



World Food Programme

School Meals Programme

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Country Overview

The Northern and Eastern provinces of Sri Lanka have been affected by decades of long civil war and are prone to climate shocks such as tsunami, drought and floods. Around 1.1 million people in these provinces are food-insecure (i.e. they form 50% of the Sri Lanka food-insecure population).

According to the National Nutrition and Micronutrient Survey, different districts in the Northern Province showed that Global Acute Malnutrition levels are above 25% which is far above the critical level of WHO's threshold.

The need for School Meals

School meals play an important role in the lives of children and their families in the five districts of the Northern Province where primary education has been affected by the three decades of conflict, tsunami and climate shocks. Children from poor households often trek long distances to school and arrive there feeling hungry and weak. Poverty prevents many parents from providing adequate nutritious food for their children. In such cases school meals:

- ⇒ motivate parents to send their children to school
- ⇒ provide children with a daily nutritious meal

- ⇒ keep children's attention focused on their studies
- ⇒ help increase school enrolment, attendance and retention.

WFP School Meals Programme

- WFP began its School Meals Programme in Sri Lanka in July 2003 with only four districts as a pilot in the conflict affected Northern and Eastern Provinces of the country. In 2005, after the tsunami, the school meals programme was expanded from 4 districts to 6 provinces, covering 15 out of the 25 districts of the country, feeding approximately 400,000 students.
- Building on previous successes, the collaboration between WFP and the government provides daily nutritious meals to over 160,000 students in 958 schools in the five districts of the Northern Province.



School Meals Programme



- WFP provides a food basket consisting of 75 grams of rice, 35 grams of pulses, 15 grams of oil and 30 grams of canned fish. Pulses and canned fish are provided on rotational basis for a child per day. The Ministry of Education provides funding to purchase vegetables from farmers.
- WFP plans to introduce the cash/voucher modality into some of the schools based on the availability of stable marketing systems. While minimizing the cost of transportation, the introduction of the voucher system will boost the local economy through food purchases. WFP promotes the local purchase of food so as to improve small farmers' access to markets and that also supports the increase of food production in the country.
- Coordination with other partners to facilitate the provision of an integrated package including de-worming, micronutrient supplementation and water and sanitation programmes, so as to re-establish a healthy school environment, is an important element of which partnership has been achieved with other stakeholders.
- Targeted schools are assisted with the construction of school kitchens and stoves, and provision of kitchen utensils.
- WFP encourages Government and community participation in securing resources and meal preparations with the intention of gradual handover of the programme to the Government and the community in the coming years, once their capacity is built to take over such interventions. In order to ensure proper implementation of the project, WFP and Government entities have developed a monitoring and evaluation system to measure the outcomes and ensure that its goals are achieved.
- There has been a stark improvement in school attendance as a result of this programme. It has also contributed to students who are healthy and active in class.

Partner Organizations:

WFP works with the Ministry of Finance and Planning and the Ministry of Education in the implementation of the School Meals Programme .

QUICK FACTS

Beneficiaries: 160,000 students in grade 1-9

Number of Schools : 958 public schools

Tonnage: 8,200 Mt (for 2 years)

Food Basket: rice, pulses, oil and canned fish