



World Food Programme

SAVING
LIVES
CHANGING
LIVES

WFP Sri Lanka

Country Brief

December 2022



Operational Context

Sri Lanka is experiencing its worst economic crisis since its independence in 1948. A 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 December was at 64.4 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**
between 6-59 months

In Numbers

US\$4.5 million in cash and vouchers distributed

US\$3.12 million six-month (January 2023 – June 2023) net funding requirements

873,962 people assisted in December 2022

Situation Updates

- In the face of Sri Lanka's economic crisis, food insecurity remains at concerning levels. 37 percent of households are food-insecure, according to WFP's latest Household [Food Security Survey](#) (November 2022).
- According to the latest [Colombo Consumer Price Index](#), food inflation (year-on-year) in urban areas of Colombo was at 64.4 percent in December.
- Although an overall improvement was reported in October, price volatility increased in November, according to WFP's November [Market Functionality Index](#). This can be attributed to the Northeast monsoon expected to negatively impact the coming months, high demand during the festive season and the start of the lean season.

Operational updates

Emergency response

WFP plans to assist 3.4 million people through general food distribution, school meals and nutrition support.

- Since the start of emergency operations in June 2022, WFP has reached **480,980** people with cash assistance and **227,952** with in-kind food assistance. This is a result of WFP's response scale-up aimed at reaching 1.4 million people through unconditional food assistance (cash or in-kind).
- WFP distributed rice to 7,593 schools in December and has reached 1,032,829 children to date. WFP surpassed its plan to support 1 million children with school meals through the Government's national school meals programme in 2022.
- The new WFP Sri Lanka Country Strategic Plan for 2023 - 2027 was approved by the WFP Executive Board on 16 November 2022.
- WFP is coordinating with the Government and donors to provide raw materials (maize and soybean) to the Government's Thripasha1 facility which is targeting approximately 1 million pregnant and breastfeeding mothers and young children with nutritious food support. So far, **268,000** packets of Thripasha have been produced.

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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	3.12 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, France, 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: Sri Lanka. Muniwara Hameed, 39, has begun to cut back the number of meals she cooks each day from three to two as the economic crisis takes hold on her families income

Total beneficiaries reached (as of Dec. 2022)

Activity	# People reached
Cash transfers	480,980
In-kind food assistance	227,952
School meals	1,032,829
Total	1,741,761

- WFP piloted the use of mobile shops on trucks to support 21,980 people in Galle District. This allows people in remote and estate areas to access food by redeeming their value vouchers provided by WFP, where physical stores are not accessible or available.

Capacity strengthening and support

- WFP, in close collaboration with the National Dengue Control Unit and Disaster Preparedness and Response Division, conducted a multi-hazard scenarios-based training of trainers on the north-eastern monsoon preparedness planning in Polonnaruwa and Anuradhapura districts. Training in Batticaloa and Trincomalee districts was already completed in November.

Monitoring

- WFP recently released the [Household Food Security Survey](#) for November 2022. The report found that 37 percent of households are food-insecure while 72 percent of households are resorting to negative coping strategies such as consuming less preferred food, limiting portion sizes and/or reducing the number of meals.
- The [Market Functionality Index](#) for November 2022 was released. The assessment found that Sri Lanka's markets currently have a wide range of products and a resilient supply chain. Although traders reported greater availability of commodities in October compared to September, November saw availability issues emerge once again. 80 percent of households reported issues in accessing food in November.

Communication/Awareness promotion

- Representative and Country Director of WFP Sri Lanka, Abdur Rahim Siddiqui gave his [year-end message](#) on social media with a brief recap of WFP's emergency operation.
- USAID's Humanitarian Advisor, Dustin Shiao visited beneficiaries of WFP's emergency operation and participated in a live demonstration of a Geographic Information System (GIS) mapping exercise in Moratuwa, to understand the process by which authorities use GIS to identify communities at risk during an emergency. The US has been funding WFP's disaster risk reduction initiatives for several years. A [press release](#) and [social media](#) posts of the visit were also published.

¹ Thripasha is an additional nutritious food aimed at minimizing and preventing maternal and child malnutrition and promoting local agricultural economy.