



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES  
CHANGING LIVES

# WFP Sri Lanka

## Country Brief

February 2024



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## Operational Context

Sri Lanka is recovering from its worst economic crisis since independence. The food inflation rate reached an all-time high of 95 percent as the government defaulted on its foreign debts. This resulted in 6.2 million people becoming food insecure. The situation in 2024 has stabilized with the inflation rate January at 6.5 percent (NCPI). About 24 percent of households were estimated to be moderately acute food insecure in October 2023. However, significant concerns remain as households (43 percent) adopt livelihood-based coping strategies, while 42 percent still adopt food coping strategies.

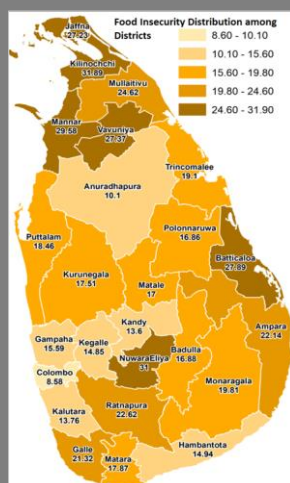
The country also faces significant threats from climate risks. Rising temperatures and extreme heat pose risks to human health and living standards and could potentially put downward pressure on agricultural yields. As the food security situation continues to show gradual improvement, WFP is implementing 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**

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

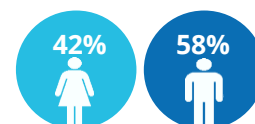


## In Numbers

**196.79 mt** of food distributed

**US\$2.14 million** six-month (March-August 2024) net funding requirements

**54,295 people** assisted in February 2024



## Operational Updates

- WFP assisted 10,726 flood-affected households in the district of Ampara with two-week rations (12 kgs of rice, 5 kgs of yellow split peas, and 1 litre of cooking oil). Selected households were from five of the worst affected divisional secretariat divisions of Ampara district.
- WFP launched the locally blended fortified rice product for the National School Meal Programme. Key government and private sector officials were present.
- WFP and the Ministry of Education developed the guidelines for the National School Meal Programme (NSMP). These guidelines cover the legal framework for the implementation of NSMP and the financial and physical monitoring system. It also entails guidance for nutrition, food safety and promotion of healthy habits.
- WFP, in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), assisted the Disaster Management Centre (DMC) Sri Lanka in organizing a Stakeholder Consultation Workshop to develop a Disaster Risk Management Guideline tailored for divisional authorities. Key content for the guidelines were identified and are currently being drafted.
- WFP held a dissemination session to share the findings of the operational research jointly conducted by WFP and Sri Lanka College of Paediatricians. The research focused on nutrition-related assessments, specifically on moderate acute malnutrition children in Nuwara Eliya. During the session, the participants discussed *Thripasha*<sup>1</sup> post-distribution monitoring, the cost of diet analysis, and WFP food security findings. Government officials, representatives from civil society organizations and academia were present at the session.

## Assessments and Monitoring

WFP conducted a Small Area Estimation (SAE) validation exercise to verify the results of a quantitative analysis with field assessment. The exercise was conducted

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

<sup>2</sup> The NCPI is issued monthly with a time lag of 21 days.

Country Strategic Plan (2023-2027)		
Total Requirement (in US\$)	Allocated Contributions (in US\$)	Six-Month Net Funding Requirements (in US\$)
104.87 m	54.77 m	2.14m

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.

across ten districts in Sri Lanka to obtain information such as household demographics, socio-economic conditions, and food security status.

- WFP recently published the January [Market Monitor](#), which provides an overview of the inflation situation, retail price changes of essential items, important policy changes and other key highlights. The market monitor observed an increase in retail prices of vegetables and fuel, compared to previous months. Prices of rice varieties and lentils remained unchanged while the prices of eggs saw a marginal decrease.

### Gender and Protection

- WFP is finalizing the the report on the disability inclusion user journeys relating to cash-based transfers with key findings and recommendations. Plans to disseminate the report are currently being discussed.

### Communication and Advocacy

- The Swiss Ambassador to Sri Lanka and the Maldives H.E Siri Walt joined WFP and Government officials in a visit to Matale district to meet recipients of the Swiss funded resilience building project. A video of Ambassador Walt was published ([Twitter](#) | [Facebook](#)) where she shares her firsthand experience on how the project has strengthened the resilience and diversified livelihoods of fishermen, dairy /livestock farmers, and smallholder farmers amongst others.
- As WFP commenced its flood relief response in the Ampara district, a social media post was published ( [Twitter](#) | [Facebook](#)) showcasing how WFP will be providing food assistance to over 10,000 flood-affected households.
- WFP Sri Lanka and Canada collaborated and published a video on social media ([Instagram](#) | [Twitter](#)) spotlighting Canada’s support for WFP’s ‘Home Grown School Feeding’ project in Sri Lanka, to commemorate Canada’s International Development Week.

### Monitoring

- According to the [Colombo Consumer Price Index](#) (CCPI), headline inflation (year-on-year) decelerated to 5.9 percent in February, compared to 6.4 percent in January. However, food inflation saw a marginal increase of 0.2 percentage points in February. According to the Central Bank of Sri Lanka, inflation is expected to remain above target levels in the near term.
- Overall headline inflation (year-on-year) increased from 4.2 percent to 6.5 percent in January 2024<sup>2</sup>, according to the [National Consumer Price Index](#).