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Sri Lanka

Urgent call for assistance



to assist
1.7 million people



FAO requires
USD 14.9 million



period
June–October 2022

Context

Sri Lanka is witnessing an unprecedented financial and economic crisis, and the situation is exacerbated by political and social turmoil. The multidimensional crisis is rapidly reversing hard-won agricultural development gains, disrupting livelihoods and threatening the food security of the most vulnerable households. Agricultural production is in a downward trend since mid-2021 due to the unavailability of fertilizers in local markets. In the context of a worsening economic crisis, farmers' purchasing power is decreasing with reduced incomes for 73 percent of households, while the prices of vital productive inputs are soaring. Consequently, farmers are cultivating less lands and the supply of food in local markets is shrinking. As a result, 70 percent of households have reduced their food consumption and 86 percent were forced to adopt at least one negative coping mechanism.

Protecting the livelihoods of smallholder farmers to enable them to feed themselves and their communities is a frontline humanitarian response. The *Maha* 2022/23 planting season is already underway and the window of opportunity to support Sri Lankan farmers and their communities is narrowly time-bound.

Objectives

- To enable agriculture-dependent communities to immediately access time-critical production inputs and restore their livelihoods.
- To sustainably improve the food security of the most vulnerable communities by increasing the supply of affordable and nutritious food in local markets.

Providing smallholder farmers with time-critical production inputs will enable them to supply local markets with nutritious food and improve the food security of their communities.



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Planned response

- Complement national efforts to assess the impacts of the crisis on the agriculture sector and guide relevant interventions.
- Provide smallholder farmers with immediate access to fertilizers and seeds, among other essential agricultural production inputs, to restore production of key crops (e.g. rice and maize).
- Support smallholder farmers and local actors in producing high-quality seeds to protect the national supply of seeds.
- Promote urban agricultural practices by training and providing targeted households with urban gardening kits.
- Provide supplementary nutrition and backyard vegetable production kits to the most vulnerable households, especially those with malnourished children.
- Train farmers on good agricultural practices.
- Provide small-scale farmers and fishers with unconditional cash transfers.
- Support sea cucumber aquaculture and processing activities as well as the restocking and management of depleted aquatic resources.
- Support livestock keeping households and dairy producers by introducing high-quality forage varieties and improving nutrition management practices.

Participating organizations

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) is working closely with the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Development and the Ministry of Livestock and Rural Community Development, among other relevant national partners (e.g. municipalities and local authorities). Moreover, FAO will continue to work closely with Humanitarian Country Team members and civil society partners across Sri Lanka.

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Situation analysis



4.9 million people
(22% of the population)
require food security and
livelihoods assistance



8 million people
(40% of the population) depend
on agriculture or livestock
keeping for their livelihoods



50% drop in agricultural
production following the
2021/22 *Maha* season and
a projected 50–60% drop
following the 2022 *Yala* season



73% increase in food
prices (2020–2022)

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