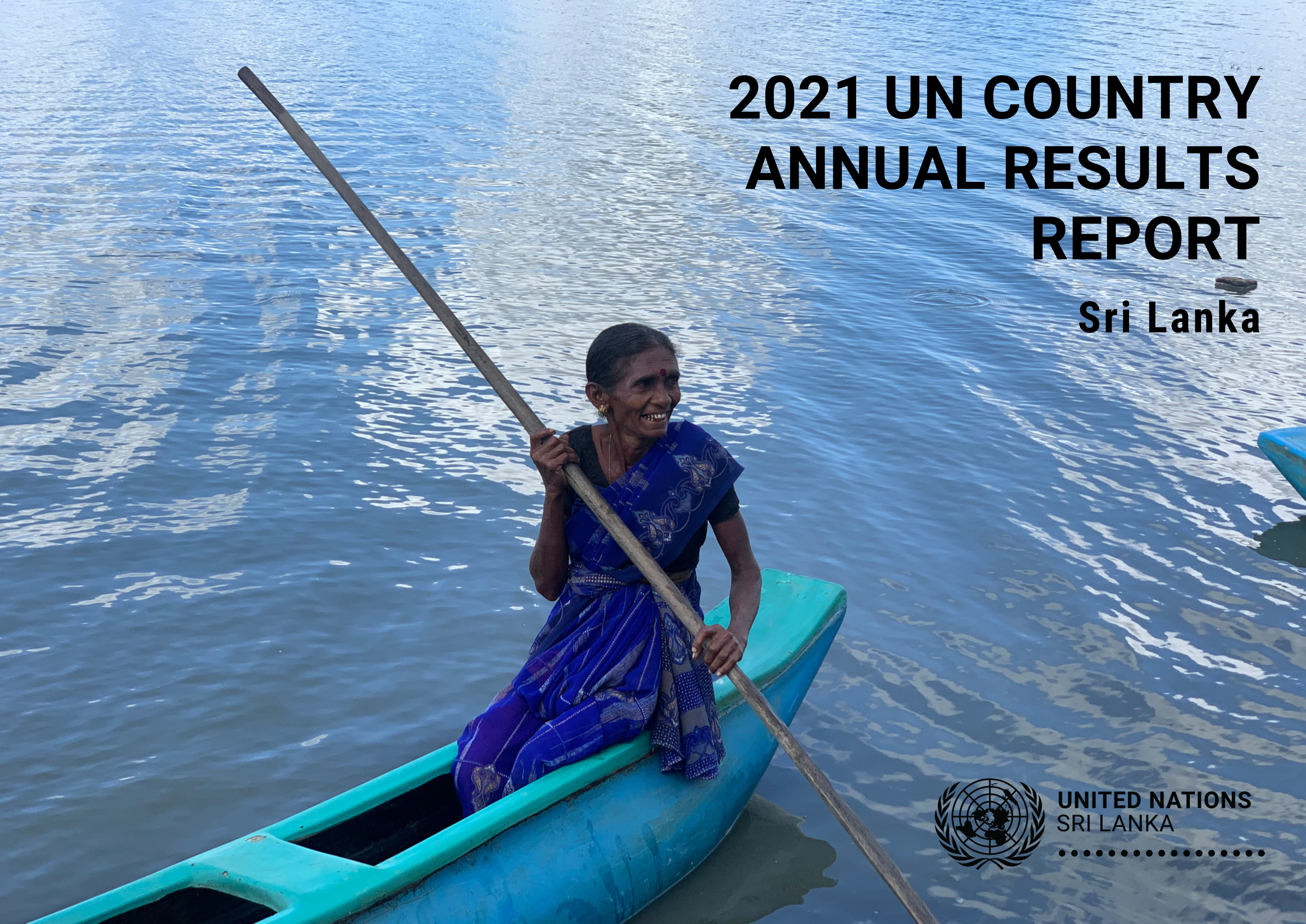


# 2021 UN COUNTRY ANNUAL RESULTS REPORT

Sri Lanka



UNITED NATIONS  
SRI LANKA



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# Foreword by the Resident Coordinator

On behalf of the United Nations in Sri Lanka, it is my pleasure to share with you this Annual Report covering 2021. It contains the combined achievements and results of all the UN Agencies, Funds and Programmes in the country. **This new Annual Report format is one of several accountability tools for our partners and stakeholders**—in line with commitments made as part of the UN Development System's ongoing reforms aimed at establishing more coherent and impactful UN country teams that are well placed to support national peace and development priorities.



There is no denying that 2021 was a challenging year for many in Sri Lanka. In terms of the COVID-19 pandemic, **2021 had the most impact of caseloads and deaths and the early effects of the economic crisis were already being felt.** Our hearts go out to those who lost loved ones, and the many whose livelihoods were disrupted.

On the other hand, **Sri Lanka has delivered one of the fastest and most comprehensive vaccination campaigns in the region.** The UN—led by UNICEF and WHO within the GAVI alliance and jointly with international financial institutions such as the Asian Development Bank and The World Bank—played a key role in supporting Sri Lanka's national vaccine rollout. Other UN entities supported livelihoods, businesses, schools, and other key socioeconomic sectors which were impacted all over the country.

**The increasing frequency of extreme weather events such as droughts, floods, landslides and cyclones are ranking Sri Lanka amongst the top 10 countries on the Global Climate Risk Index (2018-2020).** Climate change is posing an ever-increasing threat to people's livelihood and safety. The livelihoods of many Sri Lankans are connected to sectors that are highly vulnerable to environmental factors and COVID-19 has aggravated the challenges, thus compounding the climate risks on our communities. The UN has worked to enhance the country's resilience to climate change and disasters, and to reduce institutional, community and household vulnerabilities and improve capacities to better prepare for and adapt to climate change and natural hazards.

Furthermore, the MV X-press pearl maritime disaster in 2021 had a significant impact on Sri Lanka's sensitive coastal environment, local communities and the economy. **UN Sri Lanka collaborated closely with the government to address the aftermath of the MV X-Press Pearl, particularly the impact of plastic pollution to preserve the healthy marine ecosystems in Sri Lankan waters.** A rapid deployment of environmental expertise was facilitated through the UNEP/OCHA Joint Environment Unit to provide technical advisory support to the Government of Sri Lanka in assessing the environmental impacts of the incident. Robust law enforcement and effective prevention mechanisms are coming into focus, both national and international, which will hold the perpetrators to account and prevent environmental disasters in the future.

**Many challenges also remain in sustaining peace, strengthening social cohesion and protecting human rights.** Through our Joint Programme for Peace, our focus on SDG 16 and other programmes we have supported resettlement, dealing with the past and advancing of social cohesion. This included support to institutions, communities and the most vulnerable, ranging from the Office for Reparations to legal aid services to SGBV clients and prisons reform.

It is clear that the year ahead will hold even greater challenges. With COVID-19 exacerbating existing economic fragilities, Sri Lanka finds itself in a precarious situation that particularly impacts the most vulnerable and threatens not only progress but even regressing on gains made in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. As we look ahead and work with our partners and stakeholders, we must continue to be guided by the promises we made as part of the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals: **to focus on the most vulnerable to leave no one behind, and to prioritise solutions that are sustainable, inclusive, and anchored in human rights for all.**

**Hanna Singer-Hamdy**  
UN Resident Coordinator, Sri Lanka

# UN in Sri Lanka Annual Results 2021 Highlights



## Established a home-based care system for COVID-19 patients

The Ministry of Health and the medical association, with UN support established a centrally managed home-based care system for patients with less severe COVID-19. This served over 165,000 people at the peak of the third wave of the virus, contributing significantly to reducing burdens on the health system.



## Accelerated the national COVID-19 vaccination programme

The UN helped accelerate the national COVID-19 vaccination programme targeting priority groups, while also facilitating the delivery of some five million COVAX vaccines and supplying two million syringes for mass immunization.



## Messaging on COVID-19 prevention, stigma, and discrimination

The UN partnered with Sarvodaya to disseminate information and engage communities during the pandemic, training grassroots groups and community and religious leaders to address stigma and discrimination.



## Supported updates to Sri Lanka's climate change commitments

The UN provided technical assistance on the revision of the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), including overall coordination and policy analysis in sectors such as domestic water supply and drinking water.



## Ensured continued learning, despite school closures

During school closures, the UN worked with education authorities to ensure learning continuity and recovery for primary grades, benefitting over 835,000 children across Sri Lanka. Half were girls, including those from the most disadvantaged communities.



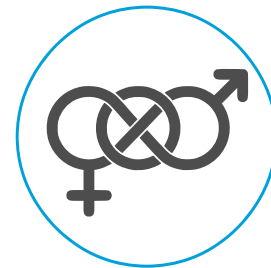
## Empowered young social entrepreneurs with online learning

The HackaDev social innovation initiative for young entrepreneurs went online with its flagship camp turned into a comprehensive six-week learning management system.



## Launched the First Multidimensional Poverty Indices in SL

The UN collaborated with the Department of Census and Statistics on rolling out the National Multidimensional Poverty Index (NMPI) to inform relevant government policy decisions.



## Development of national policy on gender equality

The UN initiated the development of the national policy on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment, in partnership with the Ministry of Women and Child Development and the Parliament of Sri Lanka.



## Supported more inclusive and accessible governance

For the first time ever, the Parliament of Sri Lanka with UN support provided simultaneous sign language interpretation of the Budget Debate for the 2022 financial year.



## Expansion of nutrition voucher programme for mothers

The UN and the Ministry of Health advocated jointly for an expansion from 10 to 24 months of an existing nutrition voucher programme for pregnant and lactating mothers.



## Provided pregnant and lactating mothers with supplementary food

The UN facilitated the importation quality assurance of maize, providing "Thripasha" supplementary food for over 625,000 pregnant and lactating mothers and their children.



## Addressed malnutrition and quality of care for mothers and newborns

The UN supported the Ministry of Health to assist over 150,000 children with severe and moderate acute malnutrition and assess quality of care for some 40,000 mothers and their newborns.

# UN Country Team



## International Financial Institutions



## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



# Financing for Sustainable Development

In 2021, Sri Lanka's development partners—including multilateral organisations and bilateral partners, with the implementation of UN Agencies, Funds and Programmes and national partners—supported work on a variety of priorities across Sri Lanka. Targeted areas included the COVID-19 response and socioeconomic recovery, and sustainable development in key sectors like health, education, employment, tourism, and agriculture.

**US\$ 40.7 Million**

**Total Expenditure in 2021**

**271**

**Single Agency Programmes**

**US\$ 3.2 Million**

**Joint Programme Expenditure**

**30**

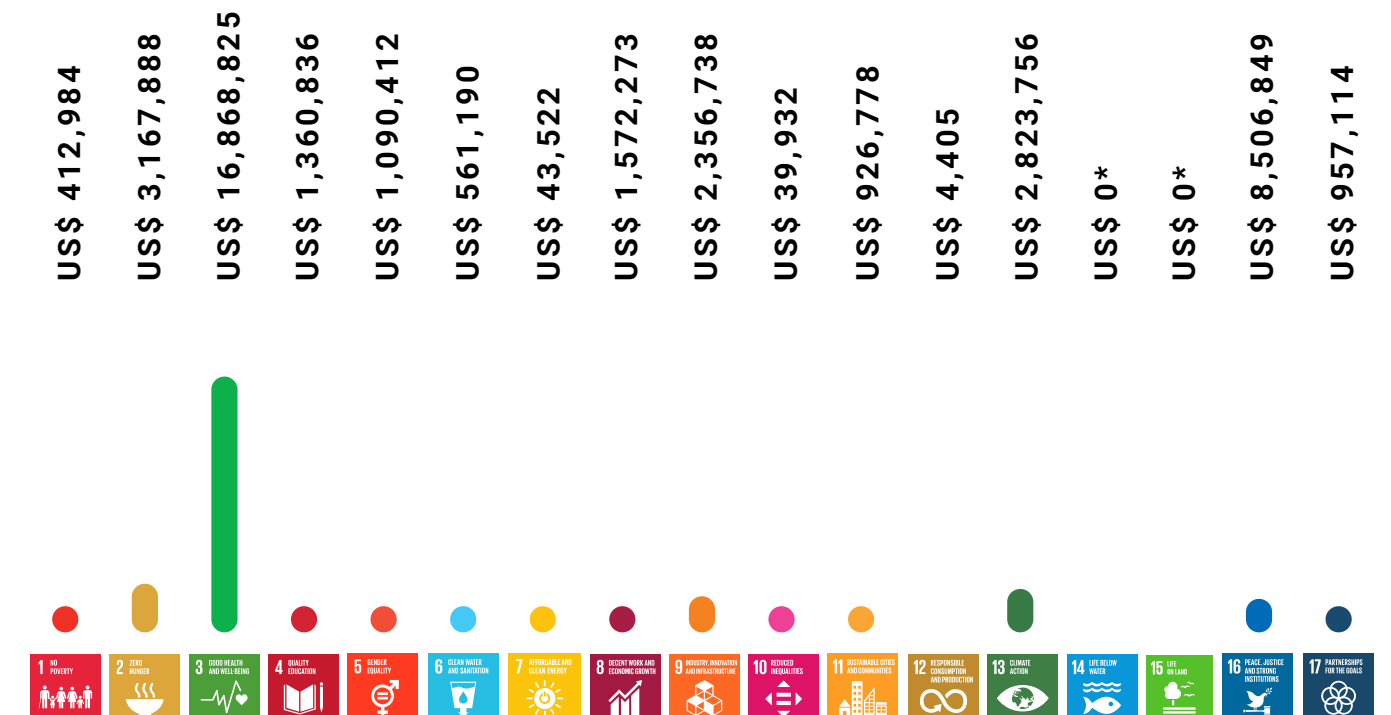
**Joint Programmes**

Estimated Expenditure in 2021

\*Insufficient Data

## Financing for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

US\$



# Chapter 1: Country Context

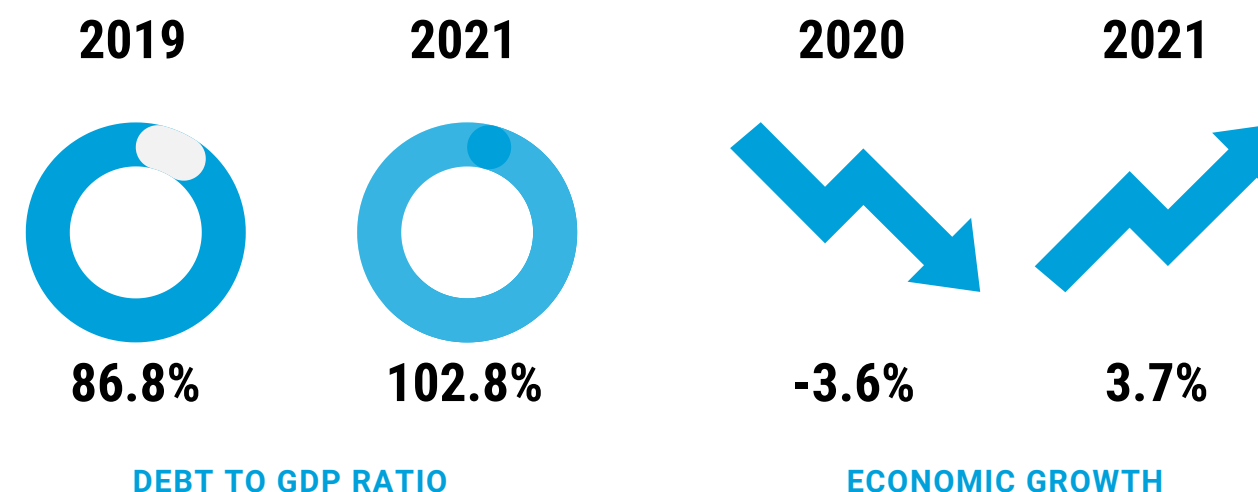
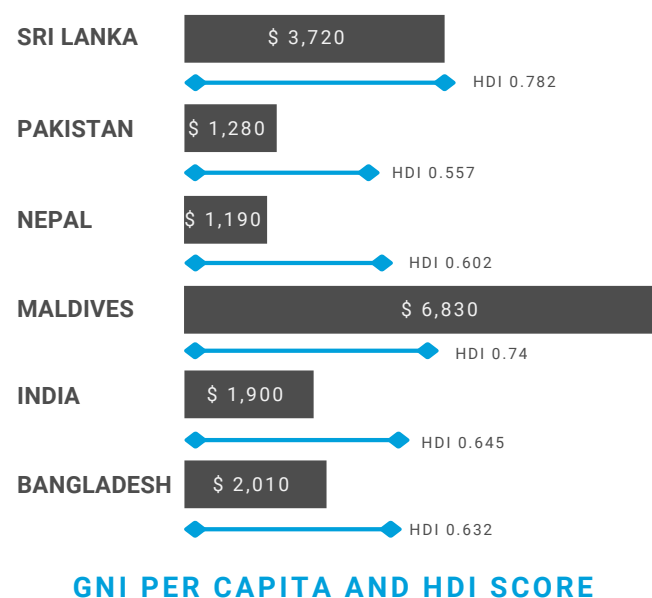


© UNDP Sri Lanka

The Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka (Sri Lanka), with an approximate population of 22.2 million, is a **lower middle-income country with a gross national income per capita of US\$3,720 in 2020**. The country experienced a period of strong economic growth and poverty reduction following the end of a 26-year conflict in 2009, **culminating in its categorisation as upper-middle income class in 2019, before falling below this threshold in 2020 in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic**. A challenging economic situation and debt to GDP ratio has been a concern and poses risks for peace and development gains made in recent years.

While the number of COVID-19 cases remained comparatively low during 2020, **May to September 2021 saw a pronounced peak driven by the new Delta variant**. Authorities invested heavily in the **COVID-19 vaccination programme, quickly expanding its coverage to a large majority of eligible people with first, second, and booster doses**. The Government continued to deploy a broad-based set of public health and relief measures, including intermittent movement restrictions. The Sri Lankan population, despite increasing impacts on their livelihoods and well-being, **demonstrated high levels of community resilience and solidarity in the face of the pandemic**.

By late 2021, **mobility indicators largely returned to their pre-pandemic levels and tourism started to recover, but a deteriorating fiscal situation and disruptions to key inputs continue to exert pressure on the economy and the livelihoods of all Sri Lankans**. The economy expanded by 3.7 per cent in 2021 following a contraction of 3.6 per cent in 2020. **Reduced tax revenue and additional expenditures to address COVID-19 both contributed to a sharp increase in central government debt, from 86.8 per cent of GDP in 2019 to an estimated 102.8 per cent of GDP in 2021**. At the same time, **the continued impact of the pandemic combined with prior imbalances weighed increasingly on the country's foreign exchange reserves, impacting pricing and access to essential imports including fuel, gas, and food items**. Another compounding factor was **reduced food crop production in 2021 compared to the previous year**.



In line with these developments, year-on-year inflation has increased to 15.2 per cent in February 2022—one of the highest in Asia—and puts additional pressure on all consumers, especially the most vulnerable population groups. As a result of these complex challenges, **considerable progress made towards the SDGs over the last year is at risk of stalling**. Further disruptions could translate into lower living standards, especially for the most vulnerable populations, as a result of income and employment losses and reduced fiscal capacity for essential government services. **The World Bank estimated that as of March 2021, over 500,000 people may have been pushed into poverty as a result of the pandemic, with job losses most concentrated in urban areas and among middle-income earners**. Restoring macroeconomic stability and debt sustainability will therefore be key objectives for the year ahead and are crucial to longer-term progress in Sri Lanka towards the Sustainable Development Goals.

The United Nations in Sri Lanka worked alongside Government entities from local to national level towards policy solutions that meet the needs of the most vulnerable populations. **Advocacy and technical expertise was extended across all Sustainable Development Goals, including SDG16 on peace, justice and strong institutions, as well as relevant human rights commitments and gender equality**. Examples of such efforts in the justice sector included **addressing prisoners' rights and overcrowding in prisons, as well as advocating for non-custodial measures for drug-dependent persons**. In 2020, the government of Sri Lanka decided to withdraw support for the UN Human Rights Council resolution 30/1. This changed the landscape and space for UN peacebuilding programming in Sri Lanka. However, **throughout the year, the United Nations Joint Programme for Peace (JPP) continued to support government and civil society efforts with regards to dealing with the past, social cohesion and resettlement**. The JPP is **implemented by eight UN agencies and supported by four development partners (US, UK, Canada and Australia) within the UN SDG Pool Fund's Peace Window**. It works in partnership with a number of government line ministries and civil society in the northern and eastern regions of the country. There remain unresolved post conflict legacy issues, as well as new fractures, that pressurize inter communal relations and UN Sri Lanka continues to support key processes in this regard.

A high-level dialogue on the Sustaining Peace agenda also took place during the **visit of United Nations Assistant Secretary-General Khaled Khiari**. Further **strengthening of rights-based and inclusive approaches to sustainable development remains an important partnership goal of the United Nations in Sri Lanka, addressing persistent challenges** noted in reports of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and Human Rights Council resolution 46/1 of 2021. More sustained dialogue with minority groups and civil society, as well as legislative reforms, are equally important and constitute areas where notable commitments were made by the Government during the course of the year.

# COVID-19 Response



© UNOPS Sri Lanka



## COVID SITUATION IN SRI LANKA 2021

This equipment included high-dependency units, B-PAP machines, multiparameter monitors, and oxygen concentrators. Emergency equipment such as X-ray machines, autoclaves, and infusion pumps was also provided to both primary health and COVID-19-specific facilities. **As the pandemic subsides, this equipment will be integrated into the primary health care system.**

For its part, UNICEF **coordinated the provision of a wide range of technical and material support to different health centres, with a notable focus on maternal health.** This included high-dependency units; maternity kits; studies on oxygen needs across the system; a nationwide assessment and specialised training and equipment on vaccine management; the integration of COVID-19 prevention in rural water safety schemes; and the upgrade of water, sanitation, and hygiene facilities in different rural maternity centres. This multi-pronged support benefited over 6,700 women and children. UNHCR **helped provide essential medical services and distance learning support to refugees and asylum seekers,** while also providing protective equipment to staff at the Disaster Management Centre. Other support facilitated by the UN and international partners, with WHO and UNOPS in the lead and provided by national and local authorities, included key genomic sequencing machines for the detection and identification of different virus variants. Support also included **sanitation and water purification facilities and personal protective equipment (PPE) for over 10,000 vulnerable plantation workers—a majority of them women—and frontline workers,** an effort coordinated by UN Habitat. **Specialised messaging on prevention of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) reached over 100,000 people across vulnerable populations in plantations.** The Ministry of Health, facilitated by UNFPA in different health and SGBV centres, distributed over \$660,000 worth of PPE to health care workers—especially staff working on maternal and child health—to prevent COVID transmission. **Through the support of international partners, procurement of medical and laboratory equipment plus oxygen plants worth over \$18 million was facilitated** by UNOPS, aiming to limit virus transmission and reduce secondary infections among healthcare personnel.

**Enabling equitable access to essential health services while prioritising vulnerable groups and those most at risk was an overarching priority for the UN and its partners during the pandemic.** Research was commissioned and facilitated by WHO regarding COVID-19's impact on the continuity of essential health services for noncommunicable and communicable diseases—such as tuberculosis, HIV, hepatitis, dengue fever, and malaria—and to track how countries in the region (including Sri Lanka) responded to mitigate challenges and recover services (see section Health page 8). Infectious waste management, especially in COVID-19 facilities, was a priority during the third wave starting in April 2021. WHO and partners **assisted Sri Lankan authorities with addressing logistical challenges to safe waste disposal and reducing infections in treatment centres.**

Another priority area of work during the pandemic was the integration of telemedicine solutions for COVID-19 cases. The UN, led by WHO, **helped establish a centrally managed, digital home-based care system for asymptomatic and mildly symptomatic patients. Over 165,000 patients were served at the peak of the third wave, contributing to a significant reduction of the burden on health institutions and providing psychosocial benefits to patients and their family members being managed at home under a qualified medical professional.**

WHO and UNICEF joined together to support the Ministry of Health on the National Vaccine Deployment Plan, which became an essential tool in prioritising the vaccination of target groups and providing overall guidance for immunisation plans.

As the COVID-19 pandemic continued into its second year, the emergence of new variants and global inequities in vaccine access and supply made it increasingly difficult to predict the path and the scale of the crisis. The public health emergency stretched the Sri Lankan health system, prompting rapid mobilisation across the country's 1,103 government hospitals. These hospitals continued to provide free healthcare, even as underlying capacity challenges became apparent during moments of peak demand. National rollout of the COVID-19 vaccination programme has contributed to easing the burden on the health system and has been among the fastest in the region: by February 2022, **more than 95 per cent of the Sri Lankan over-12 population had received one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine, and more than 80 per cent had received two doses.**

**The economic disruption posed by the COVID-19 pandemic has left Sri Lanka vulnerable to longer-term economic challenges, with the consequent potential risk of lower living standards especially for the most vulnerable populations.**

Continuing efforts initiated in 2020, the UN in Sri Lanka took a concerted joint approach to address both the public health and socioeconomic impacts of COVID-19 during 2021.

**The Sri Lanka Preparedness and Response Plan (SPRP), the key framework for collaboration between the UN and Sri Lankan authorities, continued to guide health sector response to the COVID-19 outbreak.** UN support in 2021 was spearheaded by WHO in collaboration with UNICEF and other UN entities and national and international partners such as the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank, professional associations, academic centres, and others. This support stemmed from the UN Socioeconomic Response Advisory Paper, complemented by the SPRP for relevant health sector response. Additional resources were made available by the UN's Multi-Partner Trust Fund. In this context, the UN led response, coordination, and support efforts to provide evidence-based strategic and technical guidance to the government and its partners.

Further **health sector support included boosting key public health areas** such as strengthening the country's epidemiological surveillance system; increasing laboratory testing capacity and the health system's capacity to manage cases; addressing the "infodemic;" and strengthening community engagement on public health and social measures, in tandem with helping accelerate vaccination across the country.

Sri Lanka saw a **coordinated UN response to successive waves of the pandemic in 2021,** with WHO leading on the provision of evidence-based guidance and mobilisation of additional resources. Health authorities were assisted with updating their COVID-19 plan, convening and coordinating regular meetings to align responses from different stakeholders and donors, and facilitating timely communication to address the urgent need for equipment, diagnostics, and supplies.

In material terms, **specialised equipment was facilitated by WHO for the management of COVID-19 patients who needed critical care** in 10 higher-level centres and 68 intermediate ones.

# COVID-19 Response



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In related efforts, Sri Lanka received some five million doses of COVID-19 vaccines as part of COVAX to boost its supply. UNICEF-led efforts provided technical and financial support to the Ministry of Health to ensure adequate and optimal cold chain capacity by updating specialised equipment and identifying gaps hindering rapid rollout of the vaccination programme across the country—and, in the long term, improving its overall immunisation programme. WHO, for its part, worked with the health care sector to provide further support on the NVDP, including training on data entry, visualisation, and analysis for health administrators, epidemiologists, and medical officers; providing technical assistance in the development and regulatory approval of different vaccines; and supplying some two million syringes for mass vaccinations drives. **The UN in Sri Lanka also helped develop one of the world's first COVID-19 information management systems, with the capacity to analyse and visualise data from vaccination centres at national and subnational levels. The primary data source for COVID-19 vaccination information in the country, this tool was further upgraded to issue a "Smart Vaccine Certificate" that can be verified globally.**

Communication played a key part in community engagement and vaccination efforts, with UNICEF and WHO taking the lead in helping the Ministry of Health to disseminate clear and relevant messaging in coordination with Sarvodaya and other civil society partners. **A mix of traditional and digital media was used to distribute evidence-based messaging, local and regional situation reports, and trilingual risk communication materials such as infographics and videos.** In total, over 600 materials supported by the Ministry of Health and other partners reached 15 million people across the country, raising awareness and mitigating the spread of the virus, as well as improving vaccine intake.

**The UN pursued a joint approach with Sri Lankan authorities to mitigate the socioeconomic impact of COVID-19, including disruptions to education, justice, nutrition, and employment.** 2021 saw alternative means of education carried out in various capacities for 4.2 million students in Sri Lanka, with schools moving to television or online-based learning. The UN worked in partnership with the government to support continuity of education and manage widening gaps in learning outcomes resulting from inconsistent access to remote learning (see *Education page 10*).

In response to the sudden shift in learning modalities, the UN, led by UNICEF, **developed a practice guide for teachers to introduce the concept of learning environments underpinned by children's ideas and interests, active and exploratory early childhood pedagogy, and civic competencies, complementing the forthcoming redevelopment of national and provincial education curricula.** A 10-week competency enhancement programme for 6,500 teachers of preschool-aged children on Infection Prevention and Control guidelines was also launched, including what to do if a child becomes sick at school or a new COVID-19 diagnosis is reported.



**15,000,000**  
people reached

with risk communications  
messaging and awareness raising  
on vaccinations



**950**  
e-bail  
applications

submitted to the Colombo High  
Court, owing to UN-supported  
remote court proceedings



**165,000**  
patients

served through a UN-supported  
digital home care system

The country's **digital transformation and innovation agenda** was also boosted, accelerated in part by COVID-19 (see *Digital Transformation and Innovation page 15*).

In 2021, the **Sri Lankan Ministry of Justice introduced legal provisions on conducting court proceedings using remote technology.** This effort built on the success of a UNDP-led pilot project that facilitated remote court hearings for 950 e-bail applicants in the Colombo High Court.

UNFPA has also **contributed to increasing the digital capacity of government and CSOs, investing more than US\$55,000 in upgrading digital capacity, IT equipment, and internet-enabled communications for activities focusing on Sexual and Gender-Based Violence, and the protection and well-being of women and girls.** UNICEF also supported the Sri Lanka Health Promotion Bureau to send critical child health and nutrition information to parents via cellphone-based messaging during periods of movement restrictions to ensure continuity of monitoring and management of child undernutrition.

**UN partners also addressed the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on nutrition and food systems in Sri Lanka.**

Curfew orders and import restrictions severely disrupted food systems and supply chains, impacting the availability, pricing, storage, and quality of food.

In January 2021, WFP stepped in to support urgent efforts by the State Ministry for Women and Child Development to procure maize and support production of 978 tonnes of fortified, nutrition-rich foods, distributed to over 600,000 mothers and children at risk of malnutrition.



**US\$ 18 Million**

facilitated procurement of medical and laboratory  
equipment, plus oxygen plants



**US\$ 660,000**

worth of PPE distributed to health care workers



**US\$ 55,000**

for digital capacity to combat SGBV

In the wake of ongoing school closures and disruptions to the School Meals Programme, UNICEF **provided a suite of nutrition-related communication tools to assist families in providing a more balanced diet with locally available ingredients.** In 2022, the UN will work with the government to closely monitor international developments around the COVID-19 pandemic and continue its support in managing the public health and socioeconomic response.

# Chapter 2: UN Development System Support to National Development Priorities

## Overview of Cooperation Framework

The UN Sustainable Development Framework 2018-2022, which guides the work of the United Nations in Sri Lanka, contains four priority areas, or 'drivers'.

The first 'driver,' calls for **Improved Data, Knowledge Management, and Evidence-Based Policy**, with programming priorities aimed at identifying critical data to be mobilised in Sri Lanka in relation to the Sustainable Development Goals.

The second driver strives to achieve **Strengthened, Innovative Public Institutions and Engagement Towards a Lasting Peace**. Its focus is on addressing institutional capacity gaps hindering the stability and professional capacities required to contribute effectively to long-term development planning and systematic reform.

Driver number three, on **Human Security and Socioeconomic Resilience**, emphasises economic security, equitable implementation of policies, developing a shock-responsive social protection system, building resilient livelihoods, and targeting women-headed households.

Finally, the fourth driver works on **Enhancing Resilience to Climate Change and Disasters, and Strengthening Environment Management**. It targets building capacity for disaster risk reduction and resilience, climate change adaptation, and sustainable management and conservation of natural resources.

To carry out work related to these strategic priorities, the UN in Sri Lanka initially set up working groups based on the four drivers. In 2021, to better account for the changing context including COVID-19, they were reorganized into **eight results groups**, presented over the next pages, and **three thematic groups: gender, youth, and migration**.

### Driver 1



Towards improved data, knowledge management, and evidence-based policy

### Driver 2



Strengthened innovative public institutions and engagement towards a lasting peace

### Driver 3



Human security and socioeconomic resilience

### Driver 4



Enhancing resilience to climate change and disasters and strengthening environmental management

- 1 Health
- 2 Nutrition and Food Security
- 3 Social Protection
- 4 Employment, Skills, and Economic Recovery
- 5 Social Cohesion
- 6 Climate Change
- 7 Digital Transformation and Innovation
- 8 SDG-driven Planning, Financing, and Data

Gender

Youth



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# Health



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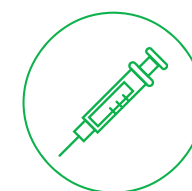
In 2021 Sri Lanka continued its swift response to the COVID-19 pandemic with a coordinated whole-of-society approach. **The UN in Sri Lanka, together with international and national partners, supported the government in this response, strengthening the country's health system and thereby ensuring the most vulnerable can continue receiving the health services they need, when they need it.** In this regard, universal health coverage and health security are complementary and crucial to the achievement of SDG 3: ensuring healthy lives and promoting well-being at all ages.

Sri Lanka has a Primary Health Care-oriented system that enabled sustained delivery of essential health services with minimal disruption at the beginning of the pandemic, as shown in tailored global WHO Pulse surveys which compare such disruptions in over a dozen essential health indicators across countries. **The UN, with WHO in the lead and supported by national and international partners, played a key role in providing Sri Lanka with strategic, technical, and operational support to ensure the continuity of essential health services outside of pandemic-related needs.**

**Assisting with evidence-based health policy development including documentation, the UN supported the Sri Lankan Government's establishment of more than 20 strategies, plans, and guidelines.** These range from enhancing essential health services across most provinces, to managing validations for the elimination of mother-to-child transmission of HIV and syphilis, and enhancing community health through relevant evaluations. Studies on tobacco use were conducted in over 7,100 households in different regions, along with studies on drownings, establishing a midwife training system, tuberculosis among health staff, salt intake in foodstuffs, and a social behaviour change strategy on breast and cervical cancers. Other studies focused on nutrition for older persons, including a joint study with the Medical Research Institute on nutrition and energy consumption gaps.

**To increase access to quality essential health services, medicines, and vaccines, the UN supported development of a delivery model for non-communicable diseases. Support was also provided for rehabilitation services, care for people with disabilities, and older persons, issuing relevant equipment listings, manuals, and training.** UNHCR, for its part, helped hospitals to assist refugees and asylum seekers through provision of needed equipment totaling over \$100,000. **Children with disabilities were supported through the design and piloting of the Inclusive Early Childhood Development Programme (IncluDe) targeting 400 health staff, while WHO at the global, regional, and local levels helped with an institutional development plan for the medicine regulatory authority.**

**Multisector partnerships were key to addressing social determinants of health. Continuing services for survivors of gender-based violence during COVID-19 represented a considerable challenge.** UNFPA and its international and national partners supported the provision of accommodation, food, security, psychosocial counselling, and recovery to beneficiaries of six shelters across Sri Lanka, strengthening their infrastructure and staff capacity. Aided by support to the Ministry of



**34,000  
injections & implants**

for family planning distributed with  
the Ministry of Health



**20  
strategies, plans and  
guidelines**

produced with UN support to  
further evidence-based health  
policy development



**6,000 midwives &  
350 medical staff**

provided with gender-based  
violence prevention training

Health family planning supplies totalling some 34,000 injections and implants were distributed to clinics across the country that had been disrupted by the pandemic. The UN, through UNFPA, UNICEF, and UN Women, also collaborated on delivering gender-based violence prevention training and materials to over 6,000 midwives and 350 medical staff.

**To better serve vulnerable and at-risk populations, the UN helped equip specialised health centres to improve access to health information, education, and services among young people,** reaching some 100,000 of them on topics including COVID-19, gender, and youth-friendly health services. Other initiatives included **providing support to design a WASH assessment and training for health officers in health care facilities,** conducted by UNICEF and WHO.

**Promoting healthy settings and reducing risk factors figured in other work, with the UN and its partners promoting health and well-being and preventing injuries and accidents across populations, especially youth.** IOM, in partnership with WHO, introduced a digital solution for continuation of health care and counselling throughout the migration cycle, from pre-departure health screening to re-integration into the health system upon return. Further, a low-salt cooking challenge was organised by the UN and partners, reaching out to policymakers, restaurant owners, and chefs.

Together with civil society partners, the UN reached over 275,000 people in more than 75 rural communities including community leaders and field facilitators. **Some 10,000 people in low-income urban settings benefitted from hygiene promotion programmes covering hand washing, waste handling, and initiatives targeting public health inspectors, waste workers, and medical officers.** Technical support and trainings were also conducted on management and rehabilitation of people with substance use disorders.

**2021 was the Year of Health and Care Workers, with the UN and partners accordingly providing support towards their well-being.** The year was also marked with commemorative postage to honour their efforts and dedication during the pandemic. ILO and WHO supported the design and issuance of a new bipartite dispute prevention and resolution mechanism for the health sector, while a collaboration targeting over 240 professionals helped boost infection prevention and control and healthcare waste management skills. Protective equipment during COVID-19's third wave, along with mental health well-being packages, were provided to over 2,000 frontline health workers and their families.

During 2021, **the UN along with the Sri Lankan government and other partners helped strengthen the country's health security and emergency preparedness.** The 2020 Sri Lanka international health regulations State Party Annual Report (SPAR) for emergency showed an improved score of 62 per cent core capacities against 54 per cent in 2019. Drafting of the national mental health in emergency plan was initiated, and WHO support enabled the expansion of the mental health helpline. International search and rescue standards were met with UN support, along with equipment for disaster preparedness and response. **Capacity for whole genome sequencing was also strengthened, including through training on Oxford nanopore technology, and surveillance equipment against viruses and microorganisms was provided to different laboratories.** Through the work of FAO with other agencies and partners, the country's antimicrobial resistance self-assessment was completed, together with relevant advocacy campaigns.

The identification and structuring of health-related priorities in Sri Lanka by the UN and its partners during 2021 and beyond will inform the new Cooperation Framework (2023-2027) and will be guided by national health priorities and the achievement of health-related Sustainable Development Goals towards 2030.

# Nutrition and Food Security



Malnutrition remains a concern in Sri Lanka, even though undernourishment has decreased in recent years. Challenges remain with access to healthy diets and food supply chain issues due to COVID-19 impacting the availability, pricing, storage, and quality of food. **The UN, therefore, has focused on maternal and child malnutrition, ensuring the provision of food security and nutrition services, and working on alternative options in cases where food delivery platforms are disrupted.**

Along these lines, **the UN supported initiatives to address malnutrition, especially among vulnerable groups. Provision of 'Thripasha' supplementary food for over 625,000 children and pregnant and lactating mother was ensured through WFP-assisted importation and quality control of maize.** Home gardening was promoted by FAO and UNDP among more than 42,200 vulnerable families and by WFP in schools enabling sustenance of the healthy school meals programme. UN support to strengthen the overarching policies and strategies to reinforce nutrition was provided through UNICEF-led development of the School Health Policy and the formative research on maternal, infant, and young child feeding.

**To bolster services for growth monitoring, early detection, and treatment of child wasting, the UN supported children with Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM),** while UNICEF enabled procurement of growth monitoring equipment for 289 child welfare clinics and multiple micronutrients for over 1,750,000 children. **The UN also provided technical support to analyse gaps in the nutrition information system, including making recommendations to match global indicators.** UNICEF and partners helped introduce protocols on the treatment and management of SAM and Moderate Acute Malnutrition (MAM) to 8,200 health care workers, benefitting 150,000 children, and 2,200 children were provided with BP-100 to ensure adequate treatment of SAM. WHO support in upgrading the District Nutrition Monitoring System addressed non-nutrition risk factors in affected children. **At the Nutrition for Growth Summit, the Government of Sri Lanka committed to relevant targets on ensuring adequate nutrition and food security.**

WHO supported implementing the National Salt Reduction Strategy and successfully advocated for regulation to eliminate industrially produced trans fats, boosting healthy diets for adults in the long term. WFP supported a biannual Cost of Diet Analysis that informs the government of the status of food security and improves targeting of related interventions.

**The UN also worked to expand social protections to safeguard access to nutritious diets and essential services, facilitating surveys to identify possible gaps in food security.** WHO and UNICEF jointly supported a survey on gaps in energy and nutrition consumption in households (see Health page 8). A national survey on the practice of National Nutrition Quality Standards in residential care institutions for older persons shed light on the nutritional status of the elderly.

UNICEF advocacy resulted in **the expansion from 10 to 24 months of an existing universal nutrition programme that provides vouchers for pregnant and lactating mothers.** WFP pre-registered in its own platform some 6,500 beneficiaries from the national social protection system in flood-prone areas, enabling more effective delivery of assistance.



**625,000 pregnant and lactating mothers**

provided with 'Thripasha' supplementary food



**child welfare clinics**

provided with assistance for procuring growth monitoring equipment



**150,000 children with malnutrition**

assisted and the quality of care for 40,000 mothers and their newborns was assessed

**Support to the national nutrition and food security agenda was provided by UN agencies through strategic advocacy for the implementation of the Multi-Sectoral Action Plan for Nutrition.** The National Roadmap on Urban Food Waste Prevention and Reduction was supported by FAO, and WFP strengthened the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) movement strategy to include SMEs.

UN support to address food security came in many forms, including FAO-provided technical assistance to address gaps in forest management in rural communities; WFP research on food system environments; and improvements to nutrition-sensitive resilience programming in partnership with international research entities. FAO, meanwhile, provided training to 500 field-level officers for the management of fall armyworm, a destructive crop pest.

UN Habitat supported sustainable farming and organic home gardening among vulnerable communities, while over 2,350 women farmers increased their annual average income through UNDP-supported climate-smart home gardens. Together with the Meteorological Department, weather advice via SMS and media benefitted close to 300,000 farmers, while support to smallholder and organic farmers included post-harvest management, value addition, market linkages, and sustainable practices.



**42,200 families**

provided with information and support on organic farming



**300,000 farmers**

benefitted from weather advice provided via SMS



**2,350 women farmers**

increased their annual average income owing to UN support

As water and sanitation are key to good health and nutrition of a community, WHO's technical assistance on water safety plans (WSPs) ensured alignment with health-based targets, improving the availability of safely managed drinking water. UNICEF supported a water quality survey for drinking water and a national assessment of rural communities' water supply schemes, now included in the national monitoring system. **The UN also supported development of a Country Road Map for Hand Hygiene, and provided WASH facilities for vulnerable populations in institutional care.**

Critically, **monitoring of rising food prices across staples has become a core issue as it is a potential challenge undermining peace and development progress to date.** Inflation across most food types is viewed as a rising socio-economic risk.

# Social Protection



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COVID-19 has reinforced the urgent need to build more resilient societies. In 2021, **the UN built upon its platform established in 2020 to drive support for a commitment by the Government of Sri Lanka to move towards a nationally-defined social protection floor.** Components of this agenda include evidence generation and policy analysis to modernise the social protection system in Sri Lanka; social dialogue to promote a shared understanding of social protection and build support for reform; national capacity-building to strengthen existing delivery systems; and direct support to vulnerable groups to expand the range of services provided by national delivery systems.

**The UN engaged in a Tripartite Dialogue promoting a shared vision for social protection in Sri Lanka, engaging the Ministry of Labour and State Ministry of Samurdhi, Household Economy, Microfinance, Self-employment and Business Development, with further consultations scheduled for 2022.** UNFPA engaged with parliament to re-establish the Sri Lanka Forum for Parliamentarians on Population and Sustainable Development and build support for implementation of the Programme of Action from the International Conference on Population and Development's 'Nairobi Summit' held in 2019. UN advocacy also played a pivotal role in the extension of "nutrition basket" provisions for pregnant mothers announced in the 2022 Budget Speech (see *Food Security and Nutrition page 9*).

Despite challenges and restrictions posed by COVID-19, **the UN was successful in strengthening national social protection systems strained by the pandemic.** In partnership with the Ministry of Tourism, ILO co-designed a short-term COVID-19 response scheme and longer-term unemployment insurance for tourism sector workers in Sri Lanka, while promotion of dialogue towards social protection through the tripartite platform of the National Labour Advisory Council (NLAC) took place with the Ministry of Labour. WFP **piloted a biometric authentication system for the Samurdhi programme—the country's primary social assistance and poverty reduction scheme**—in flood-prone areas of the Kalutara district. This system improved access to essential services for some 6,500 vulnerable beneficiaries, with plans to scale up in 2022. WFP led a multi-faceted programme jointly with Samurdhi authorities, providing a combination of cash transfers and strategic and behavioural change communications to over 1,500 vulnerable pregnant and nursing mothers in six districts with an aim to promoting healthy and diverse dietary practices and nutrition-related cash management behaviours. UNHCR and national partners for their part **helped vulnerable refugees and asylum seekers to cope with economic and social shock and address gaps in social protection coverage during the most critical parts of the pandemic, with vouchers for food, medicine, and other necessities** benefitting some 95 families.

Additionally, UNICEF's Public Expenditure Review on Social Protection, to be finalised in March 2022, builds on an extensive body of research and analysis that **considers the fiscal implications of delivering on the government's commitment to expand the coverage of existing social protection systems.**



**6,500 vulnerable beneficiaries**

included in a biometric authentication system



**630 families provided cash transfers**

through social protection mechanisms



**1,500 pregnant and nursing mothers**

reached with behavioural change communications on healthy diets

The joint-agency Stakeholder Mapping of Sri Lanka's social protection system led by UNDP in partnership with the Institute of Policy Studies (IPS), also slated for completion in March 2022, consolidates the existing programmes. In partnership with the World Bank, **the UN also contributed extensively to the government's consultation process for developing a National Social Protection Strategy for Sri Lanka.** The findings from these activities, combined with evidence from the 2019 Household Income and Expenditure Survey, will help co-develop Samurdhi programme reforms with relevant authorities. The UN will also use the data to engage in a fiscal analysis of investment options in a more comprehensive social protection system. Meanwhile, UNICEF and WFP jointly provided cash transfers to over 630 families with children under five, allowing them to better cope with current challenges around food security and nutrition.

## Education & Early Childhood Development

**2021 was a difficult year for the four million students in Sri Lanka, with nationwide school and university closures during the COVID-19 pandemic severely affecting learning at all levels.** Tertiary education institutions were relatively well-placed to respond to the changes in teaching modality, although the adjustment of primary-level learning has been neither as quick nor as comprehensive. It will be important to monitor inequities in access to alternative modalities will translate into inequality of learning outcomes as children return to school in 2022.



**US\$ 1 Million**

for urgent repairs to 13 schools



**US\$ 70,000**

to establish professional development centres



**US\$ 50,000**

in technical assistance towards the National Curriculum Framework on general education

**The UN was quick to lend its support in this vastly reorganised learning environment.** UNICEF worked with zonal education authorities in the country's Northern Province to provide over US\$1 million in urgent repairs to 13 schools, and capacity building in ICT and child-centred teaching and learning strategies for over 330 primary and secondary teachers. In Central and Uva provinces, more than 90,000 preschool-aged children received printed home-based learning kits during periods of school closure in 2021. The kits **provided engaging ways to keep children reading, writing, exploring, and learning at home with the support of their families.** In addition, the UN provided US\$70,000 to establish professional development centres equipping 1,200 educators per year with the knowledge, skills, and practice to improve learning outcomes in primary education. UNICEF also worked closely with the National Institute of Education, providing US\$50,000 in technical assistance to help shape the National Curriculum Framework on general education, including reforms for assessment and integration of transferable skills into the Framework.

In 2022, **the UN will continue to support Sri Lanka's National Institute of Education. Building on foundational data and evidence from a regional study** in 2021 by UNICEF, UN support will encompass improvements and equitable access to primary education through investments in better data and monitoring systems for primary-level education outcomes, along with the implementation of disability-inclusive education practices.

# Employment, Skills, and Economic Recovery



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The economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic wiped out some 81 million jobs in the Asia-Pacific region in 2020. In Sri Lanka, COVID-19 and its containment actions—e.g., border closures, curfews, and social distancing measures—drastically changed supply and demand in goods and services, disproportionately impacting trade, exports, construction, retail, and tourism, with negative impacts on jobs, wages, and enterprises. Against this backdrop, **the UN worked intensively with government international partners to promote an inclusive and sustainable economic recovery in Sri Lanka, underpinned by the core mandate of decent and productive employment for all.**

In 2021, the UN delivered on its goal. As the COVID-19 pandemic sent shockwaves through small-scale and informal credit markets, ILO provided a total of US\$120,000 in working capital loans across nearly 100 mid-sized enterprises with majority-female workforce, leading the Central Bank of Sri Lanka to expand this initiative across the country. A new project was also launched to promote entrepreneurship among 2,500 young people.

**The UN provided extensive support to returned migrant workers as a combined 97,000 Sri Lankans were repatriated from 122 countries in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.** It also helped develop an integrated system for economic reintegration of returned migrant workers, including providing career guidance, supporting Recognition of Prior Learning, job search assistance, and referrals for employment both locally and abroad. ILO invested more than US\$140,000 in blended training programmes for 550 returned migrants, providing the means and skills to develop business plans for transition to self-employment. ILO also **worked with vulnerable groups in the former conflict zones, promoting decent work and improving livelihoods to strengthen peace and reconciliation, including supporting return of internally displaced people (622 families including persons with disabilities and female-headed households) to newly released areas.**

As the COVID-19 pandemic in Sri Lanka ground into its second year, **the UN continued to support protecting workers from COVID-19-related health risks in the workplace.** UNFPA provided more than US\$600,000 in essential personal and protective equipment to first officers, maternal and child health workers, staff attending sexual and gender-based violence centres, and hospital staff across the country (see *COVID-19 Response page 5*). Recognising that mid-sized enterprises in Sri Lanka are particularly vulnerable to the spread of infection due to cramped spaces and a lack of facilities for infection prevention and control, a relevant **Risk Assessment study served as the basis for government Occupational Safety and Health guidelines for over 1,100 enterprises in Western Province** in 2021.

The **UN also contributed to protecting jobs and incomes and ensuring continuity and resilience of businesses during disruptions from public health orders.** ILO designed an Employment Income Support Fund and operational guidelines for the tourism sector.

UN Women worked with over 500 female heads of households and female small enterprise owners across four districts



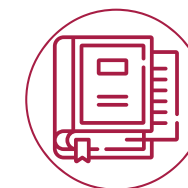
**97,000 migrant workers**

were repatriated with technical expertise provided by the UN



**500 female heads of households**

assisted in adapting their small businesses during pandemic lockdowns



**1,100 MSM enterprises**

provided with Occupational Safety and Health guidelines

during the COVID-19 pandemic, helping them to adapt their small enterprises to continue operations and become more resilient to future shocks. UN Women further expanded access to assets for women entrepreneurs with 62 mobile sales carts being provided to continue their business ventures in the districts of Ampara, Monaragala, and Vavuniya. UNDP also extended its assistance to over 60 young enterprises affected by COVID-19 through seed funding and incubation support under its “HackaDev Enterprise Support Programme.” Its flagship physical social innovation camp for young entrepreneurs was converted into a comprehensive six-week online learning management system.

**The UN also contributed towards a more robust, skilled labour force in Sri Lanka through its investment in skills development and lifelong learning.** UNDP’s Memorandum of Understanding with Sri Lanka’s Vocational Training Authority paves the way for the UN to provide learners and educators with digital skills and other resilient future-fit skilling opportunities. IOM’s successful pilot of a training programme with Sri Lanka’s Bureau of Foreign Employment put this thinking into action, upskilling aspirant Sri Lankan migrant workers—particularly women—to undertake higher-skilled advanced housekeeping work in key destination countries.

UNDP’s Social Innovation Lab “Citra Lab” provided **technical assistance in Human-Centred Design to promote skill development, with capacity building for Sri Lanka’s Presidential Taskforce on Economic Revival and Poverty Alleviation** and over 300 officials in the Tertiary and Vocational Education and Training sector. UNV’s V-Force volunteering platform provided skills development opportunities to some 140 young people, supporting the UN’s efforts to deliver on the 2030 Agenda.

## UN Migration Network in Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka is party to the **UN-facilitated Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM)**. Two national GCM committees were established in 2021 to develop and implement the country’s GCM plan, and to monitor and report progress to the International Migration Reform Forum. The United Nations Network on Migration in Sri Lanka aims to ensure effective and coordinated UN system-wide support to the government in implementation, follow-up, and review of the GCM.

# Social Cohesion



The United Nations **supported national partners to promote dealing with the past, social cohesion, and resettlement.** This work has a focused on improving community resilience, promoting inclusive social dialogue, and protecting fundamental freedoms and the rule of law. Most of this work has been implemented under the Joint Programme for Peace (JPP) with six agencies working in a joint programming framework.

The Human Rights Office in collaboration with UNOPS **supported civil society organisations to sustain and strengthen their presence and work on the ground, particularly in relation human rights, victim and community support and protection, legal aid, and advocacy on key human rights concerns affecting communities.** The Office also supported research on key substantive areas such as land rights, which could impact on social cohesion.

The UN supported community resilience and institutional architecture through the work of IOM, **assisting the Office for Reparations (OR) with development and implementation of the National Reparations Policies and Guidelines and the National Action Plan,** plus the implementation of an Information Management System. Through UN support, the OR delivered trainings for livelihood support and case managers on mental health and psychosocial services in the North. UNDP also **supported the inclusion of resettled persons through delivery of public services in the Tamil language** in the Northern Province, while UNHCR **assisted authorities in this region with IT equipment to enhance work on housing, land and property rights, education, and civil documentation benefitting the reintegration of refugee returnees.** UNICEF supported the Ministry of Education in updating **the National Action Plan on Education for Social Cohesion and piloted social cohesion learning modules** across 100 schools. UN Women supported the drafting of **a national action plan on Women, Peace and Security, while convening multiparty dialogues** (see *Gender page 16*) and capacity-building sessions to strengthen women's leadership and peacebuilding across the country. UNFPA support for women and girls subjected to sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) resulted in the first national shelter assessment. Civil society and journalists were supported by UNDP with **capacity development for countering hate speech and promoting social cohesion messaging.** For its part, ILO supported the peacebuilding process through helping to build trust and confidence, scaling up ongoing livelihood support to some 900 resettled households in partnership with the private sector.

Striving for inclusive social dialogue, the UN, with UNFPA in the lead, **facilitated platforms for women and youth-led networks to discuss matters relating to interreligious and interethnic harmony, as well as gender concerns such as sexual and reproductive health and rights.** UN Women and UNOPS coordinated community-level dialogues and training on women's leadership and mediation, and strengthened platforms for local women leaders and political actors of different ethno-religious communities to address shared environmental concerns. This work engaged over 3,000 women community members, fostering economic empowerment and innovation within communities.

Further work engaged local women leaders with the women parliamentarians' caucus on key areas of intervention such as SGBV, while the Ministry of National Language and its successor Ministry of Public Administration were supported in implementing the Official Language Policy and developing language audit tools in collaboration with the Official Language Commission of Sri Lanka.

In terms of protecting fundamental freedoms and the rule of law, UNDP in partnership with the Ministry of Justice and the Legal Aid Commission of Sri Lanka supported over 28,500 SGBV clients with legal aid services and continues to strengthen legal aid service provision for prisoners.

Further, UNFPA helped **address gaps in shelters for women with disabilities,** while UNDP supported the first budget speech in parliament with sign language interpretation, reaching the 4 per cent of the population with hearing impairment. UNODC, for its part, **developed an action plan for improving the management of high-risk prisoners and mitigating COVID-19 risks in prisons** as part of wider UN support for implementing the Nelson Mandela Rules.

Under the JPP early initiatives were commenced by UNICEF and UNDP to introduce counter hate speech programmes into the youth space and national curricula. Disinformation, hate and dangerous speech are significant issues of risk for youth across Sri Lanka. At end of 2021 UN PBF commenced support to a UNDP-UNICEF pilot countering hate speech programme 2022-23 in partnership with the Media Ministry and Ministry of Education.

## Supporting a Safer Sri Lanka

The UN's efforts in **the monitoring and prevention of crime and illicit substance use are delivered with the understanding that there can be no development without peace,** and vice versa. In an environment characterized by rising economic challenges and opportunities for organised crime there are significant threats to peace and development.

UNODC **worked with Sri Lanka's Attorney General's Department and defense lawyers from the Bar Association of Sri Lanka to deliver over a dozen trainings providing simulated investigation, prosecution, and trial exercises on the use of the internet for terrorist activities and on the appropriate handling of electronic evidence.** The UN also worked with Sri Lanka's Department of Prisons to **develop an action plan on managing high-risk detainees, and a guide on detecting and preventing radicalisation in prison settings.** This assistance comes as part of broader capacity building in dynamic security for 350 Department of Prisons officers. The UN also supported Sri Lanka's **Department of Community-Based Corrections to apply alternatives to imprisonment** where appropriate, training 300 officers across all nine provinces in Sri Lanka.

Dealing with maritime crime, UNODC **assisted with the training of 250 maritime law enforcement officers on Visit, Board, Search, and Seizure protocols.** These courses provided theoretical and practical exercises on countering maritime crime, trafficking of illicit substances, and the detection of explosive devices and their components. UNODC also engaged with the Department of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources, the Marine Environment Protection Authority, and marine law enforcement authorities on tackling crimes related to environmental pollution and climate change, in addition to providing support in response to the MV X-Press Pearl disaster (see *Responding to Environmental Disasters page 14*).

**Work to prevent and treat substance abuse—including narcotic drug abuse—was boosted with the UN providing technical assistance on the national drug demand reduction programmes.** UNODC conducted a comprehensive review of existing drug legislation and policy, and developed a gender-sensitive drug control action plan in line with human rights and international standards. Furthermore, a UNODC assessment actively promoted the development of a gender-responsive drug policy and the introduction of drug use prevention and treatment programmes in Sri Lanka.

UNODC's **advocacy promoted awareness among the general public regarding the risks and consequences of Trafficking in Persons (TIP).** Capacity-building activities in this area focused on enabling Sri Lankan police to identify, investigate, and refer human trafficking crimes appropriately, and promoted collaboration between police and communities to identify, refer, and report TIP cases. The UN also provided technical assistance to expand use of strategies against criminal networks, encouraging law enforcement and judicial officers to promote measures beyond interdiction activities in a way that fosters greater transnational cooperation.

# Climate Change



In 2021, the UN expanded its support for sustainable development efforts by working with national partners on new approaches to address environmental challenges and respond to climate change. The UN provided enhanced support to build resilience to climate change and natural disasters and improve capacities to better prepare for and adapt to climate change and natural hazards.

In this regard, UNICEF, UNDP, and WFP assisted on disaster risk reduction (DRR), drinking water safety plans, sanitation, hygiene, food security, and livelihoods in different communities. Work was focused on building climate resilience for smallholder farmers and vulnerable groups such as children, pregnant or nursing women, and those affected by the MV X-Press Pearl accident. Some 35,000 beneficiaries were reached through cash transfers, integration into local planning, water and irrigation systems, agriculture and aquaculture supplies, and diversifying livelihoods. UNICEF further supported the health ministry to develop training materials on health care waste management for medical staff, while UNDP conducted a rapid assessment and provided recommendations on health care waste management to be implemented through a national action plan.

UN support further contributed to enhancing institutional capacities for disaster risk management, e.g., training over 370 government officials on DRR focused on children and developing nationwide school safety guidelines. Agencies, including UNFPA, WFP, UNDP, and FAO assisted in integrating gender and elderly needs in preparedness plans; in finalising national emergency plan operations; registering low-income beneficiaries in an online platform to rationalise interventions; providing cash assistance to vulnerable Samurghi households as part of shock-responsive social protection; and conducting wide-ranging flood modeling and mapping to assess the implications of climate change on agriculture supply chains and human security. Further, trilingual training on the management of safety centres during COVID-19 was conducted, benefitting over 260 participants, while 2,000 camp management guideline materials were distributed among service providers.

To promote climate-resilient water supply systems, UN agencies worked on access to and management of drinking water, training 390 government officials on Rural Water Safety Plans and assessing household water quality. A manual and training guide for public water supply schemes were also developed. UNDP for its part supported over 10,400 people in 17 women-led water safety and security initiatives, and in developing guidelines for climate change adaptation for irrigation specialists. WHO assisted in training 150 personnel and a host of auditors from the national water and engineering authorities on water safety.

In the area of natural resource management, the UN led by UNDP provided technical assistance on the revision of the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), including overall coordination and policy analysis in sectors such as domestic water supply and drinking water.



10,400  
persons

supported in 17 women-led water safety and security initiatives



350  
adolescents  
consulted

to develop a Children's Declaration on DRR and climate change adaptation.



45 development  
plans

for village solid waste management

To promote sustainable land use management and climate-resilient agriculture, UNDP supported the development of the National Weather Portal and its mobile app, which benefitted almost 460,000 farmers through weather and agro-met advisories. WFP piloted the Last Mile Climate Services approach to strengthen government's capacity to provide more reliable, localised, and simplified climate advisories. Further, the South-South Triangular Cooperation initiative exchanged information to help smallholder farmers reduce post-harvest losses.

On the promotion of sustainable energy and waste management, the UN and its partners helped develop a feasibility study for the Ceylon Electricity Board to find suitable sites for small scale biomass power plants. Comprehensive health care waste management plans by UNDP will directly impact over 2,000 healthcare workers (62 per cent of them women). WHO also supported the implementation of a pilot project to recycle used agrochemical containers.

With the aim of making a business case for investments in sustainability, ITC presented a training package for small and medium enterprises on greening ICT, e-waste management, and reducing the carbon footprint. It also supported the formulation of Sri Lanka's new Industrial Policy, with a particular focus on green growth and renewable energy. Further, ILO is assisting the government in adopting a strategy for a just transition towards a greener economy.

A UNOPS project on solid waste management was implemented in four local authority areas with over 3,000 female community members, while technical support, six waste collection vehicles, and 10 waste collection trailers were provided to local partners. Through a joint UN Women-UNOPS Project, 45 village development plans were introduced by local officials and community members to resolve key needs around solid waste management, with emphasis on women's environmental leadership and participation. Action grants were provided to implement their proposals in areas such as compost production and polythene recycling. These actions reduced waste, encouraged local innovation and sustainable enterprise, and strengthened village-level governance mechanisms (Prajā Mandalas), while increasing the role of women.

Understanding that there are growing linkages between climate and threats to peace and development UN Sri Lanka will explore developing a climate security assessment in the next year.

## Green Development Dialogues

The Colombo Development Dialogues were held with a series of policy discussions focusing on 'Green Development,' organized by the Ministry of Environment and UNDP with other co-convening partners including UNICEF, UNEP, ITC, UNIDO, UNESCO, and UN Habitat. Aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals and national and regional policy priorities, the series helped frame narratives on innovative policy making, sustainable financing, and multi-stakeholder collaboration to help articulate policy underpinnings towards a National Framework for Green Development in Sri Lanka. Going beyond the overarching themes and towards localised policy prescriptions, further policy engagements with partners at a more specialised level will follow these sessions.

## Responding to Environmental Disasters



On 20 May 2021, chemical fume emissions erupted on board the MV X-Press Pearl container ship as it anchored around nine nautical miles (17 kilometres) northwest of Colombo, in Sri Lanka's national waters. The vessel was carrying 348 tonnes of fuel, nitric acid, epoxy resins, ethanol, and heavy metals. Despite rescue efforts, the ship eventually sank after much of the cargo caught fire for several days. **The incident resulted in a significant impact on the country's sensitive coastal environment, local communities, and the economy.**

To facilitate an efficient response to the disaster, **the UN provided substantial coordination support to key government authorities** including the Marine Environment Protection Authority (MEPA) and the foreign ministry's Department of Oceans Affairs. In close coordination with these authorities, the Office of the Resident Coordinator facilitated the deployment of a joint environmental mission from the UN's Environment Programme (UNEP) and Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). Together, they helped provide **technical advice to the Government of Sri Lanka on the key challenges faced in oil spill contingency planning, cleanup operations, and the assessment of environmental impacts.**

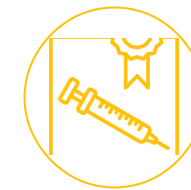
The mission produced a report with **key findings and recommendations covering both short-term response measures and longer-term recovery**, which was submitted to the government. As a result of these findings, robust law enforcement and effective prevention methods—both national and international—are in process to hold the perpetrators to account and prevent future environmental disasters.



## Digital Transformation and Innovation



**COVID-19  
Immunization  
Tracker**



**Smart Vaccine  
Certificate**



**Tourism  
Development  
Authority Web  
application**

COVID-19 revealed a number of disparities in digital accessibility and utilisation. **The UN, in support of key government ministries, responded with a needs-based approach to improve digital capacities and facilitate policy-level engagements to strengthen national systems.**

As part of this support, the **UN helped develop a COVID-19 Immunisation Tracker** (see *COVID-19 Response* page 5) that **enables data analysis and visualisation at all levels, together with a digital Smart Vaccination Certificate**, while a procurement of online temperature monitoring systems for the central cold stores and 27 regional stores was also facilitated.

In response to school closures, UNICEF leveraged **digital solutions to reduce learning losses by formulating a home-based learning programme**. It also provided financial support to produce digital and printed materials, reaching some 835,000 students. The **ParentText initiative provided parents with critical health and safety information during the pandemic**. **UNFPA supported access to information and digital training in safe shelters for survivors of Gender-Based Violence** (see *Health* page 8), while ILO helped 1,250 micro, small, and medium enterprises impacted by COVID-19 access to the e-commerce sector through digitised company profiles.

**Empowering young people through inclusive and innovative online platforms remained a priority for the UN**, with UNDP helping over 1,500 young people to improve media literacy skills. U-Report, a mobile youth empowerment platform, gathered insights from 13,000 young people to improve citizen engagement, inform leaders, and foster positive change. It also captured feedback on COVID-19 vaccines, poverty, and return to school, helping relevant authorities to address these concerns. UNV supported the development of a **Volunteer Management System, and a first-of-its-kind digital ecosystem analysis was completed** by UN Women to support future interventions on preventing violent extremism online.

The UN, through UNDP, **continued to deliver technical expertise to strengthen digital governance, develop digital mechanisms, and help mainstream innovative approaches** where relevant. Initiatives included support for the Department of Motor Traffic, support to a reactivated Chief Digital Information Officer network, and the facilitation of a Digital Maturity Assessment.

UNDP helped develop a **one-stop web application for the Tourism Development Authority**, supported the Parliament with digital solutions, funded the mapping of 274 e-governance systems, developed website templates for local government authorities, and successfully completed a justice sector pilot project, resulting in 950 e-bail applications filed, 694 cases concluded, and significant contributions to law reforms using technological solutions.

Led by ITC, **an automated system to issue Certificates of Origin by the Department of Commerce is in development, while also providing advisory support to incorporate "green growth and digitalisation" concepts into the Sri Lankan National Industrial Policy**. This is in addition to technical inputs on the 'Industry Diagnosis Report' and the report on 'Modern Industrial Policy: Considerations for Sri Lanka.' ICT also supported the development of guides to support e-commerce, Cybersecurity, and Consumer and Data Protection processes. For its part, UNIDO helped develop a **digital tracing system related to the protected geographical indication of Ceylon Cinnamon, benefitting over 6,000 farmers and technicians in 100 farms**, while also facilitating access to international markets for pepper growers through a mobile application.

Further, IOM **supported the operationalisation of the Border Risk Assessment Centre in 2021**, providing government with access to innovative digital inter-operable systems and tools to monitor, detect, and respond to security threats related to transnational organised crime (see *Supporting a Safer Sri Lanka* section page 12). A new vessel monitoring system also set a milestone by introducing 200 transponders, facilitated by training programmes.

## SDG-Driven Planning, Financing, and Data



**Sri Lanka's first National and Child Multidimensional Poverty indices**



**National SDG Data Portal launched at the 5th South Asia SDG Forum**



**National Time Transfer Accounts set-up with UN assistance**

In accordance with policy priorities of the UN and its diverse partners, work progressed towards **a more inclusive and forward-looking national planning and budgeting process incorporating population dynamics**. UNICEF, together with the Department of Census and Statistics, rolled out the **National Multidimensional Poverty Index (NMPI) to inform relevant government policy decisions**. UNFPA supported **setting up National Time Transfer Accounts (NTTA) for Sri Lanka, enabling an understanding of age and gender as economic factors**, while UNDP provided technical assistance to the National Planning Department on strengthening risk frameworks and SDG impact measurement and management in project evaluation. The UN's technical coordination of development partners supported the Parliamentary Development Action Plan (2020-22), while UN Habitat and UNEP started the groundwork for the Country Assessment and Roadmap on Resource Efficient Housing, Buildings and Construction. Work in this area also included support for an independent assessment on Universal Health Coverage.

Programmatic priorities for 2021 included **strengthening Sri Lanka's National Statistical Architecture and promoting Integrated Data systems**, on which UNICEF helped with the generation of evidence, institutionalisation, measurement, and policy use on child poverty in all its forms. **The inclusion of a child module in the Household Income and Expenditure Survey strengthened national capacity to calculate child and multidimensional poverty**. UNFPA provided technical assistance to the Department of Census and Statistics to **generate inclusive communications and data visualisation capacity and a media campaign linked to the Housing and Population Census**. The creation of a digital repository of maternal and child mortality data was also supported. UNESCO, for its part, helped to generate SDG4- related benchmarks (Quality Education), on relevant indicators.

The national women's well-being survey to measure prevalence of violence against women was also supported, engaging key stakeholders on its findings, while an M&E system for the Ministry of Women and Development was facilitated with UNFPA support. UN Women conducted **a needs assessment and a value chain analysis of economic opportunities for female-headed households to facilitate training for women entrepreneurs**, while IOM supported a third phase of an Integrated Border Management System in Sri Lanka to strengthen migration management. UNDP supported **the Sustainable Development Council's mainstreaming of SDGs into Ministerial workplans by validating 104 SDG indicators and developing methodologies for data collection/identification of proxy or supplementary indicators**. The National SDG Data Portal was launched at the 5th South Asia SDG Forum, spearheaded by UNDP's Citra Social Innovation Lab with support from UNESCO, UNFPA, UN HABITAT, WHO, FAO, UNICEF, WFP, ILO, and the RCO.

In terms of exploring and promoting innovative, immediate, and long-term financing solutions for the SDGs, **the SDG Investor Map—a market intelligence product—was produced to help private investors identify investment opportunities and business models that advance the SDGs**. Emerging findings were presented to a multi-stakeholder reference group with the participation of senior government and private sector officials. A shortlist of Investment Opportunity Areas was finalised, from a long list of 24 potential investment opportunities.

## Youth



© UNICEF Sri Lanka

Young people play an important and positive role in the realisation of sustainable development, in the prevention of crises, and in the advancement of peace. The Secretary-General's 2021 Our Common Agenda report **redoubled the UN's commitment to include young people not only as beneficiaries, but as full-fledged partners in its work** around the world. This approach was also evident in youth-related programming across the UN in Sri Lanka.

An example of this work is the **U-report, an open-source mobile messaging platform operated by UNICEF with over 25,000 'U-Reporters.'** Its purpose is to empower young people to speak out on issues in their communities, encourage citizen-led development, and create positive change. In 2021 the platform was used to **assess sentiment about the COVID-19 vaccine among young people and address vaccine hesitancy**. Staff from the Health Promotion Bureau of the Ministry of Health provided young people with information on vaccine effectiveness, addressed common myths related to the virus and vaccines, and explained how they could support the vaccination programme. Similarly, in response to disruptions brought about by the pandemic, UNDP's flagship Youth Programme **HackaDev introduced its e-learning portal, a comprehensive online platform for all skill-building programmes** offered by the HackaDev Academy of Learning and Skills. The portal is aimed at **providing young people with next-generation abilities, while enabling the youth skills ecosystem to do the same**. The first programme to be offered in 2021 was a Social Innovation Camp, a fully virtual exercise in line with COVID-19 guidelines. Spanning six weeks, the modules featured video lessons and interactive, collaborative activities and assessments on design thinking for developing social innovations in the three main languages of Sri Lanka.

## Disability Inclusion

Four per cent of the population in Sri Lanka is considered to be hearing impaired. Recognizing **"leaving no one behind" and "an inclusive parliament"** as priorities, the Parliament of Sri Lanka in collaboration with UNDP provided simultaneous sign language interpretation for the first time ever, for the duration of the 2022 financial year Budget Debate. This move was in line with the UN's overall goal to create a more inclusive and accessible governance framework.



**first-ever simultaneous sign language interpretation of budget reading**

**in parliament to reach the 4 per cent of Sri Lanka's population that is hearing impaired**



# Gender



© UNFPA Sri Lanka

In 2021, the UN in Sri Lanka strengthened collective engagement and advocacy on gender—externally and internally. This effort was largely led by the Gender Theme Group (GTG) of the UN in Sri Lanka, based on recommendations in the first comprehensive assessment of the UN’s system-wide gender equality and women’s empowerment action plan, known as UNCT-SWAP Gender Equality Scorecard in 2020. A key result was establishing the position of a Gender Coordination Officer (GCO) for the UN Country Team. **Under the support of UN Women in 2021, this function was continued into 2022, institutionalising the work and strengthening the collective engagement on gender across Agencies, Funds and Programmes.**

A comprehensive mapping of UN Sri Lanka’s full range of gender mainstreamed and gender responsive work was done by GTG at the beginning of the year, providing important analysis for developing the upcoming UN Cooperation Framework 2023-2027.

This analysis showed that UN entities best complement GTG’s work in Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV), Women’s Economic Empowerment, Peacebuilding and Social Cohesion, and strengthening of state institutions across sectors, while areas such as women in leadership, migration, and health could benefit from greater collaboration.

The prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) theme was also temporarily brought under the oversight of the GTG, which led on updating the annual UN Sri Lanka PSEA Action Plan. Work involved localising information, materials, and consultations across entities to assess the context and status of PSEA, with recommendations to strengthen collective action and streamline communication.

The GTG also led in sensitising UN staff around gender through advocacy and knowledge sharing, including webinars on gender-based violence and sexual orientation, and gender identity and expression. The GTG also advocated for gender responsive operations and strengthened its partnership with the UN Operations Management Team, an ongoing activity through 2022. The follow up 2021 Scorecard Assessment showed that **the UN in Sri Lanka made significant progress on the previous comprehensive assessment recommendations on all reassessed indicators**, guiding the Group’s work in 2021 and strengthening inter-agency collaboration around gender.

**UN entities best complement GTG’s work in Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV), Women’s Economic Empowerment, Peacebuilding and Social Cohesion**

Outward-facing, the Gender group coordinated joint advocacy by UN Agencies around International Women’s Day 2021 through a joint statement calling for more women in leadership and celebrating groundbreaking appointments and contributions of women in law enforcement, science, and business, among others. A related joint webinar on **“Women in Leadership: Achieving an Equal Future in a COVID-19 World”** was organised by the UN and the Ministry of Women and Child Development.

In collaboration with the Ministry, UNDP conducted a rapid assessment on enhancing services of helplines to survivors of SGBV during COVID-19 lockdowns.

The UN, led by UNFPA and UN Women, also collaborated with the Ministry of Women and Child Development and the Parliament of Sri Lanka to develop the National Policies and National Action Plans on Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment, while UNESCO led in sensitising media partners on the safety of women journalists, with related guidelines being disseminated among stakeholders.

**30** media managers and 50 journalists

received practical orientation on guidelines for the safety of female journalists

## Women speaking up

Winifrida Elizabeth Nawaratne is a human rights activist and an active member of the National Peace Council of Sri Lanka. She became engaged in social work following a course on human rights at the University of Colombo, which she took after retiring from her job as a typist. She was a participant in UN Women’s multi-stakeholder dialogue, titled “Promoting Women’s Engagement in Effective Solid Waste Management in Sri Lanka.” **Winifrida dedicates her time to promoting women’s rights and women’s empowerment in her community in Puttalam, north-western Sri Lanka.**

“I never realised that there existed a big gap in education and awareness about basic human rights within our own communities, until I had the opportunity to speak with different people, especially women, as part of my work in advocating for human rights,” she says.

“Many women who attended the Dialogue realised that they too have opinions that matter, and they too can contribute to making decisions in relation to community issues which affect people’s right to a clean environment and to live healthy lives. These dialogues also brought to light effective ways in which women can be empowered through self-employment by recycling waste to make an income. When women are given such knowledge, they can go far in life.”



© UN Women Sri Lanka

## Partnerships and Financing for the 2030 Agenda

During 2021, the UN in Sri Lanka strengthened its wide-ranging partnerships with the government, development partners, civil society, private sector, and local communities, working collaboratively to achieve national SDG priorities and leverage financing to advance the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The UN Sri Lanka SDG Fund promoted joint programming by UN Agencies, Funds and Programmes on important peace and resilience challenges with the support of key donor partners. The Fund facilitated greater coordination, coherence, and strategic resource allocation, while reducing fiduciary risks and transaction costs.

**US\$ 7.76 Million**

**Total Donor Commitments in 2021**

to the Joint SDG Fund

**US\$ 17.90 Million**

**Total Donor Commitments**

to the Joint SDG Fund

### Total contributions to the Joint SDG Fund 2019-2022



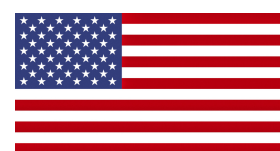
**US\$ 10.31 Million**



**US\$ 1.38 Million**



**US\$ 4.28 Million**



**US\$ 1.93 Million**

### Funding for 2021



**US\$ 3.06 Million**



**US\$ 5.23 Million**

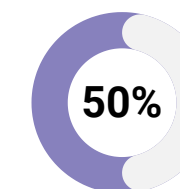
The **Peace Window** currently comprises the Joint Programme for Peace. It engages in activities related to dealing with the past, social cohesion, and resettlement. Over the course of the previous year the Programme facilitated dialogues on **implementation of the reparations policy**. A campaign was launched to understand the **nature of the spread of hate speech** in Sri Lanka by using social media influencers to promote alternative narratives. Additional work **addressed Sexual and Gender Based Violence**. The Programme also **supported internally displaced persons and refugee returnees** in Jaffna, Kilinochchi, Mullaitivu, Trincomalee, and Batticaloa through the provision of livelihood inputs and training, developing entrepreneurship, and developing community-building organisations.

With the support of the Government of Australia, the **Resilience Window** continued to focus on **addressing inequality by tackling climate change and disaster risk reduction**. The **health system's capacity to respond to the pandemic was enhanced** by the provision of health equipment, strengthening emergency services, increasing laboratory and testing capacity, improving case management and surveillance, and providing psychosocial support (see *COVID-19 response Page 5 and Health page 8*). In addition, **immediate relief assistance for COVID-19 was provided to marginalised estate and rural communities**, and the immediate and long-term protection of **vulnerable migrants** in Kuwait was addressed. Further support was also provided for the **safe reopening of schools, as well as implementing learning recovery** and continuous learning (see *Education page 10*).

## UN Coherence, Effectiveness, and Efficiency

The UN in Sri Lanka made significant progress in integrating services across its entities in various areas of work, despite the COVID-19 pandemic and its consequent impact on working modalities. **Significant cost savings continued to accrue from the Long-Term Agreements and joint procurement initiatives.**

Agreements were used on a wide variety of services including travel and transportation; janitorial and security services; conference facilities; auctioneering services; internet and network printing and scanning services; vehicle maintenance; financial spot checks; and paper supplies. **The common IT helpdesk continued its support in 2021 to resident staff at a specific rate, while the UN-wide Operations Management Team (OMT) facilitated specific training sessions for UN entities.**



**Common premises ratio**  
29 per cent in Colombo and 100 per cent outside Colombo

The OMT also developed Common Terms of Reference for interpreters, editors, and translators, and a roster of consultants for various disciplines was compiled and digitised for UN Agencies, Funds, and Programmes.

**The current Common Premises ratio is 50 per cent, with 29 per cent in Colombo and 100 per cent outside of the capital. To strengthen this consolidation**, UNICEF has initiated the planning and design of their proposed new building within the UN Compound. **Addressing disability inclusion**, two elevators were installed at the UN Compound in Colombo, one funded collectively and another funded by UNDP, greatly improving universal access.

The OMT led on **standardising guidelines on a variety of topics** such as avoiding single-use plastics in UN offices, sustainable procurement, electronic waste disposal, and e-archiving. The OMT also started work on a UN "Buddy System" for Sri Lanka and an updated induction video for incoming personnel. A survey has been undertaken to gather data on the diverse IT platforms used by different agencies in order to explore standardisation.

## Evaluations and Lessons Learned

As the **current UN Sustainable Development Framework (UNSDF) 2018-2022 is approaching its final year and the UN is working on preparing the next 2023-2027 Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF)**, it was an opportune moment to undertake an evaluation of the current Cooperation Framework to identify key lessons learnt.

The evaluation exercise identified the capacity of UN agencies to provide technical assistance, capacity building, and systems strengthening as critical strengths of the UN. **Donors and international financial institutions saw the UN as a "trusted partner" due to its close relationship with the government across diverse ministries, and for its technical knowledge of national priorities in different sectors which informed how funding was disbursed.**

**Even though the COVID-19 pandemic response was not directly implemented under the UNSDF, it laid a solid foundation underpinned by strong relations between government counterparts and UN country programmes.** This was identified as a strength to leverage towards the next cooperation framework cycle, in line with the One UN Agenda. Data availability and accuracy to evaluate many of the outcome indicators were noted as some of the challenges to address.

Gender was identified as a prominent cross-cutting issue and has been recommended as an important theme for the design and implementation of the next Cooperation Framework. **The reorganization of the results groups was mentioned as a positive step towards a more systematic alignment between the Cooperation Framework and individual priorities of UN Agencies, Funds and Programmes, in line with the UN Reform agenda.** Coordination, coherence, impact and joint approaches will be further strengthened in the new Cooperation Framework currently under development.

# Chapter 3: UNCT Focus 2022

## Adapting to a fast-moving country situation

When the COVID-19 pandemic struck, the United Nations Country Team in Sri Lanka developed a socioeconomic response strategy within months, allowing for targeted support both on immediate and longer-term measures. The UN will maintain this adaptive approach in 2022 as Sri Lanka faces mounting macro-economic pressures in terms of debt sustainability, foreign exchange reserves, inflation and shortages in essential imports. The impact of these challenges on the population, especially the most vulnerable, is already tangible and risks negatively affecting progress towards the 2030 Agenda. The UN will focus on a response effort that bridges immediate protection concerns with longer-term strategies for inclusive and sustainable growth.

## Leaving no one behind

In addition to supporting recovery efforts through technical advice aligned with national priorities, the UN will continue to be a champion of the "Leave No One Behind" approach, especially during times of increased need. We will advocate for disadvantaged groups most likely to be impacted by the emerging crisis—whether due to geographic location, migratory status, age, ethnicity, religion, gender, education level, occupation, or socioeconomic status. A more responsive social protection system is a crucial component of meeting our collective commitments to the most vulnerable. Ensuring adequate access to quality nutrition will be another important focus area, along with strengthening mechanisms for social cohesion, dealing with the past, community engagement, and human rights for all.

## Strengthening our partnerships

Leveraging synergies between the UN Country Team, IFIs, regional entities and development partners will be crucial to understanding and responding to the emerging crisis in a coherent and effective way, both in the immediate term and beyond. The UN will also work with partners from Government to civil society, academia and private sector, building alliances that can rise to the challenges ahead of us. We will continue to play our value-added role as a provider of technical expertise and transformative policy advice, while building local capacities where necessary.

A key highlight in 2022 will be working alongside Sri Lanka on its 2nd Voluntary National Review, supporting an inclusive and evidence-based SDG data gathering process. The United Nations will also look to further support ambitious national commitments on climate action and sustainable food systems.

## Planning for the next five years

Together with our Government partners and other stakeholders, the United Nations in Sri Lanka is developing the Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework 2023-2027, our collective workplan for the next five years. During 2022 we will finalize the Cooperation Framework at the strategic level, while at the same time setting the groundwork for its implementation through Joint Workplans around collective outputs that consider the economic challenges ahead. The four Strategic Priorities that will guide our future work, developed through a collaborative process, comprise inclusive and equitable human development and well-being; resilient and green growth for shared prosperity and environmental sustainability; social cohesion and inclusive governance, justice, and human rights; and gender equality.

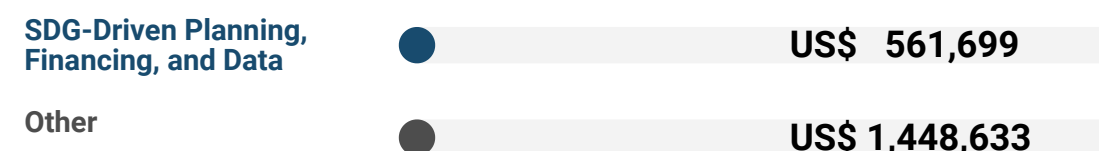
# Financial Overview and Resource Mobilisation

Estimated Expenditure in 2021



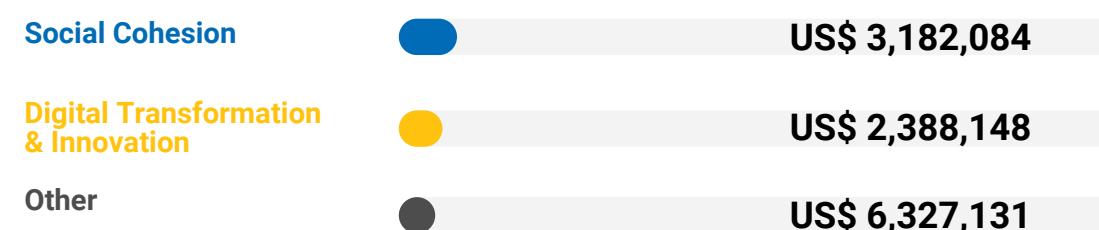
### DRIVER 1

Towards improved data, knowledge management, and evidence-based policy



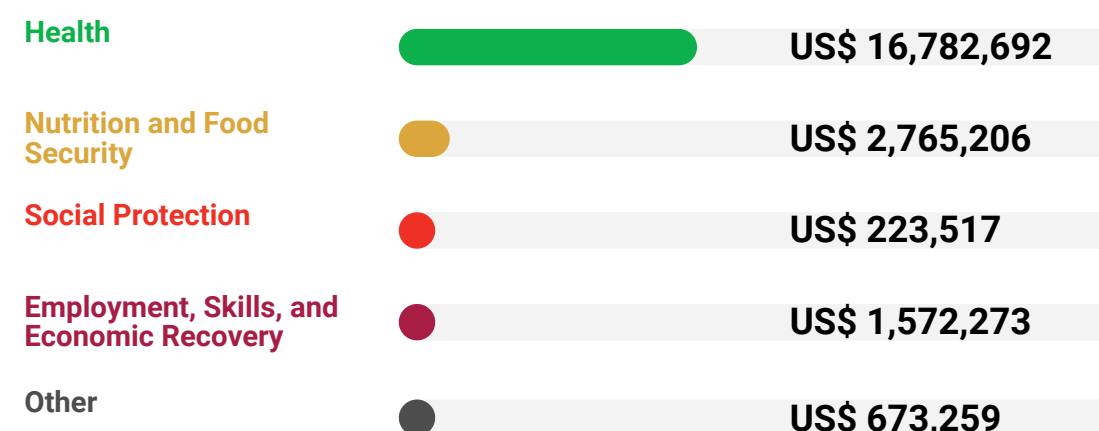
### DRIVER 2

Strengthened innovative public institutions and engagement towards a lasting peace



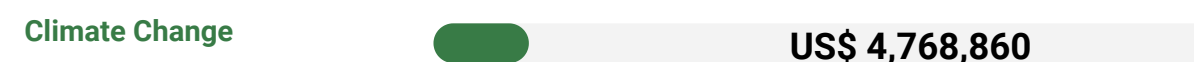
### DRIVER 3

Human security and socioeconomic resilience



### DRIVER 4

Enhancing resilience to climate change and disasters and strengthening environmental management



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# Acronyms

<b>ADB</b>	Asian Development Bank	<b>PPE</b>	Personal Protective Equipment
<b>CCA</b>	Climate Change Adaptation	<b>PPP</b>	Peacebuilding Priority Plan
<b>COP26</b>	26th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change	<b>PSEA</b>	Protection Against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
<b>COVAX</b>	COVID-19 Vaccines Global Access	<b>SAM</b>	Severe Acute Malnutrition
<b>COVID - 19</b>	Coronavirus Disease 2019	<b>SDGs</b>	Sustainable Development Goals
<b>CPRP</b>	Country Preparedness and Response Plan	<b>SERP</b>	UN Socioeconomic Response Advisory Paper
<b>DDR</b>	Disaster Risk Reduction	<b>SGBV</b>	Sexual and Gender-Based Violence
<b>FAO</b>	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	<b>SMEs</b>	Small and Medium Enterprises
<b>FDI</b>	Foreign Direct Investment	<b>SPAR</b>	State Party Self-Assessment Annual Reporting (SPAR) for international health regulations
<b>GAVI</b>	Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization	<b>SRPP</b>	Strategic Response and Preparedness Plan for COVID-19
<b>GCM</b>	Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration	<b>TIP</b>	Trafficking in Persons
<b>GoSL</b>	Government of Sri Lanka	<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>GTG</b>	Gender Theme Group	<b>UN Women</b>	UN Women
<b>HCT</b>	Humanitarian Country Team	<b>UN-HABITAT</b>	United Nations Human Settlement Programme
<b>HPB</b>	Health Promotion Bureau, Ministry of Health Sri Lanka	<b>UNCT</b>	UN Country Team
<b>HRDDP</b>	Human Rights Due Diligence Policy	<b>UNCT-SWAP</b>	UNCT System-Wide Action Plan
<b>ICT</b>	Information and Communications Technology	<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme
<b>ICU</b>	Intensive Care Unit	<b>UNEP</b>	United Nations Environment Programme
<b>IFI</b>	International Financial Institutions	<b>UNESCO</b>	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
<b>ILO</b>	International Labour Organisation	<b>UNFPA</b>	United Nations Population Fund
<b>IMF</b>	International Monetary Fund	<b>UNGC</b>	United Nations Global Compact
<b>IOM</b>	International Organization for Migration	<b>UNHCR</b>	United Nations Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
<b>IPS</b>	Institute of Policy Studies	<b>UNICEF</b>	United Nations Children's Fund
<b>ITC</b>	International Trade Centre	<b>UNIDO</b>	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
<b>JPP</b>	Joint Programme for Peace	<b>UNODC</b>	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
<b>MAM</b>	Moderate Acute Malnutrition	<b>UNOPS</b>	United Nations Office for Project Services
<b>MEPA</b>	Marine Environment Protection Authority	<b>UNSDCF</b>	UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework 2023 - 2027
<b>MPTF</b>	UN Multi-Partner Trust Fund	<b>UNSDF</b>	UN Sustainable Development Framework 2018 - 2022
<b>MSMEs</b>	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises	<b>UNV</b>	United Nations Volunteers
<b>NDCs</b>	Nationally Determined Contributions of Climate Change Mitigation, Adaptation, and Loss & Damage Sectors	<b>WASH</b>	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
<b>NLAC</b>	National Labour Advisory Council	<b>WB</b>	The World Bank
<b>NMPI</b>	National Multidimensional Poverty Index	<b>WFP</b>	United Nations World Food Programme
<b>NVDP</b>	National Vaccine Deployment Plan	<b>WHO</b>	World Health Organization
<b>OMT</b>	UN Operations Management Team	<b>WSPs</b>	Water Safety Plans

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Office of the UN Resident Coordinator,  
202-204 Baudhaloka Mw., Colombo, Sri Lanka 00700.

Email: [rco.lk@one.un.org](mailto:rco.lk@one.un.org)

Website: <https://srilanka.un.org/>

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