



# WFP Sri Lanka Country Brief

## Highlights

- WFP’s Executive Director and the Prime Minister of Sri Lanka met at the World Economic Forum (Davos), with their discussion focused on this year’s foreseen severe drought in Sri Lanka.
- Sri Lanka is preparing for serious difficulties this year in terms of food and nutrition insecurity until the main harvest in March/April 2018. The expected failure of the main harvest (*Maha*) season in March/April 2017 could be the worst main agricultural season in the last 40 years.
- The National Strategic Review for Food Security and Nutrition towards Zero Hunger will be launched on 13 February by the President.

## WFP Assistance

Country Programme Sri Lanka	Total Requirements (in USD)	Total Received (in USD)	6 Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)*
200866 (Jan 2016-Dec 2017)	20.9 m	15.8 m (76%)	-

\*February – July 2017

GENDER MARKER CP 200866

The objective of the Country Programme (CP) is to transition towards providing a more holistic support to the government’s efforts to address hunger and malnutrition and build resilience to climate-related shocks. The CP is implemented in partnership with government ministries, United Nations agencies, Non-Governmental Organizations and the private sector.

The CP aligns with the Government’s commitment to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 2 ‘Zero Hunger’ and the UN Development Assistance Framework cycle 2013-2017.

The goals of the CP are to:

- Reduce undernutrition among children under 5 and pregnant and nursing women;
- Increase food intake and school attendance among primary schoolchildren in food insecure areas;
- Enhance vulnerable households’ resilience to shocks and facilitate adaptation to climate change; and
- Increase government capacity to address food and nutrition insecurity.

Through the **School Meals Programme**, WFP provides nutritious mid-morning meals to 160,000 school children in the Northern Province, contributing to increased attendance and retention rates and improved learning performance.

WFP **supports resilience building** against climate shocks through adaptation measures to improve food and nutrition security for the shock-affected communities.

WFP also focuses on the **treatment of moderate acute malnutrition** through targeted supplementary feeding for children aged 6-59 months using Super Cereal Plus, a nutritious corn soya blend.

### Other projects:

**Scaling-Up Nutrition through a Multi Sector Approach:** WFP and FAO support the Government in implementing its Multi-Sectoral Action Plan on Nutrition. The action plan includes nutrition baseline surveys, promoting food fortification including a rice pilot and policy formulation. The joint programme is funded by the Spanish Cooperation through the Sustainable Development Goal Fund (SDG-F).

WFP provides technical support to the Ministry of Health and Indigenous Medicine to **enhance the impact of Thripocha**, a nutritious, locally fortified blended food (completion, production, supply chain)

**Scaling-Up Nutrition (SUN) – People’s Forum:** WFP supports the Government’s advocacy effort to promote nutrition for the first 1000 days of a child through the partnership with Save the Children and Civil Societies.

Through the **Climate Change Adaptation Project**, WFP is assisting 14,000 farming families in the *Mahaweli* River Basin, targeting 72 small tanks rehabilitation in 2017

**The Climate Adaptation Management and Innovation Initiative (C-ADAPT)** aims to enhance food security among vulnerable subsistence lagoon fishermen and women’s groups through improved livelihoods in the least resilient communities.

Main Photo Credit: Prime Minister’s Office, Sri Lanka. Caption: The Prime Minister and WFP Executive Director meet at the World Economic Forum (Davos).



## Operational Updates

### Severe drought in Sri Lanka:

- The WFP Sri Lanka Country Director and Resident Coordinator met the President and other officials at a Presidential Special Drought Task Force meeting.
- The Ministry of Disaster Management (MoDM) and the External Resources Department of the Ministry of National Policies and Economic Affairs have requested drought-related support from WFP, in particular Cash for Work/Food Assistance for Asset Creation. WFP is deciding on response options while awaiting the Government's formal request for assistance to the international community.
- Based on a request by the MoDM, WFP technical experts led a preliminary drought rapid assessment using WFP modelling. The report was submitted to a sub-Cabinet Ministers meeting on the drought held on 3 January and was pivotal in alerting government and other stakeholders to the severity of the drought.
- In February, WFP and the Government will lead a joint emergency assessment to assess the impact of the drought on household food security and livelihoods.

### National Strategic Review of Food Security and Nutrition towards Zero Hunger (SR):

- The report will be launched on 13 February by the President, along with the presence of the Lead Convenor, former President Madame Bandaranaike, and the WFP Executive Director. Three hundred high-level officials are expected to attend.
- In mid-January, the Lead Convener presented the SR recommendations to a High Level Committee meeting including 8 Ministers and the WFP Regional Director.

### Challenges

- Parts of the country received heavy rains in late January, causing floods in some areas. This will temporarily alleviate water shortages for human and animal use in some areas, but the damage done to the Maha crop is irreversible and there is continued concern for the subsequent Yala season due to the still very low water levels in reservoirs (73 major reservoirs stand at only 28% of their capacity). Based on historical trends, the combined production of staple crops foreseen from the two 2017 harvests is expected to result in the worst rice production levels in the last 10 years.

## Country Background & Strategy



Sri Lanka graduated to lower middle-income country status in 2010 due to the adoption of effective development policies. Notwithstanding, the country continues to struggle with the effects of a 27-year civil conflict that resulted in significant economic and social damage. Improvements in human development, and the nutritional status of children, women and adolescents have remained stagnant.

The increased frequency of natural disasters such as drought and flash floods further compounds food and nutrition insecurity. 4.7 million (23 percent of the population) people are undernourished according to [the State of Food Insecurity in the World, 2015](#), and underweight and anaemia affects a quarter of children and women. As per WFP's most recent [Cost of Diet Analysis](#), 6.8 million people (33 percent) of the population cannot afford the minimum cost of a nutritious diet.

WFP is aligned with the Government's commitment to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture.

WFP has been present in Sri Lanka since 1968.

Population: **20.9 million**

2015 Human Development Index:  
**73 out of 188**

Income Level: **Lower middle income**

Malnutrition (stunting): **13.1%**  
Acute Malnutrition (wasting): **19.6%**

## Donors

Canada, Sri Lanka, Korean International Cooperation Agency (KOICA), Spanish Cooperation, Japan Association for WFP, Alwaleed bin Talal Foundation- Global