



World Food Programme

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LIVES  
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LIVES

# WFP Sri Lanka

## Country Brief

May 2023



### Operational Context

Sri Lanka is experiencing its worst economic crisis since its independence in 1948. Economic instability adversely impacted food and nutrition security. This exacerbated 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. 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.

Food inflation in May was at 21.5 percent (NCPI). As the food security situation continues to show gradual improvement, WFP is implementing activities aimed at assisting communities in transitioning from emergency relief to early recovery. WFP has been present in Sri Lanka since 1968, working in partnership with the Government for the past 55 years to save lives in times of crises, and improve livelihoods for the future.



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

**14,454.32 mt** of food distributed

**US\$7.4 million** in cash and vouchers distributed

**US\$22 million** six-month (June-November 2023)  
net funding requirements

**365,351 people** assisted in May 2023

## Situation Updates

- According to the [Crop and Food Security Assessment Mission \(CFSAM\) findings](#) (May 2023), about 3.9 million people (17 percent of the population) are estimated to be moderately acute food-insecure and 10,000 people to be severely acute food-insecure. This represents an improvement compared to May 2022, when 6.2 million were estimated to be moderately acute food-insecure and 66,000 people were severely acute food-insecure.
- The highest level of acute food insecurity was in the Estate sector (tea production) and among households deriving their main incomes from social protection schemes such as Samurdhi and disability benefits, linked to unaffordability of food and healthy diets.
- The percentage of households adopting livelihood-based coping strategies to access food have increased significantly, from 48 percent in May 2022 to 62 percent in March 2023, making households highly vulnerable to any future shocks. Food-based coping strategies were adopted by 56 percent of households, 5 percentage points less than in May 2022, but still 36 percent of households are reducing meal portion sizes and 19 percent are skipping meals (CFSAM, 2023).

## Operational updates

### Emergency response

In 2023, WFP is implementing general food distribution, school meals and nutrition support.

- Since the start of emergency operations in June 2022, WFP has reached 610,172 people with cash and value voucher assistance and 763,808 with in-kind food. In 2023, WFP is planning to provide targeted food assistance to crisis-affected people through cash and vouchers.

Contact info: [WFP.Colombo@wfp.org](mailto:WFP.Colombo@wfp.org)

Country Director: Abdur Rahim Siddiqui

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

## Country Strategic Plan (2023-2027)

Total Requirement (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)	Six Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
<b>74.87 m</b>	<b>36 m</b>	<b>22 m</b>

## Strategic Result 1: End hunger by protecting access to food

**Strategic Outcome 1:** People are better able to meet their urgent food and nutrition needs

**Focus area:** Crisis Response to ensure humanitarian assistance

## Activities:

- Provide food and nutrition assistance and essential livelihood support to targeted populations

**Strategic Outcome 2:** People have better nutrition, health and education outcomes

**Focus area:** Root causes of food insecurity and malnutrition among school-age children

## Activities:

- Provide assistance to targeted children, pregnant and lactating women, children under 5, smallholders and communities vulnerable to food insecurity, unhealthy diets and malnutrition through asset transfers, food and cash assistance, home-grown school feeding, training and social and behaviour change communication to improve nutritional outcomes

## Strategic Result 2: No one suffers from malnutrition

**Strategic Outcome 3:** People have improved and sustainable livelihoods.

**Focus area:** Immediate and underlying causes of malnutrition

## Activities:

- Provide assistance to at-risk and vulnerable communities to develop nutrition-sensitive and inclusive livelihood diversification opportunities that improve resilience to climate change and other risks

## Strategic Result 4: Food systems are sustainable

**Strategic Outcome 4:** National programmes and systems are strengthened

**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:

- Provide technical assistance, including the co-creation, piloting and use of digital technologies among government and other food security, nutrition and social protection actors at the national and subnational levels

## 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: Primary grade students Ayushika and Yaheiya are enjoying their morning meal at St. John's Maha Vidyalaya, Colombo 15. The meals include US-funded rice, fortified with iron and folic acid, ided through the UN World Food Programme. © WFP/Carol Taylor.

- WFP is coordinating with the Government and partners to provide maize and soybean to the Government's Thripasha<sup>1</sup> facility which is targeting pregnant and breastfeeding women and children under 5. So far, over 1 million packets of Thripasha have been distributed to 659,704 people.
- As of May 2023, WFP distributed rice to 7,922 schools, reaching over 1 million children.

## Total beneficiaries reached (from June 2022)

Activity	# People reached
Cash transfers & Value vouchers	610,172
In-kind food assistance	763,808
School meals	1,061,535
Thripasha	659,704
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,095,219</b>

## Capacity building

- WFP, in partnership with the Asian and Pacific Training Centre for ICT, and the Geo-informatics Center/Asian Institute of Technology and ITC-University of Twente conducted a training on Virtual Technologies for Disaster Risk Management from 23 to 25 May, to strengthen the capacities of government officials for disaster risk management in Sri Lanka.

## Communication/Awareness promotion

- WFP Country Director, Abdur Rahim Siddiqui visited Seoul, South Korea for a signing ceremony to formally acknowledge a funding of US\$750,000 from the Korean Financial International Foundation (KFIF) to WFP Sri Lanka. In an [interview with the Yonhap News Agency](#), he emphasized KOICA's long-standing support to WFP to improve smallholder farmers' resilience against climate change.
- Through the KFIF funding, WFP will expand its Home-Grown School Feeding (HGSF) project which helps caterers to grow agricultural produce and rear poultry in their home gardens, to improve access to ingredients for school meals.



Morning school meals prepared and ready to be served.  
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