



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES

WFP Sri Lanka Country Brief June 2022



Operational Context

Sri Lanka is experiencing its worst economic crisis since its independence in 1948. The population is struggling to meet their daily food needs in the face of shortages and higher food and fuel prices. This exacerbates the hardships caused by the COVID-19 pandemic in the last two years, reversing years of developmental gains since elevating to lower middle-income-country status in 2019. Food inflation is at an all-time high of 80 percent in June 2022.

The country also faces significant threat from climate risks. Rising temperatures and extreme heat poses risks to human health and living standards and could potentially put downward pressure on agricultural yields.

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. In 2022, WFP has revised its Country Strategic Plan to reflect actual needs of the current economic and food crises. WFP aims to support an additional 3.4 million people whose lives and livelihoods were severely impacted by the crisis.



Population: 22 million

2019 Human Development Index: 72 out of 189 countries

Income Level: Lower middle

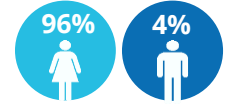
Chronic malnutrition: 17% of children between 6-59 months

In Numbers

US\$113,176 in cash and vouchers distributed

US\$44.54 m six-month (July 2022 – December 2022) net funding requirements

2,562 people assisted in June 2022



Situation Updates

- The population continues to feel the brunt of the economic and food crises, as food inflation soars to a staggering 80 percent in June 2022.
- An alarming 6.3 million people (about 3 in 10 households) are now food insecure, according to preliminary findings from WFP and FAO's joint Crop and Food Security Assessment Mission. Of this number, 66,000 people are severely food insecure. A full CFSAM report is expected to be released by August.
- The majority of households (61 percent) are regularly using food-based coping strategies such as eating less preferred, less nutritious food, and cutting back on food portions. About 6.7 million people are not consuming adequate diets and 5.3 million people are reducing the number of meals eaten.
- Food security situation is worse in the estate sector. While urban households are depleting savings to cope for now, estate populations are already turning to credit in order to purchase food and other essentials.

Operational Updates

Emergency Response

- In response to the economic and food crises, WFP has begun implementation of unconditional food assistance through value vouchers directed at nutritionally at-risk pregnant women across Colombo. **WFP has so far reached 2,100 beneficiaries (88 percent) of the total 2,375 targeted pregnant women.**
- **WFP is urgently scaling up its operations to reach 3.4 million beneficiaries** (in addition to the initially identified 430,000 beneficiaries earlier this year) through unconditional food assistance (in-kind, cash-based transfers, and vouchers), school meals, and nutrition support. It is currently in the process of selecting cooperating partners and financial service providers for the cash and voucher scale-up.

Contact info: Catherine Mones (catherine.mones@wfp.org)

Country Director: Abdur Rahim 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)
117.34 m	55.33 m	44.54 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.

Donors

Australia, Canada, Japan, New Zealand, Republic of Korea, Regional Trust Fund allocations, Russian Federation, Sri Lanka, Switzerland, UN CERF, the United States of America, and the private sector

Cover Photo: Muniwara Hameed's family is just one of millions affected by the economic crisis in Sri Lanka. Aside from cutting back on meals, she has also started to use kerosene for cooking as an alternative to petrol. © WFP/Josh Estey

Capacity Strengthening

- WFP conducted a **workshop in celebration of World Oceans Day 2022** to raise awareness on how oceans affect everyday life and how they help to buffer the impacts of extreme weather events. The forum brought together multiple stakeholders from Sri Lanka's National Oil Spill Incident Management Team, government ministries, UN agencies, international non-government organizations, academia, and the media. Participants also discussed case studies, lessons learned, and best practices on the response to the fire incident involving MX Pearl, a cargo ship carrying chemicals that caught fire off the coast of Sri Lanka in May 2021.
- A delegation from the Republic of Korea (RoK) visited some of WFP's R5n resilience building project sites and participants in Matale (Central province). The RoK Delegation saw first-hand how the funding provided by the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) has helped enhance the resilience of smallholder farmers against climate shocks and the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. **R5n is a joint project between WFP and RoK designed to build resilience among vulnerable communities against recurring shocks through diversification of livelihoods.**
- In cooperation with the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Business Network People's Forum and the Ministry of Health, WFP conducted a session on the cash assistance and nutrition awareness for pregnant and nursing women in six districts on 15 June. WFP shared its approach on social protection, lessons learned on the project, and findings from its project assessment.

Monitoring

- WFP has conducted a post-distribution monitoring on its value vouchers distribution for pregnant women in Colombo. The findings indicate that:
 - 99.5 percent of the respondents were satisfied with the amount they received
 - The majority said the support received is sufficient for two weeks
 - Lentils, milk, and rice were the most purchased commodities using the vouchers
 - The majority of households said both men and women jointly decided on what to buy using the assistance they received