



Safe Access To Fuel and Energy (SAFE) Sri Lanka

Saving lives through SAFE cooking

WFP works to ensure that the food assistance provided can be consumed as safely and nutritiously as possible. While cooking may be thought of as a safe activity, in many circumstances, especially humanitarian settings, it poses serious health, safety and environmental risks. In Sri Lanka, returnees and internally displaced populations are facing severe challenges related to the collection, supply and use of cooking fuel.

FACTS Sri Lanka

- **Internally displaced households in camps and resettlement areas depend almost exclusively on firewood for cooking**, often complementing it with palm leaves and coconut shells. **Women of all ages are the prime collectors of firewood.**
- **Exposure to landmines and unexploded ordnances is the prime protection risk faced by the resettled populations**, severely impacting their lives and livelihoods, including access to firewood for cooking.
- Growing populations in resettlement sites are adding **increasing pressure on the areas' natural resources**, partly due to firewood collection.

Until 2015, Sri Lanka has supported 244,000 people through the SAFE initiative. WFP has globally reached over 6 million people with SAFE in 18 countries.

The challenge

Despite some reduction in poverty, many people in Sri Lanka remain displaced by fighting, and land mines contaminate most of the arable land. Sri Lanka is also affected by recurrent disasters, including major damage by floods and droughts in 2012, 2013 and 2014.

Even when people successfully acquire food, accessing firewood for cooking can be challenging. A 2012 SAFE assessment in Sri Lanka highlighted that firewood collection is marked as a high-risk activity for returnees due to uncleared landmines and ordnances that severely disrupt returnees' lives and livelihoods, confining them to a small perimeter around residential areas. In addition, the majority of returnees and internally displaced people in Sri Lanka cook in the same place where they sleep, as they lack both the resources and the space for a separate kitchen. Cooking indoors can involve major health hazards from the inhalation of toxic smoke emitted from the use of traditional cooking systems.



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Working on sustainable solutions

The **success of SAFE in Sri Lanka** relies on an innovative combination of energy-related and income-generating activities addressing various challenges linked to access to cooking fuel. These activities focus on protection, health, gender, environment, livelihoods and education.

SAFE in Sri Lanka

SAFE in Northern and Eastern Sri Lanka has focused on meeting the energy needs of displaced people through the following activities:

1. **Distribution of fuel-efficient stoves** among internally displaced people in the Menik Camp
2. **Stove-making training projects** to support the livelihoods of returnees in Northern Sri Lanka
3. **Installation of institutional fuel-efficient stoves in WFP-assisted schools** under the school meals programme
4. **Creation of forestry home gardens** for enhanced access to firewood and sources of nutrition, additional livelihood opportunities and environmental rehabilitation



A global survey conducted by WFP in 54 countries in 2015 highlighted that two thirds of these countries had energy-related concerns affecting people's food security, nutrition or safety. WFP has cookstove activities in 27 of its country offices.

Progress to date

- **30,000 fuel-efficient stoves** distributed to internally displaced families in Menik Camp and **504 fuel-efficient institutional stoves** installed in 277 WFP-assisted schools.
- **Firewood collection trips reduced from daily to just twice a week**, freeing up valuable time for women and children and reducing their exposure to mine and unexploded ordnance incidents.
- The improved stoves allow for **safer, healthier and faster cooking** due to their lower smoke emissions and fire hazards, as well the ability to cook with two pots.
- **Stove-production and installation trainings** have created additional income-generating opportunities.
- **Timber, firewood and fruit trees were planted by participants in their home gardens** in exchange for food rations, providing them with long-term benefits of access to firewood and income-generating opportunities.

Future objectives Sri Lanka

WFP has a strong interest in re-establishing SAFE activities in Sri Lanka, with an estimated budget of \$US 1.5 million being actively sought to maximize the outcomes of WFP efforts in the country and ensure people's safety, health and well-being during meal preparation. The new SAFE initiative would aim to reach an additional 50,000 people in the North-Eastern areas of Sri Lanka.

WFP has globally committed to support 10 million people through SAFE activities by 2020.