



World Food Programme

SAVING
LIVES
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LIVES

WFP Sri Lanka

Country Brief

August 2025



Sampath, a smallholder rice farmer from Monaragala
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Operational Context

Sri Lanka's economic situation is improving, through economic reforms and stabilization measures. Inflation is expected to continue its downward trend, although food security and livelihood challenges remain.

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 on 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

Rice Fortification

- WFP continued to advance national rice fortification initiatives through a series of technical engagements. Discussions held with the National Food Promotion Board (NFPB), reviewed project progress, rice procurement, and the operational status of the Kalankuttiya processing facility. WFP also engaged with NFPB to estimate fortified rice kernels requirements for the next production cycle.
- WFP participated in the Rice Fortification Technical Advisory Group (TAG) to review the impact study and future directions, and joined the Presidential Secretariat's Food Policy Committee to assess overall progress and strengthen coordination.

Home-Grown School Feeding

- WFP organized a learning and exchange visit for over 100 poultry farmers from all divisions of the Matale District, including beneficiaries from 2024 and 2025, to the Mahaberiya-henna National Livestock Development Board (NLDB) farm. The visit aimed to strengthen smallholder poultry production and improve livelihoods by promoting peer learning, sharing best practices, and enhancing farmers' technical knowledge and practical skills.
- WFP conducted advanced entrepreneurship and skills development trainings across seven districts, reaching over 1,100 beneficiaries. The trainings were held in the districts of Anuradhapura, Polonnaruwa, Monaragala, Matale, Kilinochchi, Vavuniya, and Batticaloa. These initiatives aim to empower women and smallholder farmers to expand their household incomes while fostering resilient, self-reliant communities.

Disaster Data Management

- WFP held a three-day workshop to enhance capacities in disaster data management in collaboration with the National Disaster Relief Services Centre (NDRSC). The workshop brought together 60 participants from NDRSC and the Department of Census and Statistics (DCS), from Galle, Matara and Hambantota districts. The training aimed to boost the institutional and technical capacity of NDRSC and DCS officers, enabling them to produce reliable, disaggregated disaster data to support evidence-based decision-making.

Anticipatory Action

- As part of WFP's Anticipatory Action pilot programme in Ampara, three rain and three rice gauges were installed across the Galoya river basin. These units are now integrated with the Rivernet System, authorized by the Department of Irrigation.¹

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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	58.67 m	1.04 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 sub-national levels

National School Meal Programme (NSMP)

- WFP facilitated the mission of an Associate Professor of Global Health from the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health to advance the Value for Money study of the National School Meals Programme. Aligned with Sri Lanka's commitments at the Global School Meals Coalition International Meeting (October 2023), the mission featured high-level consultations with the Ministries of Finance, Education, Health, Agriculture, and Rural Development, along with DCS and the Institute of Policy Studies. It also included field visits to schools to capture ground-level insights.

Disaster Management and Preparedness

- WFP, in collaboration with the Disaster Management Division of the Ministry of Defence, facilitated a workshop for officials from the NDRSC, Disaster Management Centre, Department of Meteorology and National Building Research Organization. Participants explored strategies to strengthen institutional awareness, improve technical readiness, and identify workable solutions for effective implementation of related policies.
- WFP, together with the Disaster Management Centre and the Ceylon Chamber of Commerce, [completed](#) the National Training of Trainers (ToT) on the Business Continuity Management System, following five district-level ToTs. The trainings aim to strengthen national capacity in business continuity planning and risk management, creating a pool of trainers to support organizational resilience.
- WFP submitted two research and policy papers to the National Council for Disaster Management, based on extensive consultations and literature review. The papers identify coordination gaps in the disaster management framework and provide evidence-based recommendations to strengthen national policy, institutional resilience, and community preparedness.

Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Business Network

- WFP led the SUN Business Network's first Workplace Nutrition and Wellbeing Programme, an initiative that also served as a successful membership drive. Conducted in collaboration with the Ministry of Health's Nutrition Division, the programme included expert sessions on Sri Lanka's Food-Based Dietary Guidelines followed by an interactive Q&A session, strengthening public-private collaboration to promote healthier workplaces.

Donors

Australia, Canada, France, Japan, 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.

¹ The Rivernet System in Sri Lanka is a website that displays the water levels of rivers across the island.

Food Assistance for Assets

- WFP is advancing work across project sites in Matale and Kilinochchi, focusing on improvements to irrigation and drainage canals as well as community reservoirs. In August, cash transfers reached 698 participating households in both districts, supporting community engagement and livelihoods.

Research, Assessments and Monitoring

- WFP, together with FAO and government stakeholders, and under the leadership of the President's Secretariat on Food Security and Policy Division, convened a one-day workshop on the national food security monitoring framework. The event allowed for WFP's food security indicators to be endorsed as part of the core set under the accessibility pillar. WFP and FAO will continue providing technical support to the Cabinet-approved committee tasked with developing the framework.
- The Food for Assets baseline study was concluded in the Kilinochchi and Matale districts. Data collection was conducted by government officers, covering 300 households across 13 project sites. The baseline study will be used at the end of the FFA implementation to measure the progress and impact of the activity.
- WFP and the Department of Project Management and Monitoring (DPMM), conducted a residential training for government officers, including high-level officials and respective ministry leads, to enhance the capacity on managing evaluations. DPMM serves as the Government's focal unit for implementing the recently launched National Evaluation Strategy and Policy. As part of the global WFP Evaluation Strategy, one of WFP's key commitments is to support National Evaluation Capacity Development (NECD), an area of strategic importance.
- WFP conducted District Food Security Network (DFSN) workshops in Vavuniya, Mannar, and Mullaitivu, engaging technical government counterparts to strengthen evidence on local food security and nutrition trends.

Gender and Protection

- During the DFSN session in Mullaitivu, WFP conducted a Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) session for government officials to reinforce safeguarding measures and promote accountability. The session also aimed to build participants' capacity to identify and respond to risks of sexual exploitation and abuse in their respective institutions.

Communications and Advocacy

- WFP Sri Lanka [welcomed](#) its new Representative and Country Director, who presented credentials to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Tourism and Foreign Employment. A [video](#) featuring WFP Sri Lanka's Country Director was shared on social media, reaffirming the organization's commitment to advancing food security and nutrition in Sri Lanka.



- WFP and government partners [joined](#) a three-day workshop at WFP HQ in Rome to share progress on rice fortification under the Gates Foundation-funded Global Food Crisis response. The workshop marked a powerful exchange with global partners driving innovation in food systems.