



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES

Evaluation of Sri Lanka WFP Country Strategic Plan 2023 - 2027

Summary Terms of Reference

Country Strategic Plan Evaluations (CSPEs) encompass the entirety of WFP activities during a specific period. Their purpose is twofold: 1) to provide evaluation evidence and learning on WFP's performance for country-level strategic decisions, specifically for developing the next Country Strategic Plan and 2) to provide accountability for results to WFP stakeholders.

Subject and focus of the evaluation

The WFP country strategic plan (CSP) for Sri Lanka (2023 – 2027), aims to enhance food and nutrition security, improve food systems and support disaster risk reduction and emergency preparedness and response through four strategic outcomes (SO).

The CSP was approved with an original budget of USD 74.9 million which was increased to 104.9 million through a budget revision in September 2023. Through the CSP, WFP planned to provide direct assistance to approximately 2.61 million beneficiaries, which increased to 3.45 million following the budget revision.

The majority of the CSP budget is dedicated providing direct assistance for crisis response (SO1), followed by SO3 and SO4, which focus on resilience to climate change and providing assistance to the government, and SO2, which focuses on school meals, home-grown school feeding, and social and behavior change communication.

The evaluation will focus on assessing progress towards the CSP expected outcomes and cross-cutting results, including any unintended consequences, positive or negative. In so doing, the evaluation will also analyse WFP's approaches to partnerships, including WFP's strategic positioning in relation with national government and the international community. It will also focus on adherence to humanitarian principles, gender equality, protection and accountability to affected populations.

The evaluation will adopt standard UNEG and OECD/DAC evaluation criteria, namely: relevance, coherence, efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability as well as connectedness, and coverage.

Evaluation objectives

WFP evaluations serve the dual objectives of accountability and learning.

The evaluation will seek the views of, and be useful to, a range of WFP's internal and external stakeholders and presents an opportunity for national, regional and corporate learning. The primary user of the evaluation findings and recommendations will be the WFP Sri Lanka Country Office and its stakeholders to inform the design of the new Country Strategic Plan.

The evaluation report will be presented at the Executive Board session in November 2027.

Key evaluation questions

The evaluation will address the following four key questions:

QUESTION 1: To what extent was the CSP strategically positioned to address food and nutrition insecurity in Sri Lanka, and how well did it adapt over time? The evaluation will assess if WFP was appropriately positioned within Sri Lanka's wider normative and strategic frameworks and priorities as a lower middle-income country; it will examine the extent to which the CSP was designed and implemented leveraging WFP specific comparative advantages in Sri Lanka, and was based on realistic assumptions, including funding. It will further assess the extent to which the CSP targeted those most vulnerable to food insecurity and malnutrition and how well it adapted to evolving needs.

QUESTION 2: What contributions did the CSP make to food security and nutrition in Sri Lanka, taking account of the context? The evaluation will assess the extent to which WFP contributed to the expected outcomes of the CSP and whether there were any missed opportunities, or positive or negative unintended outcomes. It will also assess WFP's role in advocacy and innovation, progress in capacity strengthening, and the effectiveness of transition and handover strategies, particularly for shock-responsive social protection and institutionalization of home-grown school feeding.

QUESTION 3: To what extent did the CSP achieve its cross-cutting aims and how has this impacted programme quality? The evaluation will assess the achievement of cross-cutting aims (protection, accountability to affected populations, gender, equity and

inclusion, environment, nutrition and other considerations). It will also assess the adherence to humanitarian principles.

QUESTION 4: To what extent has WFP used its resources efficiently? The evaluation will assess to what extent and why outputs and related budgets were delivered within the intended timeframe; the cost-efficiency of assistance, and how WFP prioritized interventions following the 2023 emergency response given limited resources. The evaluation will explore whether resource allocation decisions optimized coverage and programme quality.

QUESTION 5: What are the critical factors internal and external to WFP, explaining performance and results?

The evaluation will assess the extent to which WFP worked with the Government of Sri Lanka and other actors to establish and leverage partnerships, and how these partnerships influenced outcomes; ensuring appropriate institutional arrangements in place, including staffing, monitoring and reporting systems that are useful to track and demonstrate progress and inform management decisions; and how these factors affect results. Finally, the evaluation will seek to identify any other organizational and contextual factors influencing WFP performance.

Scope, methodology and ethical considerations

The unit of analysis is the Sri Lanka Country Strategic Plan (2023 – 2027), approved by the WFP Executive Board in November 2022, as well as any subsequent approved budget revisions.

The evaluation covers all WFP activities (including cross-cutting results) since the cut-off date of the data collection of the previous CSPE, November 2021: while the evaluation will focus primarily on the current Country Strategic Plan (2023 - 2027), it will also consider the tail-end of the previous CSP to better assess the extent to which the strategic shifts envisaged through the CSP have taken place.

The evaluation will adopt a mixed methods approach using a variety of primary and secondary sources, including desk review, key informant interviews, surveys, and focus groups discussions. Systematic triangulation across different sources and methods will be carried out to validate findings and avoid bias in the evaluative judgement.

The evaluation conforms to WFP and 2020 UNEG ethical guidelines. This includes, but is not limited to, ensuring informed consent, protecting privacy, confidentiality and anonymity of participants, ensuring cultural sensitivity, respecting the autonomy of participants, ensuring fair recruitment of participants (including women and socially excluded groups) and ensuring that the evaluation results in no harm to participants or their communities.

Roles and responsibilities

EVALUATION TEAM: The evaluation will be conducted by a team of independent consultants with a mix of relevant expertise related to the Sri Lanka CSPE (i.e. food security, Institutional capacity strengthening, emergency preparedness and response; school meals and nutrition; livelihoods and resilience to climate change; social protection).

OEV EVALUATION MANAGER: The evaluation will be managed by Arianna Spacca, Evaluation Officer in the WFP Office of Evaluation. She will be the main interlocutor between the evaluation team, represented by the team leader, and WFP counterparts, to ensure a smooth implementation process and compliance with OEV quality standards for process and content. Alessandro Cassinadri, Research Analyst, will provide research and data analysis support. Second level quality assurance will be provided by Judith Friedman, Senior Evaluation Officer.

An **Internal Reference Group** of a cross-section of WFP stakeholders from relevant business areas in the Country Office will be consulted throughout the evaluation process to review and provide feedback on evaluation products.

The Deputy Director of Evaluation will approve the final versions of all evaluation products.

STAKEHOLDERS: WFP stakeholders at country, regional and GHQ level are expected to engage throughout the evaluation process to ensure a high degree of utility and transparency. External stakeholders, such as beneficiaries, government, donors, implementing partners and other UN agencies will be consulted during the evaluation process.

Communication

Preliminary findings will be shared with WFP stakeholders in the Country Office, the Regional Office and Global Headquarters during a debriefing session at the end of the data collection phase. A more in-depth debrief will be organized in June to inform the new CSP design process. A country stakeholder workshop will be held in September 2026 to ensure a transparent evaluation process and promote ownership of the findings and preliminary recommendations by country stakeholders.

Evaluation findings will be actively disseminated and the final evaluation report will be publicly available on WFP's website.

Timing and key milestones

Inception Phase: mid-January – March 2026

Data collection: End of April – mid-May 2026

Remote Debriefing: June 2026

Reports: End of May - November 2026

Stakeholder Workshop: September 2026

Executive Board: November 2027