



World Food Programme

SAVING
LIVES
CHANGING
LIVES

WFP Sri Lanka

Country Brief

November 2023



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Operational Context

In 2022, Sri Lanka experienced its worst economic crisis since its independence in 1948. The food inflation rate reached an all-time high of 95 percent as the government defaulted on its foreign debts. The situation in 2023 has stabilized with the inflation rate in October at -5.2 percent (NCPI). About 3.9 million people are estimated to be food insecure, a 40 percent improvement compared to 2022. However, significant concerns remain as most households (62 percent) adopt livelihood-eroding coping strategies, while 56 percent are still adopting food coping strategies.

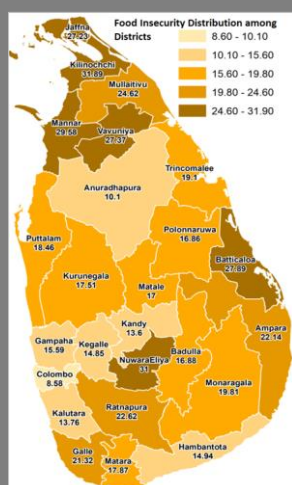
The country also faces significant threats from climate risks. Rising temperatures and extreme heat pose risks to human health and living standards and could potentially put downward pressure on agricultural yields. As the food security situation continues to show gradual improvement, WFP is implementing activities aimed at assisting communities in transitioning from emergency relief to early recovery and long-term resilience building while also focusing on improving the nutritional outcomes of the population and institutional capacity strengthening. 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**

Income Level: **Lower middle**

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

Moderate acute malnutrition:
17% of children between 6-59 months⁴



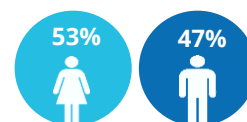
In Numbers

13,081 mt of food distributed

US\$11.9 million in cash and vouchers distributed¹

US\$0.67 million six-month (November-April 2023) net funding requirements

703,176 people assisted in November 2023



Operational Updates

Emergency response

- In 2023, WFP aimed to reach 2.4 million food-insecure people through cash and voucher assistance, general food assistance, school meals and nutrition support.
- WFP reached 218,436 people in November with in-kind food assistance and 5,132 people with cash assistance.
- WFP is providing maize and soya beans to the Government's *Thriposhha*² facility, targeting pregnant and breastfeeding women and children aged 6-59 months. In November, *Thriposhha* was distributed to 237,142 pregnant and breastfeeding women and 232,058 children aged 6-59 months. *Thriposhha* is available in all growth-monitoring and antenatal clinics across the country.
- WFP continues to support the National School Meals programme by providing fortified rice to over 7,000 schools nationwide, reaching 1 million schoolchildren every month.
- Specialised nutritious food distributions for children with Moderate Acute Malnutrition (MAM) began in Nuwara Eliya and Anuradhapura in October. In November, 10,408 food packs were distributed in two rounds.

Resilience Building, Capacity Strengthening and Social Protection

- WFP supported the Disaster Management Centre in conducting workshops on climate information analysis and decision-making for national and district staff, and local government technical officers.
- WFP completed the second round of food voucher assistance to 2,110 households, through 25 *Samurdhi*³ micro retailers as part of its micro retailer voucher programme.

Assessments and monitoring

- WFP conducted a household food security survey to provide information on the food consumption patterns, expenditures, coping strategies, and food security outcomes of households. The data

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Country Strategic Plan (2023-2027)

Total Requirement (in US\$)	Allocated Contributions (in US\$)	Six-Month Net Funding Requirements (in US\$)
104.87 m	53.57 m	0.67 m

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.

¹ Since June 2022

² Thripasha is an additional nutritious food aimed at minimizing and preventing maternal and child malnutrition and promoting local agricultural economy.

³ Government social protection safety net programme

⁴ National Nutrition and Micronutrient Survey 2023

collection of the survey was completed in November and the results are being finalized.

- WFP, in collaboration with the Partnerships Secretariat and Hector Kobbekaduwa Agrarian Research and Training Institute, is undertaking the digital transformation of the data collection process for agricultural product/ market information. This training initiative was designed to equip the field staff of HARTI with the necessary skills and knowledge about the new digital system before its official launch. This was a two-day residential program on system training.

Gender and Protection

- WFP's Community Feedback Mechanism (CFM) hotline operates daily in Sinhala, Tamil and English. In the month of November, CFM received 300 cases of which 98 percent have been closed. All concerns by callers are flagged to the respective focal points for immediate action.
- As part of #16DaysOfActivism Against Gender-based Violence (GBV), two edutainment activities for all staff were initiated to sensitize them on GBV prevalence and support in debunking common myths and misconceptions, building safe and brave spaces, and the importance of engaging men and boys for gender justice.
- WFP played a key role in organizing the UN walk for #16DaysOfActivism held on 30 November 2023 to advocate for ending violence against women and girls and investment for the prevention of GBV with the participation of the Partnerships Secretariat for WFP Corporation.

Communication and Advocacy

- A series of social media posts were published ([Instagram](#) | [Facebook](#)) highlighting the visit of Mr Won Suh Choo, Executive Director of the Korea Financial Industry Foundation (KFIF) to Sri Lanka. Mr Suh Choo observed how KFIF funding helps to strengthen the national school meal programme through WFP. He also [met with caterers](#) supported by WFP's Home Grown School Feeding (HGSF) to better understand how the funding helps caterers provide fresh and nutritious meals to students.
- A [social media](#) post was published to mark the launch of the new Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) project, "Climate and disaster ready", supported by USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (BHA). The post highlighted how this project will initiate a series of workshops with the Government, private sector, and civil society organizations, where they will assess current gaps in the existing systems.
- To mark the start of 16 days of activism against gender-based violence, WFP initiated a series of [social media posts](#) with messaging on this year's theme "no excuse".