



## REBUILDING RESILIENCE: NISD'S RESPONSE TO THE AFTERMATH OF CYCLONE "DITWAH"

### ABOUT NISD "THE WAY FORWARD"

The National Institute of Social Development (NISD) has long been at the forefront of social work education, training, and research in Sri Lanka. As the country's leading institution in the field, NISD is dedicated to developing skilled social work professionals who can respond effectively to the complex social challenges of today.

Looking ahead, NISD envisions a future where social work education continues to evolve, integrating innovative teaching methods, research-driven approaches, and practical engagement with communities. By strengthening collaborations with local and international partners, NISD seeks to foster knowledge exchange, leadership development, and professional growth among its students and alumni.

Through these efforts, NISD aims not only to empower social work practitioners but also to make a meaningful impact on communities across Sri Lanka, promoting social justice, inclusion, and resilience. By nurturing the next generation of social workers, NISD is committed to building a society that is equitable, compassionate, and prepared to face emerging social challenges.



Cyclone Ditwah (November 2025) caused widespread floods, landslides, and mass displacement in Sri Lanka, affecting nearly one million people and resulting in over 212 fatalities. The crisis created urgent humanitarian and protection needs, particularly for vulnerable groups such as children, the elderly, and persons with disabilities.

Professional social workers, trained and supported by NISD, played a crucial role in immediate relief, focusing on psychosocial support, child protection, and equitable access to aid. Key activities included:

- **Psychosocial Stabilization:** Deploying PFA teams to relief centers to address acute trauma and connect individuals with medical resources.
- **Child Protection & Family Tracing:** Establishing Child-Friendly Spaces and implementing family tracing to prevent child separation and exploitation.
- **Equity & Inclusion Advocacy:** Conducting vulnerability screenings, ensuring aid accessibility, and advocating for inclusive infrastructure for marginalized populations.

NISD coordinated inter-agency responses, conducted rapid needs assessments, mobilized resources, and facilitated direct relief distribution, including self-funded support from MSW students. Long-term efforts focus on psychosocial rehabilitation, restoring social capital, and ensuring equitable recovery, emphasizing the need for ongoing research to evaluate the effectiveness of MHPSS interventions and address systemic protection gaps.

## STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES: SOCIAL WORK IN ACTION



A team from NISD, including the Director General and Additional Director General, visited Katana DS Office to oversee relief activities and discuss rapid needs assessment.

“The recent Ditwah Cyclone has left a profound impact on communities across Sri Lanka, affecting lives not only through physical damage but also through significant psychosocial challenges. In times like these, the role of social work becomes more crucial than ever in supporting recovery, rebuilding resilience, and restoring hope.

Across NISD, our faculty, staff, and students have stepped forward, offering psychosocial support, strengthening community bonds, and helping individuals and families navigate their emotional and social wellbeing during this difficult period. These efforts captures these collective efforts, our partnerships, and the social work values that guide our response.

To everyone who has contributed with compassion, commitment, and professionalism, thank you. Your dedication reflects the true spirit of social development. As we move forward, NISD remains steadfast in its mission to empower and uplift communities as they rebuild and emerge stronger.”

*Professor Premakumara de Silva, Ph.D (Edinburgh)  
Director General- NISD,  
Professor of Sociology (Chair), University of Colombo*



NISD serves as a collection center for dry rations, food, and other basic needs, coordinated by NISD staff and students.



“We are truly amazed by the extraordinary contributions of volunteers from across the community.

Despite experiencing significant loss and hardship, their resilience, compassion, and commitment to rebuilding harmony within their communities have been inspiring.

Volunteerism is deeply ingrained in the Sri Lankan spirit, reflecting the inherent generosity and solidarity of the people. For social workers, this spirit of volunteerism is invaluable, it strengthens community networks, amplifies recovery efforts, and demonstrates the transformative power of collective action in times of crisis.

Observing volunteers step forward so selflessly reminds us of the profound role that social work plays in supporting communities to heal, adapt, and thrive.”

*Gowri Vasudevan,  
Additional Director General -  
Academic, NISD*



Social workers and NISD students are supporting community kitchens in Rajapakshapura, Seeduwa, and across Muthur, Pulmodai, Kuchchaveli, and Trincomalee, providing vital meals and assistance to families affected by Cyclone Ditwa.



## STRENGTHENING PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT: NISD ON THE ROAD TO RECOVERY



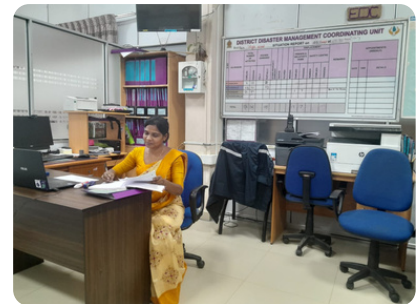
The Director General of NISD, Prof. Premakumara de Silva, together with Senior Lecturer Kumuduni Wedisinghe, Head of the Department of Psychology & Counselling, participated in a special television discussion on the way forward after Cyclone Ditwah. The conversation highlighted the critical importance of psychosocial support in disaster recovery, the role social workers have played so far, and how NISD can continue to strengthen mental health and psychosocial services. They emphasized supporting affected individuals as they navigate grief, loss, and the process of rebuilding their lives, ensuring no one is left behind during recovery.

## REGIONAL CENTERS IN ACTION: GROUNDED SOCIAL WORK IN DISASTER RESPONSE

*NISD students and staff assisting with preschool and community clean-up in flood-affected Kilinochchi on 7 December 2025.*



*Disaster Management Coordinating Unit – Kilinochchi supporting NISD’s psychosocial intervention efforts on the ground*



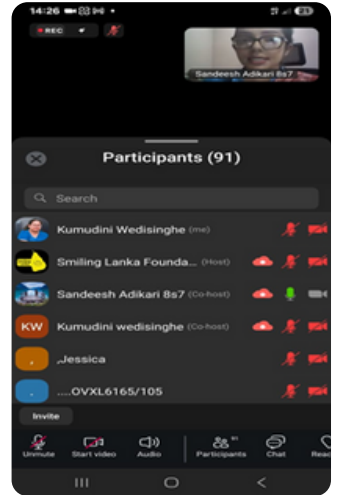
*NISD BSW students and psychosocial volunteer groups supporting clean-up efforts in Muthur and Kilinochchi, working alongside the Disaster Management Unit and regional centres.*



## ENHANCING SKILLS FOR PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT & COMMUNITY RELIEF



In the aftermath of Cyclone Ditwa, NISD swiftly organized training programs to support affected communities, equipping frontline officers, counselors, and students with skills in Psychological First Aid and disaster mental health. Reaching 91 Samurdhi Officers, 148 Counseling Officers, professional community kitchen teams, and 438 NISD students, the programs aimed to strengthen PFA capacity, enhance relief efforts, and promote resilience and well-being. The series began on 2nd December 2025, with a session in Sinhala and Tamil for 91 Samurdhi Officers, facilitated by Dr. Gayan Jayawardhana and Dr. I. Priyamali de Silva, focusing on immediate emotional support and community resilience.



### STUDENT TRAINING IN PSYCHOLOGICAL FIRST AID AND DISASTER RESPONSE"

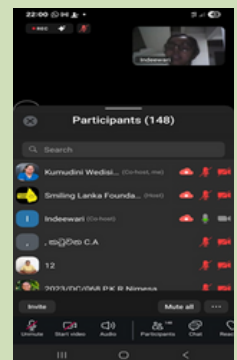
On 2nd December 2025, this program engaged 438 NISD students (230 Sinhala, 208 Tamil) across diploma, degree, and postgraduate levels. Led by Ms. V. Vasudevan and Ms. K. Wedisinghe, the session provided students with foundational skills in Psychological First Aid and practical guidance on supporting affected communities during emergencies.



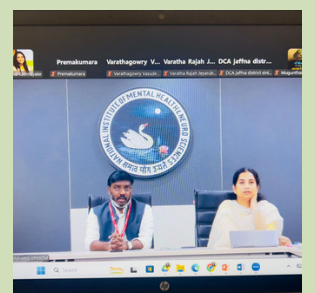
### PSYCHOLOGICAL FIRST AID TRAINING FOR COUNSELING OFFICERS



Held on 3rd December 2025, this session reached 148 counseling officers in Sinhala and Tamil. The program emphasized practical strategies to address psychosocial distress, strengthen coping mechanisms, and enhance the participants' ability to support survivors during crisis situations.



On 4th December 2025, students, practitioners & professionals participated in an English-language session led jointly by NIMHANS India and NISD experts, Dr. Jayakumar and Dr. S. Bala Shanthi. The training highlighted the role of community kitchens in disaster response, focusing on inclusive practices, community engagement, and social as well as psychosocial recovery and Rapid Need Assessment.



## INVITATION FOR COLLABORATION: Building Stronger Social Work Partnerships for Disaster Response



In response to the challenges posed by Cyclone Ditwa, the National Institute of Social Development (NISD) invites collaboration with local and international social work educators and institutions. These partnerships aim to strengthen disaster response, enhance psychosocial support, and foster resilient communities. Your expertise and engagement can make a meaningful difference in supporting affected populations and advancing professional social work practice in Sri Lanka.

For partnership inquiries, please contact:

**Director General, NISD: [dg@nisd.ac.lk](mailto:dg@nisd.ac.lk)**  
**Additional Director General, NISD: [adg@nisd.ac.lk](mailto:adg@nisd.ac.lk)**

### SUPPORT SRI LANKA'S CYCLONE DITWA RECOVERY

Sri Lanka urgently needs generous contributions to aid communities affected by Cyclone Ditwa. Your support can help provide essential relief, psychosocial assistance, and resources to rebuild lives. Contributions can be made to the following government accounts:

**For those overseas depositing in USD kindly use the following account details**  
**Foreign receipts**  
**USD A/C**  
 Account Name – Central Bank of Sri Lanka  
 Account No. – 021083514  
 Swift Code – CBCELKX  
 Beneficiary's Bank – Federal Reserve Bank, New York  
 Swift Code of the Beneficiary's Bank – FRNYUS33  
**Also state the following in the Remarks column – Credit to DST's Dollar A/C 45013**

**For overseas donors depositing in any other foreign currency or LKR, use the following account details:**  
 Account Name – Deputy Secretary to the Treasury  
 Bank - Central Bank of Sri Lanka  
 Account No. – 50516  
 Swift Code – CBCELKXXXX

**For Local donors, use the following details:**  
 Account Name – Deputy Secretary to the Treasury  
 Account No - 2026450  
 Bank - Bank of Ceylon

## NISD STUDENT RELIEF: HOUSING AND TRANSPORT SUPPORT

At this time, if your dormitories are at risk of flooding or are difficult to stay in, accommodation facilities have now been arranged for you at the National Institute of Social Development. Necessary food, drinks and other facilities have been provided at the institute. A van is also ready to transport you to the institute, so those who need this assistance should contact the above lecturers.



**K.C.K. De Thabrew**  
+94 75 182 2341



**Indika Sanjeewa**  
+94 71 077 0950



**B.K.S. Karunarathna**  
+94 70 350 1577



**NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**

## JOIN THE NEXT GENERATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS NISD 2025/2026 APPLICATIONS

**National Institute of Social Development**  
 Recognized by the University Grants Commission under the UGC Act, 25A 16, of 1978 as a Degree Awarding Institute  
 Ministry of Rural Development, Social Security and Community Empowerment

**Bachelor of Social Work (Honours) Degree Programme 2025/2026**  
 Applications are now open

**Entry Qualifications:**  
 Candidates should have sat for the GCE (A/L) examination in the years 2022, 2023 or 2024 and should have fulfilled the minimum requirements for admission to university in any subject stream at the GCE (A/L) Examination. A minimum of 80 marks in General Knowledge at the GCE (A/L) Examination is required. To apply for a degree program conducted in the medium of English, applicants must have obtained at least a Credit Pass (C) in the English Language subject at the GCE (O/L) Examination or in the General English subject at the GCE (A/L) Examination.  
 \* Applications are welcomed from students with special needs

**How to apply:**  
 The application form should be downloaded from the official website of the National Institute of Social Development ([nisd.ac.lk](http://nisd.ac.lk)).  
 Fully completed application should be sent by registered post to the Registrar, National Institute of Social Development,  
 Uvasangem, K. S. Sanjeewa  
 along with certified copies of:

**COURSE FEE:**  
 This four-year full-time degree programme is conducted FREE OF CHARGE, and charges only Rs. 35,000/- as registration fee.  
 APPLICATIONS FEE: Rs. 500/-  
 SELECTION TEST FEE: Rs. 1,000/-

**CONTACT**  
 Sinhala Medium: Mr. Gayathri Thabrew - 075 182 2341  
 Tamil Medium: Mr. P. Jayasinghe - 077 334 4676  
 English Medium: Mr. Akshay Manojkumar - 071 531 8009

**Apply Now: BSW (Hons) 2025/2026**

NISD is accepting applications for its four-year, full-time Bachelor of Social Work (Honours) program in Sinhala, Tamil, and English. Tuition is free, with minimal registration fees. Inclusive and equitable, the program empowers future social work professionals to make a meaningful impact.

**Apply by 31 December 2025: [nisd.ac.lk](http://nisd.ac.lk)**

**Writer & Analyst: Yasintha Rathnayake – MSW Alumni | Global Development Practitioner**

**Editorial Lead: Gowry Vasudevan – Additional Director General – Academic, NISD**

## Programmes conducted by NISD

### DEGREE PROGRAMS

Course Title	Duration	Entry Qualification	Venue
Master of Social Work (Sinhala/Tamil/English)	Two Year (Weekend)	A bachelor's Degree from a recognized university or a higher education institute with a minimum of 30 credits in the relevant subject area	NISD, Seeduwa
Bachelor of Social Work (Sinhala/Tamil/English)	Four Year (Fulltime)	Passing the G.C.E. (A/L) Examination with minimum requirements for university admissions. (The applicants should appear for a selection test and an interview)	NISD, Seeduwa

### HIGHER DIPLOMA PROGRAMS

Course Title	Duration	Entry Qualification	Venue
Higher Diploma in Social Work (Sinhala/Tamil/English)	One Year (Weekend)	Completion 30 credits Diploma in Social Work	NISD, Seeduwa
Higher Diploma in Counselling (Sinhala/Tamil/English)	One Year (Weekend)	Completion 30 credits Diploma in Social Work	NISD, Seeduwa

### DIPLOMA PROGRAMS

Course Title	Duration	Entry Qualification	Venue
Diploma in Social Work (Sinhala/Tamil/English)	12 Months (Weekend)	Passing the G.C.E. (A/L) Examination	Seeduwa, Ampara, Thalawa (Anuradhapura), Kilinochchi
Diploma in Counselling (Sinhala/Tamil/English)	12 Months (Weekend)	Passing the G.C.E. (A/L) Examination	Seeduwa, Ampara, Thalawa (Anuradhapura), Kilinochchi
Diploma in Child Protection (Sinhala/Tamil/English)	12 Months (Weekend)	Passing the G.C.E. (A/L) Examination	Seeduwa, Ampara, Thalawa (Anuradhapura), Kilinochchi
Diploma in Gerontology and Eldercare (Sinhala/Tamil/English)	12 Months (Weekend)	Passing the G.C.E. (A/L) Examination	NISD, Seeduwa
Diploma in English (Sinhala/Tamil/English)	12 Months (Weekend)	Passing the G.C.E. (A/L) Examination	Seeduwa, Ampara, Thalawa (Anuradhapura), Kilinochchi
Diploma in Women Empowerment (Sinhala/Tamil/English)	12 Months (Weekend)	Passing the G.C.E. (A/L) Examination	NISD, Seeduwa
Diploma in Sign Language (Sinhala/Tamil/English)	12 Months (Weekend)	Passing the G.C.E. (A/L) Examination	NISD, Seeduwa

### CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS

Course Title	Duration	Entry Qualification	Venue
Certificate in Social Work (Sinhala/Tamil/English)	06 Months (Weekend)	Passing the G.C.E. (O/L) Examination	Seeduwa, Ampara, Thalawa (Anuradhapura), Kilinochchi
Certificate in Counselling (Sinhala/Tamil/English)	06 Months (Weekend)	Passing the G.C.E. (O/L) Examination	Seeduwa, Ampara, Thalawa (Anuradhapura), Kilinochchi
Certificate Course in Child Focused Community Development (Sinhala/Tamil/English)	06 Months (Weekend)	Passing the G.C.E. (O/L) Examination	Seeduwa, Ampara, Thalawa (Anuradhapura), Kilinochchi
Certificate Course - Research methodology and Academic Writing (Sinhala/Tamil/English)	06 Months (Weekend)	Passing the G.C.E. (A/L) Examination	Seeduwa, Ampara, Thalawa (Anuradhapura), Kilinochchi
Certificate Course in Elder Care (Sinhala/Tamil/English)	06 Months (Weekend)	Passing the G.C.E. (A/L) Examination	Seeduwa, Ampara, Thalawa (Anuradhapura), Kilinochchi

contact : registrar@nisd.ac.lk