



Cash & Voucher Assistance for House Repairs – Operational Guidance

Shelter, Land & Site Coordination Sector

This guidance note provides operational and technical direction for SLSC sector partners implementing Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA) for house repairs in Sri Lanka, following damage caused by Cyclone Ditwah, including impacts from strong winds, heavy rainfall, flooding, and landslides.

CVA-based house repair interventions aim to enable affected households to safely repair or restore their homes, while preserving dignity, supporting early recovery, and stimulating local markets. This guidance seeks to ensure that such assistance is safe, effective, accountable, and aligned with national standards and best global practices.

Scope of Assistance

This guidance applies to non-structural house repairs that enable affected households to repair or partially restore their existing homes. Typical interventions include roof repairs, replacement of damaged doors and windows, repairs to walls or partitions, minor floor works, and measures to address water ingress. Such repairs aim to restore essential living conditions that allow households to reside safely and with dignity, but they may not address all damage to the dwelling. Interventions that only partially address damage and do not enable households to safely remain in or return to their dwellings should be carefully reviewed, as they may not achieve the intended shelter outcome.

The guidance does not cover structural or foundation repairs, major reconstruction, or full rebuilding. Assistance is limited to dwellings located in areas assessed as safe by the National Building Research Institute (NBRI). For houses located in high-risk or no-build zones, partners should consider alternative forms of assistance or refer households to the relevant authorities.

Assistance may be provided either unconditionally, where risks are assessed as low and household capacity is sufficient, or as accompanied or conditioned cash, where additional technical guidance, verification, or monitoring is required to mitigate identified programmatic, technical, or protection risks.

Eligibility and Targeting

Eligibility for Cash & Voucher Assistance for house repairs is determined through a combination of **vulnerability criteria, technical feasibility, and risk assessment**. Households must meet the vulnerability and prioritization criteria established in the SLSC Guidance [Note on Targeting, Prioritization and Vulnerability](#), and the dwelling must be certified by NBRI as being located in a non-risk area.

Only houses with damage that can be **safely repaired** without structural or foundation interventions are eligible. In addition, assistance should not duplicate support already provided through government programmes for the same purpose unless a clearly documented unmet need remains.

Partners are encouraged to critically assess whether CVA is an appropriate modality for each household. Highly vulnerable households, or those with limited capacity to manage repairs independently, may face challenges in achieving safe repair outcomes without additional support. In such cases, accompanied cash, community-based support mechanisms, or alternative assistance modalities should be considered to ensure that the intervention achieves its intended outcome. The choice of modality should be guided by the likelihood of achieving a safe and durable repair outcome, rather than by modality preference alone.



Technical Considerations and Risk Reduction

While cash and vouchers assistance provides flexibility and choice, technical accompaniment remains essential to ensure safety and quality in shelter repair interventions. Evidence and operational experience demonstrate that CVA for shelter repairs is most effective when combined with proportionate technical guidance.

Partners are therefore strongly encouraged to provide households with clear guidance on safe repair techniques, appropriate use of materials, and basic hazard-resistant construction practices relevant to local risks. This may include advice on improved roof fixing, rainwater management, wind resistance, landslide mitigation measures, and simple measures to prevent recurrent damage.

Technical support can take multiple forms, including short household visits, provision of simple repair manuals or visual guides, and access to on-demand technical advice. Participatory approaches such as PASSA (Participatory Approach for Safe Shelter Awareness) are recommended to strengthen household and community understanding of everyday shelter risks and to promote safer construction and settlement practices.

Assessment and Market Analysis

Prior to implementation, partners should conduct household-level damage and risk assessments to verify eligibility, confirm repair scope, and identify any protection, land tenure (HLP), or access-related concerns.

Equally important is the assessment of local market capacity, including the acceptance and feasibility of voucher-based modalities. Partners should verify that construction materials and skilled or semi-skilled labor are available, accessible, and affordable, and that cash injections are unlikely to create market distortions or inflationary pressures. Market conditions should be monitored throughout implementation and transfer values adjusted if necessary. CVA house repair assistance should only be implemented where markets can respond adequately and where households are able to **safely procure materials and services**.

Cash Transfer Design and Delivery

Cash or voucher transfer values should be calculated to realistically cover the cost of both materials and labour required for the defined repair scope. Transfer values may differ by location and must be based on up-to-date market data. Regular review of transfer values is recommended to ensure they remain adequate. Where markets are distant from households, the transfer amount should also factor in transportation and distribution costs, as these can be proportionally significant compared with the value of the materials themselves.

Delivery mechanisms may include mobile money, bank transfers, or vouchers, depending on accessibility, security, and **beneficiary preference**. In all cases, mechanisms should be selected ensuring that they are inclusive, safe, and cost-efficient.



Protection & Risk Management

Cash & Voucher based shelter interventions must be designed and implemented with strong **protection and accountability safeguards**. Partners should ensure equitable access to assistance, particularly for women-headed households, older persons, persons with disabilities and minorities that may have difficulties accessing the financial system.

Clear communication with communities is essential to prevent misunderstandings, fraud, or exploitation. Households should receive clear information on eligibility criteria, transfer values, and complaint and feedback mechanisms. Guidance should also be provided to discourage unsafe repair practices or coping strategies that could increase risk. All interventions should integrate Accountability to Affected People (AAP) principles and transparent communication throughout the programme cycle.

Coordination & Monitoring

Effective coordination is critical to the success of cash-based house repair interventions. SLSC sector partners are expected to coordinate closely with NBRI, local authorities, and relevant government programmes to ensure technical alignment and avoid duplication.

Sectoral cash assistance does not have to be incompatible with other forms of cash assistance, including MPC, as each serves different needs and should not result in overlaps. However, it is highly advisable to coordinate interventions with the **Cash Working Group** due to the potential impact that increased cash flows may have on local markets in certain areas, as well as to enhance transparency and accountability. Coordination also helps mitigate potential tensions that may arise when different transfer values are provided without adequate explanation.

Partners should report planned, ongoing, and completed activities through SLSC coordination mechanism 5W to support sector-wide analysis, gap identification, and learning. Proportionate monitoring and technical spot-checks are recommended to verify that repairs are completed safely and in line with agreed standards. A robust Post-Distribution Monitoring system is critical to understand whether shelter needs have been adequately addressed. The dissemination of PDM results in sectoral meetings is highly useful for collective learning within the sector and for understanding what works and what does not in sectoral CV assistance in the Sri Lanka context.