



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES  
CHANGING LIVES

# WFP Sri Lanka Country Brief October 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 **2<sup>nd</sup> of 176 countries** prone to climate shocks (Global Climate Risk Index 2019).

**US\$ 2.93 million** – Six months net funding requirement (November 2019 – April 2020)

## Operational Updates

- WFP conducted cookery demonstrations during 14 – 16 October in three Ministry of Health (MoH) areas in Wilgamuwa, Matale. It included the participation of public health midwives and leaders of mother support group members. The aim was to promote healthy food preparation, consumption and eating behaviour. The aim was also to break misconceptions, especially those related to gender-discriminating beliefs and practices in food preparation.
- WFP held the first meeting in Thanamalvila on the home-grown school feeding pilot project with government counterparts representing the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Agriculture.
- The SUN Business Network met for an informal discussion on healthy diets and Canteen Guidelines which was led by Dr. Bhanuja from the nutrition division of MoH. This meeting was held to inform the private sector on the country's Canteen Guidelines.
- On October 29, as a result of a tropical low pressure system, located 300km south-west of Colombo, WFP supported the Disaster Management Centre with the preparation of a situation summary report. The low pressure system brought about heavy rains and strong winds that impacted over 6,000 people across the country. The joint report included flood impact mapping, government response information, and system tracking and forecasting.
- WFP actively participated in The Department of Meteorology's Monsoon Forum on 15 October. This forum explored the second inter-monsoon and north-eastern monsoon and their potential impact over the period of October 2019 to

### Main Photo

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Caption: Community participation, in Moneragala district, to clean the irrigation channels carrying water from the water reservoirs to the farmers' fields.

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## WFP Country Strategy

### Country Strategic Plan (2018-2022)

Total Requirement (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)	Nov 19 – Apr 20 Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
46.6 m	18.93 m	2.93 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.

February 2020. WFP assisted authorities to understand short and long term hazard impacts through a real-time monitoring system.

- WFP assisted the Disaster Management Centre with coordination and planning discussions between officials in seven districts: Monaragala, Ampara, Batticaloa, Trincomalee, Polonnaruwa, Vavuniya and Anuradhapura. These sessions, conducted from 22 to 26 October, focused on government preparedness for the inter-monsoon, north-eastern monsoons and upcoming elections. These officials were from sectors including public administration, shelter and relief, irrigation, and essential services.
- WFP, together with the ILO and the Government, continue to implement a project which aims to increase access to economic empowerment, social integration, resilience and peace building participation for disadvantaged and post-conflict-affected women in Mullaitivu, one of the most isolated and war-affected districts in the northern district of Sri Lanka. WFP has begun construction of agro-wells for household water harvesting during dry months. Water from the asset created will be used to initiate commercial cultivation, expand home gardens to commercial farming and expand the variety of cultivated products. As a result of the assistance, beneficiary households are expected to yield additional and increased income, leading to better food security and nutrition.

## Challenges

- The rainy season, if continued, will hinder the completion of the rehabilitation of irrigation schemes and construction of agro-wells.
- Presidential elections in Sri Lanka have been confirmed to take place on 16 November 2019. Accordingly, government officials are engaged in the official duty leading up to and until 20 November.

## Donors

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