



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES



WFP Sri Lanka Country Brief November 2020

In Numbers

45 percent of women of reproductive age group are overweight or obese; **33 percent** of pregnant and lactating women are anaemic (Demographic and Health Survey, Sri Lanka, 2016).

US\$ 27,043 paid as cash-based transfers in November

497 participants (**1,988** beneficiaries) assisted in resilience projects for November.

US\$ 0.33 million - six months net funding requirement (December 2020 – May 2021)

**WFP
SAYS
NO to
GENDER
BASED
VIOLENCE**

Operational Context

Sri Lanka has shown steady growth over the last decades with progress on SDGs, reflecting the country's elevation to middle-income status. Presidential elections were held in November 2019 followed by parliamentary polls in August 2020, where the incumbent Government won a majority. Despite the progress, the country faces many socio-economic challenges, including a nutritional 'triple burden' comprising of undernutrition, overnutrition and micronutrient deficiencies.

Sri Lanka is ranked 6th on the Climate Risk Index reflecting the extent and impact of hydro-meteorological hazards brought about by climate change.

Moreover, the outbreak of Covid-19 in March this year, with serious effects on the economy and livelihoods of vulnerable people, will hinder progress towards the country's socio-economic status, as is the case globally, in reaching zero hunger by 2030 in all its forms.

WFP has been present in Sri Lanka since 1968, working in partnership with the Government for the past 50 years to save lives in times of crises, and improve livelihoods for the future.



Population: **21 million**

2019 Human Development Index: **71 out of 189**

Income Level: **Lower middle**

Chronic malnutrition: **15% of children between 6-59 months**

Situation Updates

- COVID-19 infections continued to increase in the country throughout November, putting more districts at risk. By the end of November, 23,484 people had tested positive, 17,560 of these had recovered, and 116 people had died from the virus. The Government continued with their targeted approach, enforcing strict movement restrictions in highly affected communities, treating patients in the local hospitals and tracing contacts.
- The Government only reopened schools for secondary classes in most districts, however, opening of schools in the western province has been further postponed due to the increased spread of COVID-19.

Nobel Peace Prize for WFP

- On the receipt of the [Nobel Peace Prize](#), WFP's country office in Sri Lanka joined the global visibility campaign at the national level, publishing a [special cover story](#) of WFP's Executive Director on prominent local business magazines, and [interviews](#) with the director of WFP Sri Lanka country office. This was followed by interviews given on popular mainstream media outlets.
- Through these engagements, WFP emphasised its important contribution to ensuring household food security through community engagement in agriculture and sustainable livelihoods – and the role this can play in enhancing community peace and harmony.

Operational Updates

- Through WFP's project on promoting maize and managing of post-harvest losses (with South-South Technical Cooperation facilitated by WFP's Centre of Excellence in Beijing) farmers have benefitted from collaboration with private sector agricultural agencies; they have gained an assured price above the market value for their maize harvest. Rice farmers have more efficiently managed water resources for mid-season cultivation of maize and mung bean, and have therefore obtained additional income from higher prices. This project received technical support from China and the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO).

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Country Strategic Plan (2018-2022)

Total Requirement (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)	Six Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
46.57 m	27.19 m	0.33 m

Strategic Result 1: End hunger by protecting access to food

Strategic Outcome #1: Crisis-affected people have access to food all year round.

Focus area: Crisis Response to ensure humanitarian assistance

Activities:

- Provide food assistance to crisis-affected people

Strategic Result 2: Habitant venenatis placerat

Strategic Outcome #2: School-age children in food-insecure areas have access to food all year round.

Focus area: Root causes of food insecurity and malnutrition among school-age children

Activities:

- Provide nutrition-sensitive food assistance, in partnership with the government, to school-age children.
- Provide technical and policy support for the delivery of nutrition-sensitive school meals programmes to the government.

Strategic Result 2: No one suffers from malnutrition

Strategic Outcome #3: Children under 5, adolescent girls and women of reproductive age have improved nutrition by 2025

Focus area: Immediate and underlying causes of malnutrition.

Activities:

- Provide evidence-based advice, advocacy, and technical assistance to the government and implementing partners.
- Provide technical assistance and advocate the scaling up of the fortification of staple food and specialized nutritious foods to the government and other stakeholders, including the private sector.

Strategic Result 4: Food systems are sustainable

Strategic Outcome #4: Vulnerable communities and smallholder farmers have strengthened livelihoods and resilience in the face of shocks and stresses all year round.

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:

- Support nutrition-sensitive and gender-transformative livelihood diversification and income generation through integrated resilience-building activities.
- Provide technical assistance for emergency preparedness and response operations to the government.
- Provide technical assistance to the government and related agencies in the building of improved, unified, shock-responsive safety-net systems.

- WFP together with the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the (FAO), supported by the Government and the United Nations Resident Coordinator's Office, spearheaded a first virtual dialogue to engage key stakeholders including donors, on agricultural value chains and their linkages to improve food systems in the country.
- The discussions on agricultural value chains are expected to serve as a platform for knowledge-sharing, to discuss how

inclusive models for climate, and responses to COVID-19 can ensure resilience of smallholder agribusiness, empower youth and women sustainably, and provide adequate tools for food security. The dialogue is part of a series of events leading up to the [Food Systems Summit in 2021](#).

- On the campaign on 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence, WFP collaborated with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to raise awareness on the theme: "When Home is not safe anymore". Webinars with short films and discussions focussed on why it matters to create awareness of a home environment free from violence. The theme was timely, as the number of reported violent incidents against women has increased four-fold during the COVID-19 lockdown period, as per government records.
- During the discussions, WFP emphasized the importance of understanding food security and hunger within the household and the linkages with domestic violence.

Monitoring

- To adequately capture information on the outcomes generated from the "R5n" resilience project, WFP conducted training sessions for enumerators. The survey will be carried out using computer assisted telephone interviews (CATI), enabling WFP to collect data remotely amidst ongoing COVID-19 prevention measures.

Challenges

- Primary schools continue to be closed island-wide due to the spread of COVID-19. The national school meals programme remains temporarily suspended, however, WFP continued to provide technical support to establish the home-grown school feeding model, putting in place school infrastructure such as kitchens and water facilities, in preparation for the programme's launch, with training sessions to school staff to commence as soon as the primary schools reopen.

Donors

Korean International Cooperation Agency (KOICA), Government of Japan, UN Peace-building Fund, The Earth Group, Italian Comitato, Government of Australia, Office of the US Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA), Government of Denmark, Japan Association for WFP, FEED, DSM N, Johns Hopkins University-USA.