



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES

WFP Sri Lanka

Country Brief

September 2024



A caterer from the home-grown school feeding project in Anuradhapura district. © WFP/ Asiaworks / Farzan Nijabdeen

Operational Context

Sri Lanka is recovering from its worst economic crisis since independence. The food inflation rate in 2022 reached an all-time high of 95 percent as the government defaulted on its foreign debts. The situation in 2024 has stabilized with the inflation rate at 6.5 percent (NCPI) in January. However, significant concerns remain as 4 in 10 households adopt livelihood-based and food-based coping strategies.

The country faces significant threats from climate risks. Rising temperatures and extreme heat pose risks to human health and negatively impact agricultural yields. WFP implements 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.



Population: **22 million**

Income Level: **Lower middle**

2023/2024 Human Development Index: **78 out of 193 countries**

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

Operational Updates

Anticipatory action

- The South Asia Dialogue Platform (SADP) was held on 10 and 11 September in Sri Lanka. The SADP saw participation from seven countries (Bhutan, Nepal, Bangladesh, Maldives, Afghanistan and Sri Lanka) and explored the challenges and opportunities in developing national frameworks for anticipatory action. WFP, as a key member of the Sri Lanka anticipatory action technical working group, played a key role in organizing the event.
- The Sri Lanka Dialogue Platform on anticipatory action, which followed the SADP, was held on 12 and 13 September. The event, themed “Meaningful partnerships for sustainable anticipatory action”, aimed to build a common understanding of anticipatory action among national actors and foster collaboration for institutionalization.

Support to the national school meal programme

- WFP supported and finalized the information management system for the national school meal programme. The information management system will support the Government with programme monitoring.

Home-grown school feeding

- WFP assisted home-grown school-feeding beneficiaries and caterers in Matale, Vavuniya and Batticaloa with inputs such as sprinklers and poultry feed. The poultry farmers also received their first batch of chicks in Batticaloa.

Capacity strengthening

- WFP assisted the Provincial Department of Animal Production and Health in Anuradhapura in planning and design of the breeder farm for poultry.

Community asset creation

- WFP reached 1,774 households with assistance (cash and food), as part of its food for assets (FFA) activities. FFA participants completed all planned projects. Participants worked on the rehabilitation of community water ponds, irrigation and drainage canal systems, for improved livelihoods and food security.

Country Strategic Plan (2023-2027)

Total Requirement (in US\$)	Allocated Contributions (in US\$)	Six-Month Net Funding Requirements (in US\$)
104.9 m	56.9 m	0

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

Research, assessments and monitoring

- The [market monitor](#) for August was published and highlighted key changes in inflation, commodity prices and policy environments. While headline inflation remained unchanged, Sri Lanka's economy grew by 4.7 percent in the second quarter of 2024, recovering from a 3 percent contraction in the second quarter of 2023, according to the Department of Census and Statistics.

Communication, Advocacy, and Partnerships

- A delegation from the Korea Financial Industry Foundation [visited](#) Sri Lanka to observe how their funding is empowering school meal caterers enrolled in WFP's home-grown school feeding project.
- A series of [workshops](#) on environmental and social safeguards was carried out in six districts by WFP and the Ministry of Environment, ahead of the implementation of the adaptation for resilience project.
- WFP received a [contribution](#) from Mastercard to continue its home-grown school feeding project which supports caterers who cook meals for children enrolled in the national school meal programme.

Donors

Australia, Canada, France, Japan, New Zealand, Norway, Italy, New Zealand, Republic of Korea, UN Trust Fund, the Russian Federation, Sri Lanka, Switzerland, UN CERF, the United States of America, and the private sector.