, while Public Health Inspectors (PHIs), Family Health Officers (FHOs) of the Medical Officer of Health (MOH) Office, and Police officers provided active support throughout the sessions. The program was jointly implemented through the collaborative efforts of Save the Children (SCI), the International Water Management Institute (IWMI), the Sahana Social Development Alliance (SSDA), the Disaster Management Centre (DMC), and the National Disaster Relief Services Centre (NDRSC).

Anticipatory Action triggers for flood

The Anticipatory Action (AA) trigger mechanism for flood hazards was designed to effectively address the preparedness, readiness, and active response phases of disaster management. The development of these triggers was based on integrating rainfall and flood forecasting data, utilizing OpenWeather rainfall forecasts and GloFAS (Global Flood Awareness System) flood forecast data using AWARE platform.

AWARE Platform

The AWARE platform of CGIAR's initiative on Climate Resilience strengthens the links between early warning for early action and early finance. The platform assists stakeholders in taking action to reduce the impact before the disaster unfolds. The key feature of the AWARE platform is to promote multi-level coordination and collaboration and enhance accountability to enable responsiveness. The platform disseminates information on climate, market, health, nutrition, and population displacement to promote collaborative efforts by multiple partners at local- to-national scales to enhance preparedness, response, advocacy, and resource mobilisation in times of extreme climate events.

To establish reliable thresholds for early action, two analytical methods were applied: the Cumulative Distribution Function (CDF) and the Return Period Calculation Method. These approaches enabled the identification of critical rainfall and discharge levels that correspond to specific flood probabilities and return intervals.

Based on this analysis, the AA triggers were developed for the Malimboda and Thihagoda areas, with the finalized trigger values presented in Table 1. These thresholds serve as the scientific basis for activating early warning and anticipatory measures to minimize flood impacts in the Matara District.

Table 1: Flood AA triggers scenarios for two DSD divisions for rainfall and discharge forecasts

Indicator	AA triggers for flood hazard		Lead-time
	Malimboda – DSD	Tihagoda – DSD	
OpenWeather (Rainfall)	>135 mm - **active** 80 -135 mm - **readiness** 50-80 - **preparedness** Less than 50mm is normal	>128 mm - **active** 80 -1128 mm - **readiness** 50-80 - **preparedness** Less than 50mm is normal	72 Hours 3-10 days 10 days to 1 month)
GloFAS	10-Year return period - **Active** 5-Year return period - **readiness** 2-Year return period - **preparedness** A less than 2-year return period is normal	10-Year return period - **Active** 5-Year return period - **readiness** 2-Year return period - **preparedness** A less than 2-year return period is normal	72 Hours 3-10 days 10 days to 1 month)

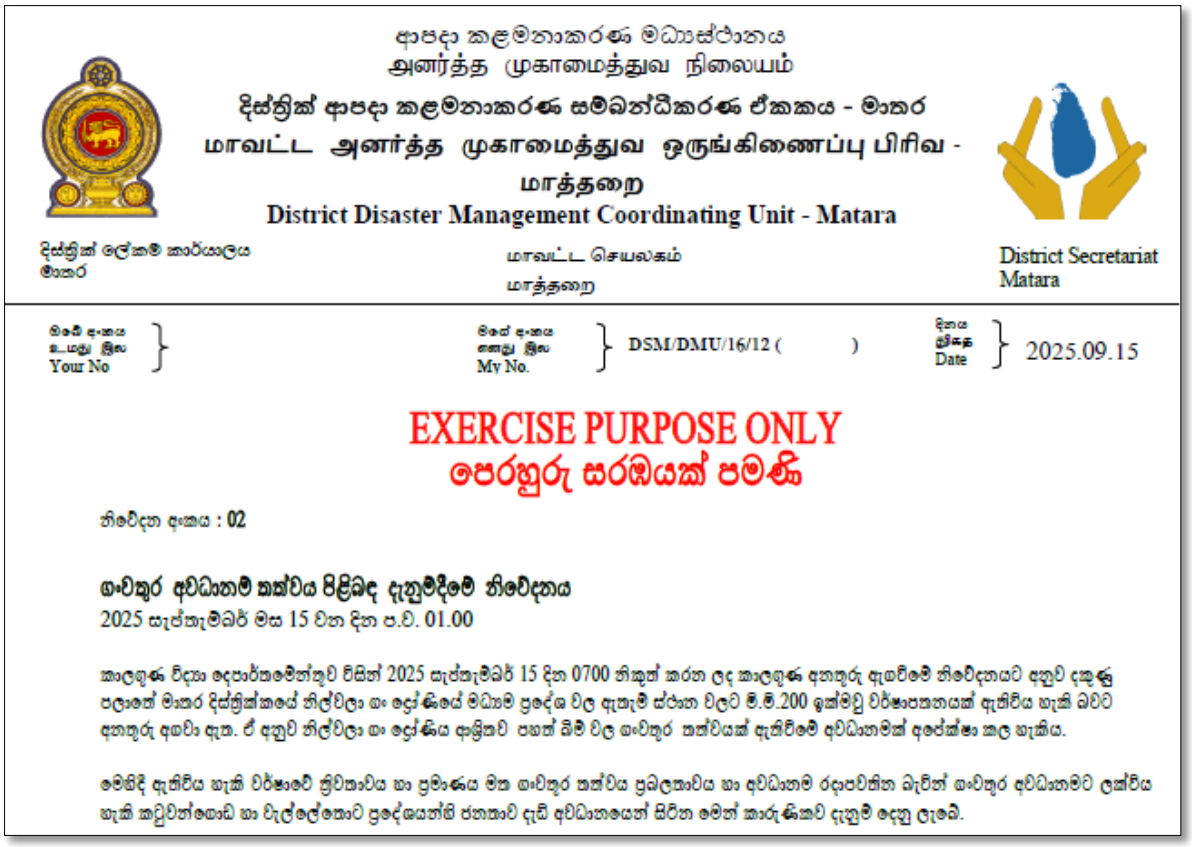
Preparedness Phase

The preparedness phase was activated 15 days before the expected flood events from the information given by the technical agency, which is the Meteorological Department. Based on this information, the early warning dissemination process followed a well-structured flow, ensuring that messages (Figure 3) reached communities in a timely manner. Once the Disaster Management Centre (DMC) issues a flood warning, the following actions are taken by the community as long-term preparedness activities.

- As soon as the Government Agent (GA) of Matara district, who then notifies the Divisional Secretariat (DS) offices (Figure 4). The DS offices then relayed the information to Grama Niladhari (GN) officers, who passed it on to Village Disaster Management Committee (VDMC) leaders.
- VDMC members played a crucial role in community-level outreach, conducting community-level discussions.
- Door-to-door visits and using bells, whistles, and mobile community megaphones to spread the message widely.
- At the household level, families actively practiced preparedness measures such as securing essential documents in waterproof covers, cannel cleaning, collecting drinking water in bottles, and preparing first aid kits.
- To ensure the quick water moving along the cannel, the cannel cleaning and maintaining carried out in this Preparedness Phase.

This combination of systematic information flow and practical household responses showcased the community's growing preparedness to act early and effectively in disaster situations.

Figure 4: Dissemination of Early Warnings from DMC via the Matara Government Agent (GA) to the Community (*photo*: Sakuna/BIZ).



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කාලගුණ විද්‍යා දෙපාර්තමේන්තුව විසින් 2025 සැප්තැම්බර් 15 දින 0700 හිකුත් කරන ලද කාලගුණ අනතුරු ඇඟවීමේ නිවේදනයට අනුව දකුණු පලාතේ මාතර දිස්ත්‍රික්කයේ නිල්වලා ගං ද්‍රෝණියේ මධ්‍යම ප්‍රදේශ වල ඇතැම් ස්ථාන වලට මි.මී.200 ඉක්මවූ වර්ෂාපතනයක් ඇතිවිය හැකි බවට අනතුරු අඟවා ඇත. ඒ අනුව නිල්වලා ගං ද්‍රෝණිය ආශ්‍රිතව පහත බිම් වල ගංවතුර තත්වයක් ඇතිවීමේ අවධානමක් අපේක්ෂා කල හැකිය.

මෙහිදී ඇතිවිය හැකි වර්ෂාවේ ත්‍රිවතාවය හා ප්‍රමාණය මත ගංවතුර තත්වය ප්‍රබලතාවය හා අවධානම රදාපවතින බැවින් ගංවතුර අවධානමට ලක්විය හැකි කටුවන්ඔබාඩ හා වැල්ලේතෙට ප්‍රදේශයන්හි ජනතාව දැඩි අවධානයෙන් සිටින මෙන් කාරුණිකව දැනුම් දෙනු ලැබේ.

Figure 3: Second Early Warning for the community to activate the preparedness phase of the flood simulation.

Readiness Phase

The preparedness readiness phase of the Anticipatory Action was activated 7 days before the expected flood events (Figure 5), based on information from the technical agency, the Meteorological Department.

During the readiness phase, communities took proactive measures to ensure they were fully prepared for potential flooding through the following actions.

- Village Disaster Management Committee (VDMC) members carried out essential checks and repairs on rescue boats (Figure 7), confirming they were functional and ready for deployment.
- Women in the community contributed significantly by installing indicator poles along evacuation routes (Figure 8), providing a clear guide to monitor rising water levels.
- Farmers prepared for livestock safety by identifying designated areas on higher ground to relocate their cattle.
- Farmers also demonstrated early harvesting of paddy (Figure 6), highlighting how proactive actions can help safeguard paddy yield before floodwaters arrive.
- At the household level, families packed go-bags with essential items such as clothes, cooking pots, mats, hygiene supplies, and flashlights to ensure quick evacuation.
- In parallel, community members cleaned and prepared shelters in schools and temples, arranging mats, cooking stoves, and water storage facilities to accommodate evacuees.
- To enhance road safety, evacuation paths were marked with white cloth strips, serving as visual guides in conditions of poor visibility.

These collective actions reflected strong community ownership and readiness, laying the foundation for an effective response.

Figure 5: Dissemination of Early Warnings and Community-Led Canal Cleaning in Thihagoda and Malimbada DSDs, Matara District (*photo:* Sakuna/BIZ)

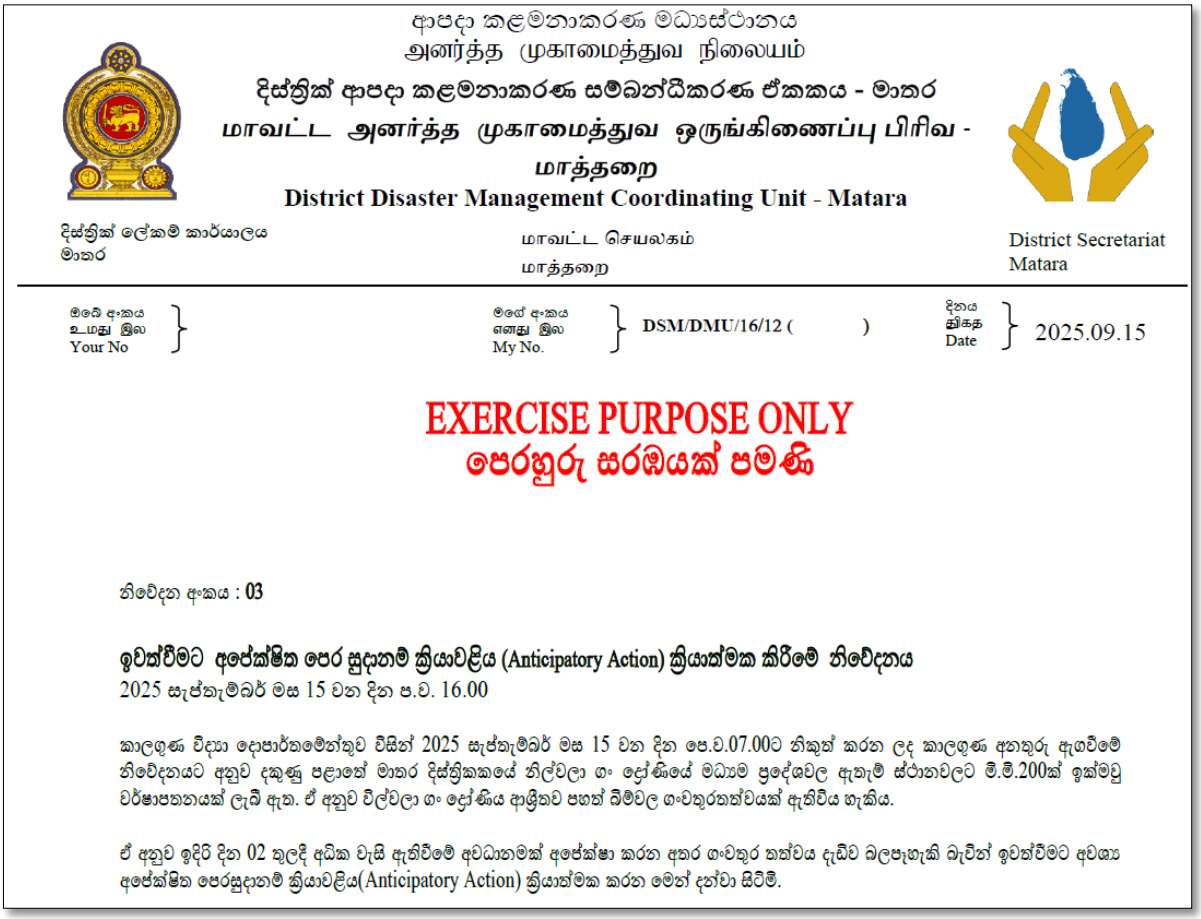
Figure 6: Early paddy harvesting based on the forecast data, while activating the AA readiness phase. (*photo:* Sakuna/BIZ)

Figure 7: Community: Checking the functionality of boats and making sure they are ready to be used in an emergency. (*photo:* Sakuna/BIZ)

Figure 8: Flood level markers are installed along the road to monitor flood levels and demarcate the road's boundary. (*photo*: Sakuna/BIZ)

Activation Phase

Once the Disaster Management Centre (DMC) issued the activation alert, the community swiftly moved into action (Figure 9). The community is preparing for evacuation and is ready to move the livestock to safer locations.



ආපදා කළමනාකරණ මධ්‍යස්ථානය
அனர்த்த முகாமைத்துவ நிலையம்
දිස්ත්‍රික් ආපදා කළමනාකරණ සම්බන්ධීකරණ ඒකකය - මාතර
மாவட்ட அனர்த்த முகாமைத்துவ ஒருங்கிணைப்பு பிரிவ - மாத்தறை
District Disaster Management Coordinating Unit - Matara

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மாவட்ட செயலகம்
மாத்தறை

District Secretariat
Matara

මගේ අංකය / எனது இல / My No. DSM/DMU/16/12 ( )

දිනය / திகத / Date 2025.09.15

EXERCISE PURPOSE ONLY
පෙරහුරු සරඹයක් පමණි

නිවේදන අංකය : 03

ඉවත්වීමට අපේක්ෂිත පෙර සුදානම් ක්‍රියාවලිය (Anticipatory Action) ක්‍රියාත්මක කිරීමේ නිවේදනය
2025 සැප්තැම්බර් මස 15 වන දින ප.ව. 16.00

කාලගුණ විද්‍යා දෙපාර්තමේන්තුව විසින් 2025 සැප්තැම්බර් මස 15 වන දින පෙ.ව.07.00ට නිකුත් කරන ලද කාලගුණ අනතුරු ඇඟවීමේ නිවේදනයට අනුව දකුණු පළාතේ මාතර දිස්ත්‍රිකකයේ නිල්වලා ගං ද්‍රෝණියේ මධ්‍යම ප්‍රදේශවල ඇතැම් ස්ථානවලට මි.මී.200ක් ඉක්මවූ වර්ෂාපතනයක් ලැබී ඇත. ඒ අනුව විල්වලා ගං ද්‍රෝණිය ආශ්‍රිතව පහත් බිම්වල ගංවතුරතත්වයක් ඇතිවිය හැකිය.

ඒ අනුව ඉදිරි දින 02 තුලදී අධික වැසි ඇතිවීමේ අවධානමක් අපේක්ෂා කරන අතර ගංවතුර තත්වය දැඩිව බලපෑහැකි බැවින් ඉවත්වීමට අවශ්‍ය අපේක්ෂිත පෙරසුදානම් ක්‍රියාවලිය(Anticipatory Action) ක්‍රියාත්මක කරන මෙන් දන්වා සිටිමි.

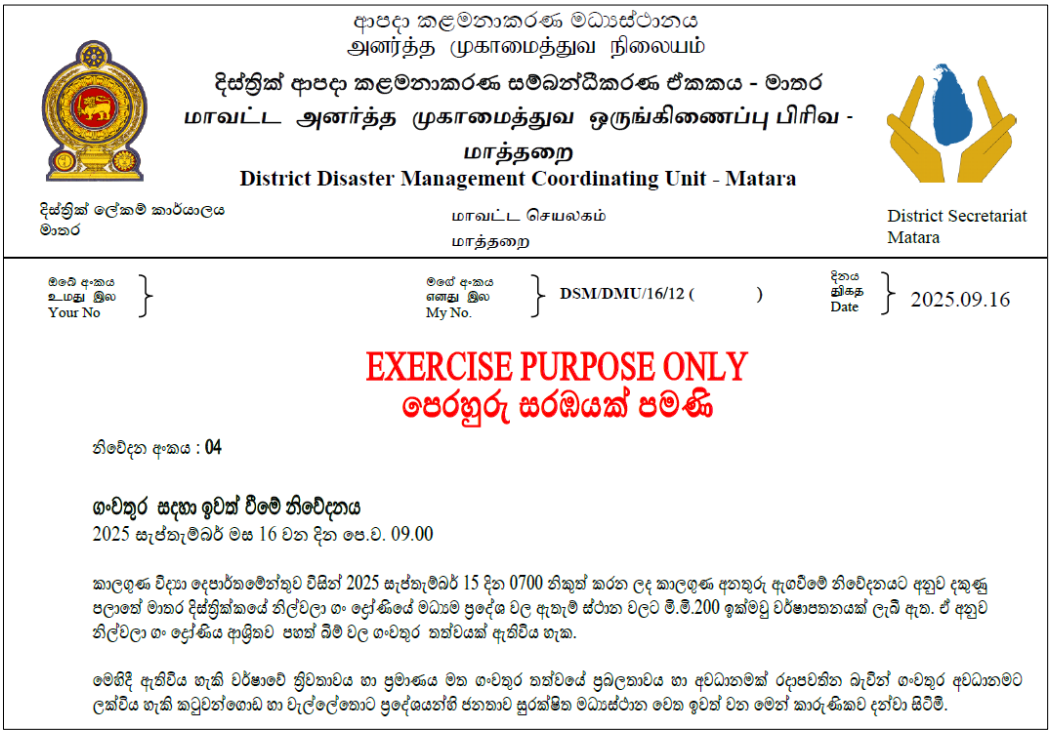
Figure 9: Third message from the government officials and the community: initiate the activation phase of Anticipatory Action.

To strengthen financial readiness, families participated in a mock exercise of anticipatory cash assistance (Figure 10), receiving practice vouchers and redeeming them at local shops, which reinforced their ability to access essential supplies in a real emergency quickly. Safeguarding Champions played a vital role in ensuring inclusivity and protection, coordinating with volunteers to support persons with disabilities, children, and elderly community members throughout the process. This activation phase not only tested the community's capacity to respond under pressure but also demonstrated how preparedness planning translates into practical, life-saving actions.

Figure 10: Distribution of Vouchers: these vouchers are used by the people to buy the dry ration for emergencies. (*photo*: Hasanthi Amarasinghe/SCI)

Evacuation Phase

Following rainfall over the last two days, with more expected over the next days, the government officials from the disaster management centre (DMC) issued an evacuation order for the community of Malimbada and Thihagoda DSD division (Figure 11).



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அனர்த்த முகாமைத்துவ நிலையம்

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மாவட்ட அனர்த்த முகாமைத்துவ ஒருங்கிணைப்பு பிரிவு - மாத்தறை
District Disaster Management Coordinating Unit - Matara

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மாவட்ட செயலகம்
மாத்தறை

District Secretariat
Matara

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Your No

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எனது இல
My No. DSM/DMU/16/12 ( )

දිනය
திகதி
Date 2025.09.16

EXERCISE PURPOSE ONLY
පෙරහුරු සරඹයක් පමණි

නිවේදන අංකය : 04

ගංවතුර සඳහා ඉවත් වීමේ නිවේදනය
2025 සැප්තැම්බර් මස 16 වන දින පෙ.ව. 09.00

කාලගුණ විද්‍යා දෙපාර්තමේන්තුව විසින් 2025 සැප්තැම්බර් 15 දින 0700 නිකුත් කරන ලද කාලගුණ අනතුරු ඇගවීමේ නිවේදනයට අනුව දකුණු පලාතේ මාතර දිස්ත්‍රික්කයේ නිල්වලා ගං දෝණියේ මධ්‍යම ප්‍රදේශ වල ඇතැම් ස්ථාන වලට මි.මී.200 ඉක්මවූ වර්ෂාපතනයක් ලැබී ඇත. ඒ අනුව නිල්වලා ගං දෝණිය ආශ්‍රිතව පහත් බිම් වල ගංවතුර තත්වයක් ඇතිවිය හැක.

මෙහිදී ඇතිවිය හැකි වර්ෂාවේ ත්‍රිවතාවය හා ප්‍රමාණය මත ගංවතුර තත්වයේ ප්‍රබලතාවය හා අවධානමක් රදාපවතින බැවින් ගංවතුර අවධානමට ලක්විය හැකි කටුවන්ගොඩ හා වැල්ලේතොට ප්‍රදේශයන්හි ජනතාව සුරක්ෂිත මධ්‍යස්ථාන වෙත ඉවත් වන මෙන් කාරුණිකව දන්වා සිටිමි.

Figure 11: Fourth message to the community: Evacuate from their premises to safe locations.

When the evacuation alert was issued through sirens and megaphones (Figure 12), the community responded quickly and in an organized manner. More than 1,200 participants were successfully evacuated (Figures 13, 14 &15), with families guided along safe routes and, where necessary, transported by boats.

Figure 12: Evacuation alert to the community through megaphone and Sirens. (*photo:* Niranga Alahacoon/IWMI)

Figure 13: Relocating livestock to safer locations ahead of flood event. (*photo:* Sakuna/BIZ)

Figure 14: Village community evacuation to safer locations. (*photo:* Sakuna/BIZ)

Figure 15: Community evacuation in response to a warning. (*photo:* Sakuna/BIZ)

At the shelters, volunteers managed registration (Figure 16), prioritizing the elderly and persons with disabilities, while committee members initiated food preparation under the supervision of the Public Health Inspector (PHI) as in Figure 21. Local health staff provided vital guidance, with special attention to pregnant mothers, and WASH facilities, including latrines and handwashing points, were set up and tested to ensure hygiene.

Figure 16: Volunteers led registration at evacuation centers. (*photo*: Sakuna/BIZ)

To support children, safe, child-friendly spaces were established, featuring drawing and storytelling activities. Meanwhile, youth volunteers demonstrated their first-aid skills (Figures 19 & 20), including CPR and wound dressing, while PHIs oversaw food safety and conducted awareness sessions on preventing diarrhoeal diseases (Figures 21, 22, 23 & 24). For security, the police patrolled evacuated villages (Figure 18), ensuring that homes remained safe. Altogether, the evacuation phase highlighted the community's ability to coordinate, protect vulnerable groups (Figure 17), and maintain health and safety standards during emergencies.

Figure 17: Community members are helping disabled people to evacuate to the safety centers during the simulation exercise. (*photo:* Sakuna/BIZ)

Once the situation was normal, an alert was issued by the DMC, and the community was informed that the immediate danger had passed. The Government Agent (GA) and DMC officials visited the shelters, reassuring families and acknowledging their cooperation throughout the process. The return phase began with families moving back to their homes, relocating livestock from safe areas, and collectively cleaning and restoring the shelters that had been used. To capture lessons learned, the Divisional Secretariat (DS) officials facilitated a reflection session where community members and leaders jointly reviewed the exercise. Key challenges were identified, including the shortage of megaphones for communication and delayed evacuation by a few households. The GA's visit to the locations further reinforced the importance of community preparedness and provided an opportunity for direct dialogue, ensuring that both achievements and gaps were recognized as part of building stronger readiness for future emergencies.

Figure 18: Police ensure the safety of houses during evacuation. (*photo:* Sakuna/BIZ)

Figure 19: First Aid Support Provided by Youth Volunteers. (*photo:* Sakuna/BIZ)

Figure 20: Youth Volunteers Actively Provided First Aid Assistance. (*photo:* Sakuna/BIZ)

Figure 21: Public Health Inspector (PHI) Providing Safe Cooking Advice at Shelters. (*photo:* Sakuna/BIZ)

Figure 22: Community-Led Food Preparation at Evacuation Shelters. (*photo:* Sakuna/BIZ)

Figure 23: Community-Led Food Distribution at Evacuation Shelters. (*photo:* Sakuna/BIZ)

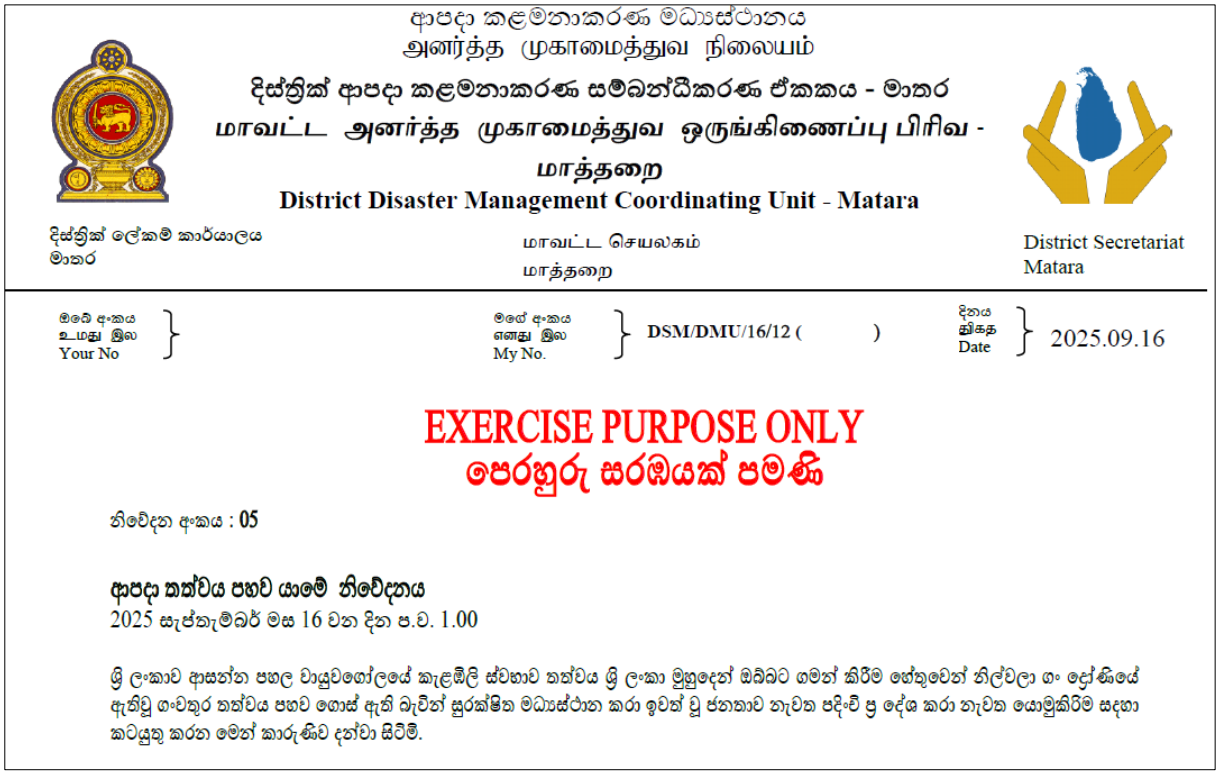
Figure 24: Child-Friendly Spaces. (*photo:* Sakuna/BIZ)

Figure 25: Handover the AAP to Government Agent in Matara. (*photo*: Sakuna/BIZ)

Representatives from the Disaster Management Centre (DMC), International Water Management Institute (IWMI), Save the Children International (SCI), and the Sahana Social Development Alliance (SSDA) formally handed over the jointly prepared Early Action Protocols (EAP) to the Government Agent (GA) of Matara District (Figure 25).

Stand down the Flood Emergency

As the influence of the low-level depression over the Bay of Bengal began to weaken, the disaster management centre and the meteorological department issued an emergency stand down message to the affected communities and the District Secretariat (Figure 26 & 27). This communication informed stakeholders that the weather system was improving and that no further significant impacts were expected. Consequently, community members who had been temporarily evacuated or relocated for safety were advised and permitted to return home, marking the transition to the recovery phase of the event.



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அனர்த்த முகாமைத்துவ நிலையம்
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District Disaster Management Coordinating Unit - Matara

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மாவட்ட செயலகம்
மாத்தறை

District Secretariat
Matara

ඔබේ අංකය
உமது இல
Your No

මගේ අංකය
எனது இல
My No. DSM/DMU/16/12 ( )

දිනය
திகத
Date 2025.09.16

EXERCISE PURPOSE ONLY
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නිවේදන අංකය : 05

ආපදා තත්වය පහව යාමේ නිවේදනය
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ශ්‍රී ලංකාව ආසන්න පහල වායුවගෝලයේ කැළඹිලි ස්වභාව තත්වය ශ්‍රී ලංකා මුහුදෙන් ඔබ්බට ගමන් කිරීම හේතුවෙන් නිල්වලා ගං ද්‍රෝණියේ ඇතිවූ ගංවතුර තත්වය පහව ගොස් ඇති බැවින් සුරක්ෂිත මධ්‍යස්ථාන කරා ඉවත් වූ ජනතාව නැවත පදිංචි ප්‍ර දේශ කරා නැවත යොමුකිරීම සඳහා කටයුතු කරන මෙන් කාරුණිව දන්වා සිටිමි.

Figure 26: Final message to stand down the flood emergency situation in Malimboda and Tihagoda.

Figure 27: District security (GA) visits the community shelters and gives permission for them to return home. (*photo:* Sakuna/BIZ)

Participants Summary:

To ensure the simulation exercise was conducted effectively and had a meaningful impact, a total of 1,204 participants took part in the activity, demonstrating strong community engagement and interest. Of this total, 1,147 participants were community members, while the remaining 57 participants represented various government agencies involved in disaster preparedness and response (Table 2). A particularly noteworthy aspect of the exercise was the high level of female participation across both Divisional Secretariat Divisions (DSDs), highlighting the growing involvement and leadership of women in community-based disaster risk reduction and anticipatory action initiatives. This inclusive participation significantly contributed to the simulation's overall success and representativeness.

Table 2:Number of participants for the simulation exercise in both the DSD decisions.

	Malimboda	Tihagoda
Number of Males	185	211
Number of females	298	312
Number of Children	65	76
Total	548	599

Conclusion

The simulation exercise marked a milestone in community-based disaster preparedness in Matara. Led by DMC with technical support from SCI, SSDA, and IWMI, it mobilized 1,200 community members in an inclusive, participatory process.

The exercise tested early warning dissemination, evacuation, and shelter management, while building community confidence. Although challenges remain particularly in communication, shelter readiness, and support for vulnerable groups the progress achieved is significant.

With sustained investment and regular practice, communities in Matara can strengthen anticipatory action and reduce vulnerability to future floods.

The early warning drill demonstrated several notable strengths and challenges. On the positive side, the warning flow from the Government Agent (GA) to Divisional Secretaries (DS), Grama Niladharis (GN), Village Disaster Management Committees (VDMCs), and finally to households was clear and effective, ensuring information reached all levels. Community participation was impressively high, with strong youth engagement, particularly in first aid, and practical demonstrations with boats, life jackets, and indicator poles added valuable realism. Inclusivity was also a strength, as the elderly and persons with disabilities were actively involved in the process. However, some gaps were observed: a few households delayed evacuation despite the alerts, communication tools such as megaphones and backup systems were limited, and shelter facilities lacked adequate privacy for women. These challenges highlight areas for improvement further to strengthen community preparedness and inclusivity in future exercises.

The evaluation of the exercise highlights both successes and areas for further improvement. In terms of effectiveness, early warning protocols functioned well, ensuring timely communication across all levels, though the speed of household evacuation varied. Efficiency was demonstrated through strong inter-agency coordination, but logistical gaps were noted, particularly in the timely distribution of safety gear. Regarding inclusiveness, representation from all community groups was commendable, yet more practical mechanisms are needed to support persons with disabilities fully. From a sustainability perspective, the skills and knowledge gained through this exercise provide a strong foundation for future preparedness, but regular repetition of such drills will be essential to embed practices and maintain readiness.

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Annexures

Annexure 1: List of Community Participants

No	Name	No	Name	No	Name
1	S L L Sandaruwan	36	P J Shimal	71	Chandani N
2	N Devika	37	M W Dayawahti	72	W Thushara
3	K H Indrasili	38	A Pemawathi	73	W Disanayaka
4	Nadeeka Chathurani	39	D Asha Muthukumari	74	H Sujatha
5	D Priyanthi	40	N G Nisansala	75	Jayarathna W
6	S Madushani	41	H R Kanthi	76	M Mangalika
7	W Eshmika	42	V Pathmi	77	L Darmawardana
8	H Ridmi	43	S Haritha Priyankara	78	K G Gayathri
9	L Sandunika	44	K Ajantha	79	U Dayananda
10	T Devmini	45	P Ganawathi	80	G Malanii
11	H Umayanga	46	L Senewirathna	81	W Wimalawathi
12	P Renuka	47	R Sumudu Kumara	82	G A Sumanawathi
13	K Shirani	48	W Nishantha	83	P Kumudu
14	A Charlet	49	W somawathi	84	L Mallika
15	W Priyadarshani	50	W Samitha	85	Ganga Jayaweera
16	Deepika	51	K Lanka Dihani	86	S Ariyawathi
17	S Nadeesha	52	S Nandasena	87	S Priyani Chandima
18	D Sriyani	53	W Chandana	88	W S Perera
19	K Sreemathi	54	D Withanage	89	P Lalani
20	Nelum Madushani	55	A Wasana	90	G Sumanawathi
21	Somawathi W	56	P Chaminda	91	G P Sameera
22	R G Kalyani	57	C wehtthasingha	92	Lanka Dilhani
23	K A lathika	58	K Ravin	93	R G Kalyani
24	W Lasanthika	59	W Banda	94	A Priyadarshani
25	Muditha L	60	Chamila	95	P Jeewani
26	L Ayesha	61	B Nishantha	96	W Sriyalatha
27	M Thilakshani	62	K Nalin	97	B G Kalyanawathi
28	Randima Nimali	63	D K Ranasinghe	98	K Karunathilaka
29	K P G Jen nona	64	K R Lathika	99	P Damayanthi
30	S Senevirathna	65	A Nimali	100	G A Sumanawathi
31	W Jayantha	66	V D Hemakanthi	101	W G Somawathi
32	P G Samson	67	D Mahesha	102	M W Dayawathi
33	G Nuwan	68	K K Nadeeka Dilhani	103	L Dilhani
34	W Prasanna	69	Wimal Ranjith	104	W V Disanayaka
35	R wijesinghe	70	N Upasena	105	H Sujatha Kodikara

106	P K Deepika	141	V G Indrapathmini	176	G Jayaweera
107	P Y K Padmawathi	142	K Edirisinghe	177	K M L Kumari
108	A L S D Perera	143	C Rajapaksha	178	N J Gunadasa
109	Disna Krishanthi	144	P Kumudu Rupika	179	Pradeep D
110	R Menadi	145	H Kanthi	180	A A Malkanthi
111	T Sahan	146	H S R Perera	181	Risith Eshmika
112	I Gimhana	147	K A Nedilin	182	K Sathish
113	G Yasawathi	148	K P G Jennana	183	A Vinula
114	D Dilrukshi	149	L Senawirathna	184	A WIjenayaka
115	Anusha Priyadarshani	150	C K Weerabandara	185	K Satheesh
116	K Lathika	151	Tensan Sampath	186	W D Priyadarshani
117	U D Hemakumari	152	V Rupathunga	187	Dulakshi Palliyaguru
118	Ganga Jayaweera	153	P C Nayakkara	188	Asha Muthukumari
119	Samadhi Mekala	154	Shan Irashan Lokuge	189	Krishani Shreemathi
120	Ravindu Weerawarna	155	H Dayananda	190	Nelum Madhushani
121	P Chandima	156	P Wijesinghe	191	Menaka Krishanthi
122	W Somawathi	157	Diduli Pabasara	192	Ranjani Hemalatha
123	R Kalyani	158	R Weththasinha	193	G Indrani
124	P Lalani	159	R M T S Neranjana	194	G Gayani Priyangika
125	W Lasnthika	160	U D Hema Kanthi	195	Maduri Thilakshani
126	S Arwathi	161	H L Mallika	196	G Palitha
127	K Lathika	162	G Sumanawathi	197	H G Nandasiri
128	W Weerasinha	163	Anushka Milmini	198	W Vijitha
129	P K Ghanawathi	164	W B Ahinsa	199	W Vinitha
130	A Kumanayaka	165	H G Deepika	200	D Witharana
131	N Ishwara	166	Rasika Dinesh	201	Dayapala V
132	Lanka Dilhani	167	P Srimali	202	Amila Nuwan
133	M Mangalika	168	R Gunathilaka	203	N Gurusingha
134	W Jayasekara	169	Roshan Sumudukumara	204	P Liyanage
135	M W Dayawathi	170	N Sumudu	205	W Ariyawathi
136	J Witharana	171	G Ghanasiri	206	Deepika Damayanthi
137	Wimal Ranjith	172	AA Pradipa	207	Durga Priyanthi
138	W Bindu	173	G P Samira	208	B G Kalyanawathi
139	L Aloka Nethmini	174	Chaminda Kumara	209	H K Thilanka
140	R K Piyasiri	175	Thisumi Bhagya	210	W Hemawathi
211	W Samantha Kumara	221	P Tharanga	231	R Chaminda

212	P WItharana	222	K Siril	232	H Chathirani
213	J Santha	223	M Witharana	233	B Nishamai
214	J D Dalas	224	L M Indrani	234	M Shiromi
215	H K Nandawathi	225	R Samanthi	235	H Ajith Samnthilala
216	Prabath Indika	226	H Nihal	236	S Chaminda Kumara
217	M Gayani Lakshika	227	S Dilshan	237	K Piyasena
218	H Chandrika	228	B G Piyasiri	238	H G Nandawathi
219	M Iresha	229	M G Ranjani	239	K Gunasoma
220	P B Saman	230	N A Wasantha	240	K Renuka

Annexure 2: List of Government Participants

No	Name	Position	Organization
1	Chandana Thiilakaratne	District Secretary, Matara	District Secretariat's Office
2	Kanchana Thalpawila	Additional District Secretary, Matara	District Secretariat's Office
3	Lakmali Thenuwara	District Secretary, Matara	District Secretariat's Office
4	K M B Perera	Officer	Ministry of Health
5	Anuja	Officer	National Disaster Relief Services Centre
6	Nuwan	NGO Coordinator	District Secretariat's Office
7	P Lakmali	Academic	University of Ruhuna
8	N Anurudda	Academic	University of Ruhuna
9	B S Sanjeewani	Officer	Sahana Social Development Alliance
10	Sanduni J	Grama Niladhari	Divisional Secretariat's Office
11	J A Ranjith	District Coordinator	DMC Matara
12	Dr Suranjith G	Academic	University Of Ruhuna
13	D Shreemali	Coordination Officer	District Secretariat's Office
14	M P Wannigama	Coordination Officer	District Secretariat's Office
15	M G Dananjaya	Coordination Officer	District Secretariat's Office
16	J Kishanthi	Coordination Officer	District Secretariat's Office
17	J Ruwanpathirana	Economic Development Officer	Divisional Secretariat's Office
18	H Senadeera	Economic Development Officer	Divisional Secretariat's Office
19	Y Sajwwani	Economic Development Officer	Divisional Secretariat's Office

20	G Chamila	Economic Development Officer	Divisional Secretariat's Office
21	Pavithra Kumuduni	Economic Development Officer	Divisional Secretariat's Office
22	H Priyangani	Economic Development Officer	Divisional Secretariat's Office
23	W Pushpakumari	Economic Development Officer	Divisional Secretariat's Office
24	R Malkanthi	Grama Niladhari	Divisional Secretariat's Office
25	K Dilrukshi	Grama Niladhari	Divisional Secretariat's Office
26	Indrani Sahabandu	Grama Niladhari	Divisional Secretariat's Office
27	H K Perera	Grama Niladhari	Divisional Secretariat's Office
28	K Indeewari	Grama Niladhari	Divisional Secretariat's Office
29	C H Maddumage	Officer	Disaster Management Centre
30	Rukshan G	Officer	Disaster Management Centre
31	Anusha P	Officer	Disaster Management Centre
32	M Wellapilli	Officer	Disaster Management Centre
33	R Palihawadana	Economic Development Officer	Divisional Secretariat's Office
34	H Chathurani	Grama Niladhari	Divisional Secretariat's Office
35	A Champika	Economic Development Officer	Divisional Secretariat's Office
36	N Wickramage	Economic Development Officer	Divisional Secretariat's Office
37	DMM Maduwanthi	Economic Development Officer	Divisional Secretariat's Office
38	L H Sandya	Economic Development Officer	Divisional Secretariat's Office
39	D P Kodikara	Economic Development Officer	Divisional Secretariat's Office
40	H A Anusha	Grama Niladhari	Divisional Secretariat's Office
41	H R Nishanthi	Economic Development Officer	Divisional Secretariat's Office
42	E A C Damayanthi	Economic Development Officer	Divisional Secretariat's Office
43	W A D Sandali	Economic Development Officer	Divisional Secretariat's Office
44	J Wickrama	Economic Development Officer	Divisional Secretariat's Office
45	S Sanjeewa	Economic Development Officer	Divisional Secretariat's Office
46	J Priyadarshani	Economic Development Officer	Divisional Secretariat's Office
47	H Dulari	Economic Development Officer	Divisional Secretariat's Office

48	G Pesala	Economic Development Officer	Divisional Secretariat's Office
49	W Ranjith	Grama Niladhari	Divisional Secretariat's Office
50	A M Tharaka	Grama Niladhari	Divisional Secretariat's Office
51	A W Jagath	Grama Niladhari	Divisional Secretariat's Office
52	M R Lasanthi	Grama Niladhari	Divisional Secretariat's Office
53	T K M Wijesinghe	Grama Niladhari	Divisional Secretariat's Office
54	H K Anshika Lakshan	Grama Niladhari	Divisional Secretariat's Office
55	L H Hemantha	Administrative Officer (Planning)	District Secretariat's Office
56	R G D Sreemal	Officer	Disaster Management Centre
57	M Wannigama	Officer	Disaster Management Centre
58	C Ramasinghe	Officer	Disaster Management Centre
59	P Sampath	Officer	Disaster Management Centre
60	K Priyankara	Economic Development Officer	Divisional Secretariat's Office
61	Ajantha Wijenayaka	Economic Development Officer	Divisional Secretariat's Office
62	R Chathuranga	Economic Development Officer	Divisional Secretariat's Office
63	A L Ruwan	Officer	Disaster Management Centre
64	P GI Lakmal	Officer	Disaster Management Centre
65	G N D Gunawardena	Officer	National Disaster Relief Services Centre
66	J K Krishantha	Coordination Officer	Divisional Secretariat's Office
67	M Dananjaya	Assistant Coordination Officer	Divisional Secretariat's Office
68	Ashika L	Grama Niladhari	Divisional Secretariat's Office
69	G Palliyage	Grama Niladhari	Divisional Secretariat's Office
70	T K Wijexinghe	Grama Niladhari	Divisional Secretariat's Office
71	S A Rasika	Officer	National Disaster Relief Services Centre
72	R Lasanthi	Grama Niladhari	Divisional Secretariat's Office
73	A Jagath	Grama Niladhari	Divisional Secretariat's Office
74	P Kumarawansha	Grama Niladhari	Divisional Secretariat's Office
75	A Viduranga	Officer	National Disaster Relief Services Centre
76	N Disanayaka	Officer	Divisional Secretariat's Office
77	Ravindra K	Grama Niladhari	Divisional Secretariat's Office
78	K R Wickramathikaka	Economic Development Officer	Divisional Secretariat's Office
79	H A Anusha N	Grama Niladhari	Divisional Secretariat's Office
80	A M Thaksala	Grama Niladhari	Divisional Secretariat's Office

81	U K Rubasinghe	Grama Niladhari	Divisional Secretariat's Office
82	R K Dilrukshi	Grama Niladhari	Divisional Secretariat's Office
83	A Lakshani	Grama Niladhari	Divisional Secretariat's Office
84	C Palliyage	Grama Niladhari	Divisional Secretariat's Office
85	A Chanrani	Grama Niladhari	Divisional Secretariat's Office
86	S Nilani	Grama Niladhari	Divisional Secretariat's Office
87	Dinesh M	Development Officer	Divisional Secretariat's Office
88	Krishna T	Development Officer	Divisional Secretariat's Office
89	P Lakmali	Officer	Disaster Management Centre
90	R Witharana	Officer	Disaster Management Centre
91	D S Mudalige	Grama Niladhari	Divisional Secretariat's Office
92	K K S Indeewarii	Grama Niladhari	Divisional Secretariat's Office
93	H P P Priyangani	Economic Development Officer	Divisional Secretariat's Office
94	H Liyanage	Economic Development Officer	Divisional Secretariat's Office
95	A Agra	Economic Development Officer	Divisional Secretariat's Office
96	Dinesh M	Development Officer	Disaster Management Centre
97	Gayan C	Economic Development Officer	Divisional Secretariat's Office
98	K T Priyankara	Economic Development Officer	Divisional Secretariat's Office
99	Lt Kernl K G C K Kudagamage	Officer	Disaster Management Centre
100	Major A P N Suranga	Officer	Disaster Management Centre
101	Wasana C	Grama Niladhari	Divisional Secretariat's Office
102	S Nilani	Grama Niladhari	Divisional Secretariat's Office
103	P A L Ruwan	Officer	Disaster Management Centre
104	D M Maddumage	Officer	Disaster Management Centre
105	Anusha P	Officer	Disaster Management Centre
106	P Kumuduni	Economic Development Officer	Divisional Secretariat's Office
107	Krishna T	Development Officer	Divisional Secretariat's Office
108	K W Lakshani	Grama Niladhari	Divisional Secretariat's Office
109	K M Perera	Public Health Inspector	Ministry of Health
110	Kumuduni D	Grama Niladhari	Divisional Secretariat's Office
111	S Chathuranga	Economic Development Officer	Divisional Secretariat's Office
112	W Udayangani	Grama Niladhari	Divisional Secretariat's Office
113	K Lakshani	Grama Niladhari	Divisional Secretariat's Office

114	W Malkanthi	Grama Niladhari	Divisional Secretariat's Office
115	W Udayangani	Grama Niladhari	Divisional Secretariat's Office
116	Lekshani S	Academic	University of Ruhuna
117	D L R Dikella	Academic	University of Ruhuna
118	M Lalchandarathna	Development Officer	Divisional Secretariat's Office
119	N Wickramage	Economic Development Officer	Divisional Secretariat's Office
120	J P Ruwanpathirana	Economic Development Officer	Divisional Secretariat's Office
121	D T Kodikara	Economic Development Officer	Divisional Secretariat's Office
122	Dulano Dilrukshi	Economic Development Officer	Divisional Secretariat's Office
123	W Wasantha	Officer	Disaster Management Centre
124	J A Ranjith	Officer	Disaster Management Centre
125	K Gunasena	Officer	Disaster Management Centre
126	D Dilrukshi	Grama Niladhari	Divisional Secretariat's Office
127	A D Sanduni	Grama Niladhari	Divisional Secretariat's Office
128	K Ashika	Grama Niladhari	Divisional Secretariat's Office
129	L K R Wickramarathna	Economic Development Officer	Divisional Secretariat's Office
130	J L Vikum	Economic Development Officer	Divisional Secretariat's Office
131	H R Nishanthi	Economic Development Officer	Divisional Secretariat's Office
132	S Sujewa	Economic Development Officer	Divisional Secretariat's Office
133	J Ruwanpathirana	Economic Development Officer	Divisional Secretariat's Office
134	G N Ranawa	Economic Development Officer	Divisional Secretariat's Office
135	N Wickramage	Economic Development Officer	Divisional Secretariat's Office
136	E C Damayanthi	Economic Development Officer	Divisional Secretariat's Office
137	L M Sandya	Economic Development Officer	Divisional Secretariat's Office
138	W Sandamali	Economic Development Officer	Divisional Secretariat's Office
139	T C Priyadarshani	Economic Development Officer	Divisional Secretariat's Office
140	Dulani Dilrukshi	Economic Development Officer	Divisional Secretariat's Office
141	R Peshala Udayakumari	Economic Development Officer	Divisional Secretariat's Office

142	D M M Madushanthi	Economic Development Officer	Divisional Secretariat's Office
143	D P Kodikara	Economic Development Officer	Divisional Secretariat's Office
144	M H LAL	Officer	National Disaster Relief Services Centre
145	W Ravindrakumara	Grama Niladhari	Divisional Secretariat's Office

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