



World Food Programme

SAVING
LIVES
CHANGING
LIVES

WFP Sri Lanka Country Brief October 2018



Operational Context

Sri Lanka is a lower middle-income country that continues to struggle with the effects of a 27-year civil conflict that resulted in significant economic and social damage. Improvements in human development, nutritional status of children, women and adolescents remain stagnant.

The Demographic and Health Survey (2016) informs that poor nutrition is prevalent throughout the life cycle, starting with 15 percent of infants born with low birth weight. This is among the worst rates globally. Climate shocks contribute to increased frequency of natural disasters (droughts and floods) that compound food and nutrition security.

WFP has been present in Sri Lanka since 1968.



Population: **21 million**

2015 Human Development Index: **73 out of 188**

Income Level: **Lower middle**

Acute malnutrition (wasting): **15% of children between 6-59 months**

In Numbers

15 percent of children under five are acutely malnourished, rates of which have remained stagnant over the last ten years.

Sri Lanka ranks **4th of 184 countries** prone to climate shocks (Global Climate Index).

US\$ 0.69 m six months in net funding requirements (November – April 2018).

Operational Updates

- **World Food Day:** An event was held for World Food Day in Colombo. His Excellency Maithripala Sirisena, President of Sri Lanka took a pledge to improve nutrition and food security. This is the first time in Sri Lanka a President was involved in World Food Day. The Minister of Agriculture, and the Minister of Health and Indigenous Medicine joined WFP, other UN agencies, development partners, private sector partners, community representatives, youth and school children to celebrate World Food Day.

His Excellency also presented an award to 14 year old Miss. Sasmini Minupama Elaperuma from Vihara Mahadevi Balika Vidyalaya (Kiribathgoda), a winner of WFP's annual global Children's Design Competition which was themed 'Why is having a meal at school important to you'. He also presented an award to Miss Rithini Perera from Museaus College, Colombo who was placed third in the 5 – 8 years category at the World Food Day Global Poster Contest 2017.

The event featured an exhibition of nutritious food prepared by women's societies from across the country, and a **pledge wall led by the president calling for thoughts and actions on achieving Zero Hunger.** The "Take a stand, make a pledge for improved nutrition in Sri Lanka" was facilitated by popular Sri Lankan actress Pooja Umashankar. Celebrity chef Publis curated a healthy snacks and drink menu for the attendees of the event. [Link to press release](#)

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Country Strategic Plan (2018-2022)

| Total Requirement (in USD) | Allocated Contributions (in USD) | Nov - Apr Net Funding Requirements (in USD) |
|----------------------------|----------------------------------|---|
| 46.6 m | 11.04 m | 0.69 m |

Strategic Result 1: End hunger by protecting access to food

Strategic Outcome 1: Crisis-affected people have access to food all year round.

Focus area: Crisis Response to ensure humanitarian assistance

Activities:

- Provide food assistance to crisis-affected people.

Strategic Result 2: No one suffers from malnutrition

Strategic Outcome 2: School-age children in food-insecure areas have access to food all year round.

Focus area: Root causes of food insecurity and malnutrition among school-age children

Activities:

- Provide nutrition-sensitive food assistance, in partnership with the Government, to school-age children.
- Provide technical and policy support for the delivery of nutrition-sensitive school meals programmes to the Government.

Strategic Result 3: Smallholders have improved food security and nutrition

Strategic Outcome 3: Children under 5, adolescent girls and women of reproductive age have improved nutrition by 2025

Focus area: Immediate and underlying causes of malnutrition.

Activities:

- Provide evidence-based advice, advocacy, and technical assistance to government and implementing partners.
- Provide technical assistance and advocate the scaling up of the fortification of staple food and specialized nutritious foods to government and other stakeholders, including the private sector.

Strategic Result 4: Smallholders have improved food security and nutrition

Strategic Outcome 4: Vulnerable communities and smallholder farmers have strengthened livelihoods and resilience in the face of shocks and stresses all year round.

Focus area: Resilience building to enable vulnerable communities to better withstand shocks and stresses and to augment government capacity to implement disaster-management and integrated disaster-risk-reduction strategies.

Activities:

- Support nutrition-sensitive and gender-transformative livelihood diversification and income generation through integrated resilience-building activities.
- Provide technical assistance for emergency preparedness and response operations to the Government.
- Provide technical assistance to government and related agencies in the building of improved, unified, shock-responsive safety-net systems.

- **Update on heavy monsoon rains and drought (double burden):** The second inter monsoon in October brought considerable rains to dry and intermediate zones in the country. Compared to last 30 years of average rainfall, the total rains received during the first ten days in October was more than 200% higher compared to the average precipitation.

The end of October saw the weather level of major reservoirs in the country reached 47% of storage capacity which was only 19 percent during the same time last year. As a result, water reservoirs in the dry and intermediate zone reached their full capacity (Anuradhapura, Kurunegala and Monaragala districts) contributing to a improved 'Maha'(major) cultivation season.

The 2018/19 season is expected to have sufficient water throughout the season. Under these circumstances, the prevailing dry weather and the ground water deficit levels are also expected to fade off, which will also reduce the effect of droughts for non-agricultural areas.

- Technical training was conducted for 40 officers of the National Disaster Relief Service Centre on Disaster Relief Management with specific focus on contingency planning through simulation exercise.

Monitoring

Abdul Janees (32) and his wife Nusra planted papaya trees and vegetables in their half acre land. Previously he used to cycle and fetch water some 300 meters away to water his home garden. KOICA and WFP supported programme on Resilience Building and Livelihoods Support engage people like Abdul and Nusra with household water harvesting among many other initiatives to increase sustainable livelihood and build resilience to climate shocks, such as the slow on-set drought in Sri Lanka that is the worst in 40 years.

Before the support from the KOICA and WFP project, the couple was earning LKR 8,000 (US\$ 50) each month on average - barely enough to have a nutritious and diversified meals for two week. This support has enabled them to earn LKR 22,000 (USD 140) per month – three times more - while increasing their nutritious food intake.

Donors

KOICA, Japan, UN Peace-building Fund, The Earth Group, Italian Comitato, Australia, OFDA, Government of Denmark, Japan Association for WFP