



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES

WFP Sri Lanka Country Brief October 2022



Operational Context

Sri Lanka is experiencing its worst economic crisis since its independence in 1948. Majority of the population is struggling to meet their daily food needs in the face of shortages and high 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 in October is at 85.6 percent (CCPI), in urban areas of Colombo.

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 made a budget revision of 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**

2021/ 2022 Human Development Index: **73 out of 191 countries**

Income Level: **Lower middle**

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

In Numbers

US\$11.5 million in cash and vouchers distributed

US\$29.69 million six-month (November 2022 – April 2023) net funding requirements

275,160 people assisted in October 2022

Situation Updates

- In the face of Sri Lanka's economic crisis, food insecurity remains at concerning levels. 32 percent of households are food-insecure, according to WFP's [Food Security Monitoring](#) report for September 2022.
- In urban areas of Colombo, food inflation (year-on-year) is at 85.6 percent in October, according to the [Colombo Consumer Price Index](#).
- A considerable number of markets reported concerns around price volatility and food availability, according to WFP's September [Market Functionality Index](#). High and unstable prices further impact households' food accessibility.

Operational Updates

Emergency Response

- Since the start of emergency operations in mid-August, WFP has reached a total of 456,664 people with cash assistance. This came as a part of WFP's scale-up to reach 3.4 million additional people in 2022, through unconditional food assistance (cash or in-kind), school meals and nutrition support.
- To support 1 million children with school meals for a period of two months, WFP began distribution of rice to over 7,000 schools. This will directly support schoolchildren through the Government's national school meals programme.
- WFP is coordinating with the Government and donors to provide raw materials (maize and soybean) to the Government's Thripasha facility, ensuring continuity of nutrition support.
- WFP is gearing up to roll out in-kind food assistance, to support 400,000 people in Ampara, Kurunegala, Mullaitivu, Nuwara Eliya, and Vavuniya districts.

Capacity Strengthening and Support

- WFP, in partnership with the National Dengue Control Unit (NDCU) and Disaster Preparedness and Response Division of the Ministry of Health, conducted a one-day consultative workshop on multi-hazard contingency planning. The NDCU introduced its training of trainers programme, with an aim to develop a handbook that can be utilized to create simulation-based training for grass-roots

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Country Strategic Plan (2018-2022)

Total Requirement (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)	Six-Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
117.34 m	88.88 m	29.69 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, Norway, Italy, New Zealand, Republic of Korea, UN Trust Fund, Russian Federation, Sri Lanka, Switzerland, UN CERF, the United States of America, and the private sector.

Cover Photo: S. A. Priyangani, 36, works as a day labourer at nearby farms, earning barely enough to support her extended family of nine. High food and fuel prices, and shortages of essential items are putting adequate and nutritious meals out of reach for many families in Sri Lanka. © WFP/Josh Etsy

level public health workers in preparation for the upcoming 2022 North-Eastern Monsoon.

- WFP collaborated with the Mannar District Secretariate and Marine Environment Protection Authority to facilitate a regional oil spill response contingency planning awareness workshop with key stakeholders. The purpose of contingency plans is to coordinate all aspects of the response, including oil lockage, containment, and clean-up.
- The South-South Triangular Cooperation project provided timely support for the recovery of smallholder farmers in Anuradhapura. The farmers received support in cultivating mung beans, procuring seeds, hiring farm machinery & equipment, and for other essential field operations. Farmers produced good yields of mung beans (which are in short supply), cultivated in the paddy land in Yala/minor season with lesser water in the reservoir, and met their food and nutrition needs.

Communications/Awareness promotion

- WFP with task delivery support of Scaling Up Nutrition – People’s Forum has begun implementing awareness-raising programmes focused on nutrition, gender, and social behaviour change communication, by coordinating with key government institutions. This complements the cash assistance provided by WFP through the Government’s Samurdhi social protection programme.
- WFP commemorated the World Food Day on 14 October themed ‘Leave no one behind’ with the Food and Agriculture Organization and the International Fund for Agricultural Development. The event was widely covered in local media, and a joint op-ed authored by the heads of the three UN agencies was published.
- WFP supported the Ministry of Health in its National Nutrition Month campaign in October by partnering with a social media influencer/chef to develop low-cost, healthy recipes. A special statement was issued by WFP Country Director to commemorate the month.

Monitoring

- WFP recently released a Food Security Monitoring survey report for September 2022. The report provides insight into food security, food consumption patterns, nutrition, and expenditure.
- WFP’s Market Functionality Index indicates that spikes and instability in prices are posing threats to market functionality in Sri Lanka. It also suggests that mitigation measures, such as strengthening market monitoring and adapting to price fluctuations, should be put in place to safeguard against price-related risks for cash-based transfers.