



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES

WFP Sri Lanka Country Brief August 2021



Training of Trainers at Monaragala district in the Last Mile Climate Services pilot project. @WFP/Tamara Nanayakkara

Operational Context

Sri Lanka has shown steady growth over the last decades with progress on SDGs, reflecting the country's elevation to middle-income status.

Despite the progress, the country faces many socio-economic challenges, including a nutritional 'triple burden' comprising of undernutrition, overnutrition and micronutrient deficiencies.

Sri Lanka is ranked 30th globally on the Climate Risk Index highlighting the exposure and vulnerability to climate change. Hydro-meteorological hazards have a serious impact on vulnerable communities.

Moreover, the outbreak of Covid-19 in March 2020, with serious effects on the economy and livelihoods of vulnerable people, will hinder progress towards the country's socio-economic status, as is the case globally, in reaching zero hunger by 2030 in all its forms.

WFP has been present in Sri Lanka since 1968, working in partnership with the Government for the past 50 years to save lives in times of crises, and improve livelihoods for the future.



Population: **21 million**

2019 Human Development Index: **72 out of 189 countries**

Income Level: **Lower middle**

Chronic malnutrition: **17% of children between 6-59 months**

In Numbers

45 percent of women of reproductive age group are overweight or obese; **33 percent** of pregnant and lactating women are anaemic (Demographic and Health Survey, Sri Lanka, 2016).

WFP completed the delivery of cash assistance amounting to **LKR 15,170,000 (approximately USD 75,850)** to a total of **1,517 pregnant and nursing mothers** in six districts, under the social protection programme.

US\$ 0.90 million - six months net funding requirement (September 2021 – February 2022)

Situation Updates

- The increase in the number of COVID-19 patients continued throughout August, registering 436,081 cases, most of them in the urban Colombo, Gampaha and Kalutara districts. The number of deaths also doubled from the previous month, counting to 8,991. Despite this situation, 374,156 patients were able to recover from the disease.
- Meanwhile, the COVID-19 vaccination count reached 12.4 million people who had received at least a single dose. Of them, 7.7 million people had completed their vaccination, having received both doses. The Government's COVID-19 vaccination drive has so far included people aged 18 to 60 years, with plans for including other age groups.
- Inter-provincial travel restrictions, reinstated in the previous month, continued throughout August. Essential services continued to operate, however public transport remained limited.
- Online lessons and televised educational programmes continued as schools remained closed.

Operational Updates

- WFP continued with two Training of Trainers (ToT) programmes for field based agricultural officials in Monaragala and Mullaitivu districts, in the Last Mile Climate Services pilot project. These training sessions helped them to understand how to down-scale national agromet advisories to their relevant locations and simplify the technical details. Farmer engagement sessions were also planned for the coming month, to disseminate the tailored agromet information to help farmers make timely cropping decisions ahead of the cultivating season. The Departments of Meteorology, Agriculture, and Agrarian Development are the key stakeholders with WFP to pilot this approach of providing vital climate information combined with agricultural advice. A feedback loop is built in so that farmers can provide input and suggestions for the localised agromet advisories, bringing in their agricultural experiences.

Contact info: Tamara Nanayakkara (tamara.nanayakkara@wfp.org)

Country Director: Abdurrahim Siddiqui

Further information: <https://www.wfp.org/countries/sri-lanka>

Country Strategic Plan (2018-2022)

Total Requirement (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)	Six Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
53.97 m	30.06 m	0.90 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 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 2: No one suffers from malnutrition

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: Food systems are sustainable

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.

- WFP has successfully tested SCOPE - its corporate beneficiary management platform - within its social protection programme activities by distributing cash-based assistance to 160 pregnant and nursing mothers in Kalutara district.
- WFP [press release](#) issued in August highlighted WFP's support to the Government with food items and funding to provide school children with take-home rations in lieu of school meals.

- To mark the World Humanitarian Day, WFP spotlighted a series of staff features, which included social media quote cards. The staff were enthusiastic in relating their experiences and what it means to be a humanitarian worker and contribute to WFP's work.
- WFP also finalised an internal deep dive into its programmes to understand ways to better support the communities, specifically on "doing no harm", and how WFP's programmes can contribute to community harmony. This is expected to lead to improving WFP and partner staff capacities to incorporate suitable strategies towards improving social cohesion through WFP interventions.

Monitoring

- WFP concluded the baseline data collection for the cash-based transfer programme supporting pregnant and nursing mothers in six districts. This exercise employed computer assisted telephone interviews (CATI methodology) to gather data from 219 households in the districts of Matale, Mannar, Monaragala, Mullaitivu, Batticaloa and Kalutara, considering the travel restrictions imposed due to COVID-19. The analysis and report will be available in the coming month.
- Similarly, WFP finalized the data collection tool for the food security assessment planned to be conducted in coastal areas of Negombo, which were affected by the *X-press Pearl* marine disaster in May. The assessment will help to understand the effect on livelihoods and the food security status of the fishing communities directly impacted by this crisis.
- WFP also initiated a monitoring exercise on the water level of minor irrigation schemes in the operational districts of resilience building projects. Despite challenges brought about by COVID-19 movement restrictions, data has been gathered from 48 minor irrigation tanks across project locations.
- The corporate evaluation of the Country Strategic Plan (2018-2022) is under way and the inception discussion was concluded with the country team.

Donors

Top donors to WFP Sri Lanka CSP 2018-2022 include: [Government of Republic of Korea](#), [Regional Trust Fund allocations](#), [Government of Japan](#), [USAID/BHA](#), [Private donors](#), [flexible funds](#).