



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES

WFP Sri Lanka Country Brief September 2019



Operational Context

Despite progress on many of the SDGs, Sri Lanka continues to struggle with the effects of a 27-year civil conflict on communities and frequent climate shocks which cause significant damages economically and to livelihoods. While now an Upper Middle Income Country, there are significant gaps in human development including the nutritional status of children, women and adolescents which remains stagnant.

The Demographic and Health Survey (2016) informs that poor nutrition is prevalent throughout the life cycle, especially 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 50 years, since 1968.



Population: **21 million**

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

Income Level: **Upper middle
incoming earning country**

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\$ 1.0 million – Six months net funding requirement (October 2019 – March 2020)

Operational Updates

- WFP has launched R5n, a project that aims to build vulnerable communities' resilience against recurrent natural shocks through the diversification of livelihoods, together with the Government of Sri Lanka and the Korean International Cooperation Agency (KOICA). Worth US\$ 6 million (LKR 1.6 billion) and with a timeframe of three years, R5n will rehabilitate irrigation schemes and provide climate-affected households in the dry regions with water harvesting and storage facilities. Broader aims of the programme include improving economic empowerment, social integration and resilience, and peacebuilding participation for disadvantaged and post-conflict-affected women.
- The International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) and WFP conducted operational research in R5n project areas, to ensure that the R5n project is sensitive to gender and nutrition concerns, and to ensure that it is adequately reaching the intended beneficiaries.
- WFP supported the organization of a symposium on rice fortification at the first South East Asia Regional Group Meeting of the International Epidemiological Association and 24th Annual Academic Session of College of Community Physicians Sri Lanka. WFP and the Ministry of Health presented their experience on rice fortification globally and in Sri Lanka.
- WFP continues to roll-out its Home-Grown School Feeding programme, which links smallholder farmers to the national school meals programme. This will be supported by a technical advisory group which has now been appointed to provide cross-ministerial inputs for the programme.

Main Photo

Credit: WFP
Caption: Brenda Barton and Ritsc Nacken handover anthropometric equipment to the Maternal Child Health Clinic in Thanamalwila, Moneragala

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WFP Country Strategy

Country Strategic Plan (2018-2022)

Total Requirement (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)	Oct 19 - Mar 20 Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
46.6 m	18.53 m	1.0 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 the government and implementing partners.
- Provide technical assistance and advocate the scaling up of the fortification of staple food and specialized nutritious foods to the 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 the government and related agencies in the building of improved, unified, shock-responsive safety-net systems.

Operational Updates (continued)

- ‘CHANGE’, a joint WFP/UNFPA project funded by the Danish Government, is improving access to comprehensive information and services in areas including household food security, health, nutrition, and sexual and reproductive health. The project focuses on six districts and aims to reach 8,000 women and adolescents. One of the aims of the initiative is to help to reduce the number of unwanted and early pregnancies.
- WFP conducted a training of trainers program in September for 40 health officials from Mannar, Mullaitivu, and Batticaloa Districts. These officials are now equipped to train teachers, students and parents on providing psychosocial support for adolescents on body image, sexual and reproductive health, and bullying.
- WFP Sri Lanka hosted a scoping mission from WFP’s Innovation Accelerator and Numer8 India. This is part of the pilot for an app-based project to help small fishing communities increase their yield by using real-time remote sensing and other crowdsourced data.
- As part of its continued focus on emergency preparedness, WFP conducted a Contingency Planning process workshop with a table-top simulation exercise for district and divisional officers of the National Disaster Relief Services Centre. 52 officers were trained from the four most frequently flood-affected districts during the North-East Monsoon.
- WFP, jointly with Hector Kobbekaduwa Agrarian Research and Training Institute hosted a one-day workshop to validate the findings of the Cost of Diet (CoD) analysis. The CoD tool, designed by Save the Children, is designed to analyse the lowest cost at which each district across the country can attain a nutritious diet, therefore advising policy makers and organisation on interventions needed to address the nutrition gap. The workshop was attended by officials from the Department of Census & Statistics, the Ministry of Health, HARTI and WFP. The final report will be available towards the end of October 2019.

Challenges

Presidential elections in Sri Lanka have been confirmed to take place on 16 November 2019. Accordingly, government officials are highly focused on the process.

Donors

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