



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES

WFP Sri Lanka Country Brief June 2019



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 moderate acute malnutrition – which is “wasting” or thinness – in children under 5 years of age. 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**

2017 Human Development Index: **76 out of 189**

Income Level: **Lower middle**

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

In Numbers

Poor nutrition among women of reproductive age remains an issue in Sri Lanka, with **10 percent underweight and 45 percent overweight or obese**. Meanwhile, 33 percent of pregnant and lactating women are anaemic.

Sri Lanka ranks **2nd of 176 countries** prone to climate shocks (Global Climate Risk Index)

US\$ 2.79 million six-month net funding requirement (July – December 2019)

Operational Updates

- The quarterly [Climate and Food Security Monitoring Bulletin](#) was prepared by WFP for April-June 2019. It highlights the current dry spell and temperature increases and their impacts on various sectors. The bulletin was developed using the ‘Platform for Real-time Information and Situation Monitoring’ or ‘PRISM’, a data-driven tool developed by WFP, with information from the Government of Sri Lanka.

According to the climate impact analysis, country-wide reservoirs were filled to 50 percent of their total capacity in May 2019, but water levels had fallen to 36 percent by mid-June due to evapotranspiration in the warm weather conditions.

Forecasts predict that rainfall remain below normal and temperatures will be above normal in July. This will add to the scarcity of drinking water and limit agriculture production.

The bulletin concluded with key short to medium term recommendations to reduce the impact of the dry weather and to address short-term food insecurity. They include the preparation of contingency plans to preserve water resources, the promotion of drought-tolerant crops, the renovation of wells and the implementation of cash for work and other climate-resilience building activities that improve community-level agricultural infrastructure.

- WFP, in partnership with the Medical Research Institute, the Postgraduate Institute of Medicine, and Sri Lanka Medical Nutrition Association, coordinated the 2019 Food Security and Nutrition in Emergencies training course, which took place in June. The five-day course, which was attended by 51 medical doctors specialising in nutrition and eight disaster management professionals, developed knowledge and skills in assessing food security status and nutritional challenges in emergency situations.

Main Photo

Credit: Ministry of Disaster Management
Caption: Prevailing drought in Sri Lanka

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Country Strategic Plan (2018-2022)		
Total Requirement (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)	July-Dec Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
46.6 m	15.89 m	2.79 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.

Operational Updates (continued)

- WFP trained 166 personnel from the Sri Lanka Institute of Development Administration in emergency management. The training focused on emergency management concepts and contingency planning, as well as the use of incident management systems.
- In June, 100 beneficiaries of the Department of Samurdhi Development (Sri Lanka’s national social safety net system) in four districts received a SCOPE ID card and real-time payment update when coming to collect their monthly remittance, concluding the first of three payment cycles in a pilot between Samurdhi and WFP. The pilot aims to digitalize the identification and payment of beneficiaries, which was previously done manually at the Samurdhi Bank in the communities. The digitalization uses ‘SCOPE’ WFP’s beneficiary registration and transfer management tool. The second cycle will take place in mid-July.
- June was National Nutrition Month. As part of the campaign to increase awareness about nutrition, WFP and UNFPA supported the Ministry of Health, Nutrition and Indigenous Medicine to pilot a session on cookery demonstration from the series of workshops on ‘From Home Garden to Table: grow, harvest prepare, share.’ This project aims to support nutrition sensitive agriculture, practices for home gardening, cash management for better nutrition, food demonstration and healthy eating behaviours through knowledge-based training sessions at community level. In addition to the pilot programme, the Government will also organize 18 cookery demonstration sessions in the 6 districts that the WFP/UNFPA CHANGE project is implemented, targeting the mother support group members.

Challenges

- The political situation in Sri Lanka continues to be precarious, following the terrorist attacks on Easter Sunday and ahead of presidential elections due in November-December.

Donors

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