



World Food Programme

WFP Sri Lanka Country Brief

November 2018

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES



Operational Context

Sri Lanka is a lower middle-income country that continues to struggle with the effects of a 27-year civil conflict that resulted in significant economic and social damage. Improvements in human development, nutritional status of children, women and adolescents remain stagnant.

The Demographic and Health Survey (2016) informs that poor nutrition is prevalent throughout the life cycle, starting with 15 percent of infants born with low birth weight. This is among the worst rates globally. Climate shocks contribute to increased frequency of natural disasters (droughts and floods) that compound food and nutrition security.

WFP has been present in Sri Lanka since 1968.



Population: **21 million**

2017 Human Development Index: **76 out of 189**

Income Level: **Lower middle**

Acute malnutrition (wasting): **15% of children between 6-59 months**

In Numbers

15 percent of children under age 5 have moderately acute malnourishment, rates of which have remained stagnant over the last 10 years.

Sri Lanka ranks **4th of 184 countries** prone to climate shocks (Global Climate Index).

US\$ 1.05 m six months in net funding requirements (Dec 2018 – May 2019).

Operational Updates

- On the occasion of the 16 Days of Activism against Gender Based Violence, WFP and UNFPA embarked on a new joint project to improve women’s nutrition and promote gender equality and women’s empowerment by providing critical information and services on sexual and reproductive health, nutrition and food security over the next year. The project is made possible thanks to the generous contribution (USD 458,000) by the Government of Denmark.

The project will assist communities in six districts that focus on the development of women entrepreneurs through initiatives to enhance their skills and boost their incomes. In addition, the project will aim to improve access to sexual and reproductive health services which would enable the prevention of human rights violations such as gender-based violence. [Link to press release](#)

- WFP supported the National Food Promotion Board with meetings and workshops in November to raise awareness about fortified rice (iron and folic acid) linked to the national school meals programme, thus boosting nutrition amongst school children. This was a pre-awareness measure as the project starts broader fortified rice distribution in January 2019.
- WFP continued to support the National Disaster Relief Services Centre to develop scenario based contingency plans in 12 out of the 25 districts in Sri Lanka exposed to Northeast monsoonal floods. WFP also provided technical assistance to the Disaster Management Centre on the emergency preparedness plan to combat the effects of the Northeast monsoon.

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WFP Country Strategy

Country Strategic Plan (2018-2022)		
Total Requirement (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)	Dec - May Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
46.6 m	11.04 m	1.05 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: No one suffers from malnutrition

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 3: Smallholders have improved food security and nutrition

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

Strategic Result 4: Smallholders have improved food security and nutrition

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 government and related agencies in the building of improved, unified, shock-responsive safety-net systems.

- An Emergency Shock Responsive Safety Net Unit was established in the Samurdhi Department (Sri Lanka's national safety net system for those living below the poverty line), under the Ministry of Social Empowerment, Welfare and Kandyan Heritage. The unit will mainly support the Department of Samurdhi to improve their current social protection schemes on shock responsive preparedness and response measures.
- A national level initiative is underway to incorporate Sustainable Development Goals Food Security Indicators. The baseline food security indicators has been adopted and integrated by the Department of Census and Statistics. The department has been provided with technical capacity with training for trainers (ToT) workshops to use the indicator and collect relevant information.
- The severe cyclonic storm GAJA over the Southwest Bay of Bengal moved towards West Southwestwards and Pondicherry coast of South India on 16th November. This was approximately 75 km away from the Northern (Kankesanthurai) and North Western Sri Lanka. The Governor's office advised to close all schools in the Northern province on 16th November due to adverse weather conditions. The Divisional Secretariat divisions Tellipalai and Chavakachcheri were mostly affected.

The Northern province received heavy rainfall throughout the month. The Western, Central, Sabragamuwa and North Western provinces also received over 75mm of rain fall. By the end of November, the water level of major reservoirs in the country reached 66% of storage capacity which was only 32% in November 2017. As a result, it is expected that 2018/19 Maha season will have sufficient water throughout the cultivation. The potential effects of El Nino are being closely monitored.