



UNITED NATIONS
SRI LANKA



Annual Results Report 2025

UNITED NATIONS IN SRI LANKA





Photo © UNDP Sri Lanka

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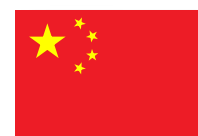
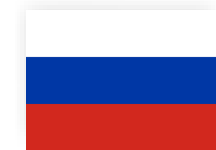
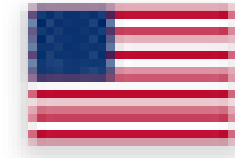
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UN SRI LANKA COUNTRY TEAM



DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS



MESSAGE FROM THE RESIDENT COORDINATOR

In 2025, we marked important milestones: the 80th anniversary of the United Nations and 70 years of partnership between Sri Lanka and the UN. These anniversaries offered an opportunity to reflect on our long-standing collaboration and how to maintain its strength going forward amidst rising global uncertainties.

Over seven decades, the UN has stood alongside Sri Lanka at defining moments: the aftermath of the devastating tsunami in 2004, the civil conflict and the long work of reconciliation, the COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent economic crisis as well as the recent cyclone that affected communities across the country. Sri Lanka, for its part, has made important contributions to global efforts, such as through its peacekeepers, its voice on ocean governance and commitments to sustainable development.

This year was also shaped by difficult realities beyond Sri Lanka's borders. Global warming, conflict in other regions, economic uncertainty, challenges to multilateral systems and significant reductions in financing for international development have made it harder to keep progress on the Sustainable Development Goals on track.

In light of these extraordinary changes shaping our world, the UN Secretary-General put forward a vision through the UN80 reform agenda. It outlines critical changes that will help the UN make better use of our resources at the global and country levels and better able to support Member States tackle those challenges. While consultations with Member-States continue, the broad direction of these reforms will increasingly guide the work of the UN in Sri Lanka.

This year, the UN has continued to work alongside the Government and partners to deliver on our diverse mandates as the UN Country Team in Sri Lanka. Thousands of people across the country benefited from our efforts to improve the wellbeing of those in need, including through interventions on nutrition and strengthening resilience to climate shocks. We also worked to improve health services, promote gender equality, support decent work, and invested in education and skills, especially for young people who are so central to the country's future.

At the same time, support for reforms in social protection, governance, and digital systems are beginning to change how people experience public services, making them more accessible and responsive. The visit of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights reinforced the importance of progress on truth seeking, justice, reconciliation, accountability, and transitioning to a human rights-based economy - areas where Sri Lanka's own leadership will be decisive.

Lives and livelihoods were suddenly upended on 28 November when Cyclone Ditwah struck the country, triggering the worst flooding and landslides in two decades. I was deeply impressed by the solidarity shown by authorities, communities and individuals across the country, who quickly and generously supported those affected. That collective spirit showed what Sri Lanka is capable of when it comes together. During my visits to affected communities, I spoke with families who had lost their homes, their crops and everything they had built overnight.

In some areas, schools had been damaged or turned into shelters, water systems were disrupted, and children's education was put on hold. What struck me most was that the people hit hardest were those who were already struggling – families still recovering from previous shocks who were least able to absorb another one.

To respond at scale, at the request of the Government, the United Nations and humanitarian partners supported a coordinated response through the Humanitarian Priorities Plan (HPP), delivering life-saving assistance while helping lay the groundwork for recovery. The HPP was generously supported by partners of Sri Lanka around the world, during a time when funding for humanitarian appeals can no longer be taken for granted.

Progress is never the work of one institution. I want to thank the Government of Sri Lanka, civil servants

at every level, development partners, civil society organisations, private sector partners, and communities across the country for our continued collaboration.

I also want to recognize our UN colleagues across Sri Lanka, whose efforts, often carried out in difficult conditions, make a real difference in people's lives. The results presented in this report are a reflection of their hard work and dedication, and I am so very proud of what this team achieves.

Looking ahead, Sri Lanka's path will require continued investment in the potential of its people, in effective institutions that deliver and enable, in communities in all their diversity, and in a model of growth that is innovative, green and leaves no one behind. The UN remains committed to walking this path with Sri Lanka, working alongside its government, its institutions and its people to build a future that is more resilient, more equitable, and more sustainable for all.

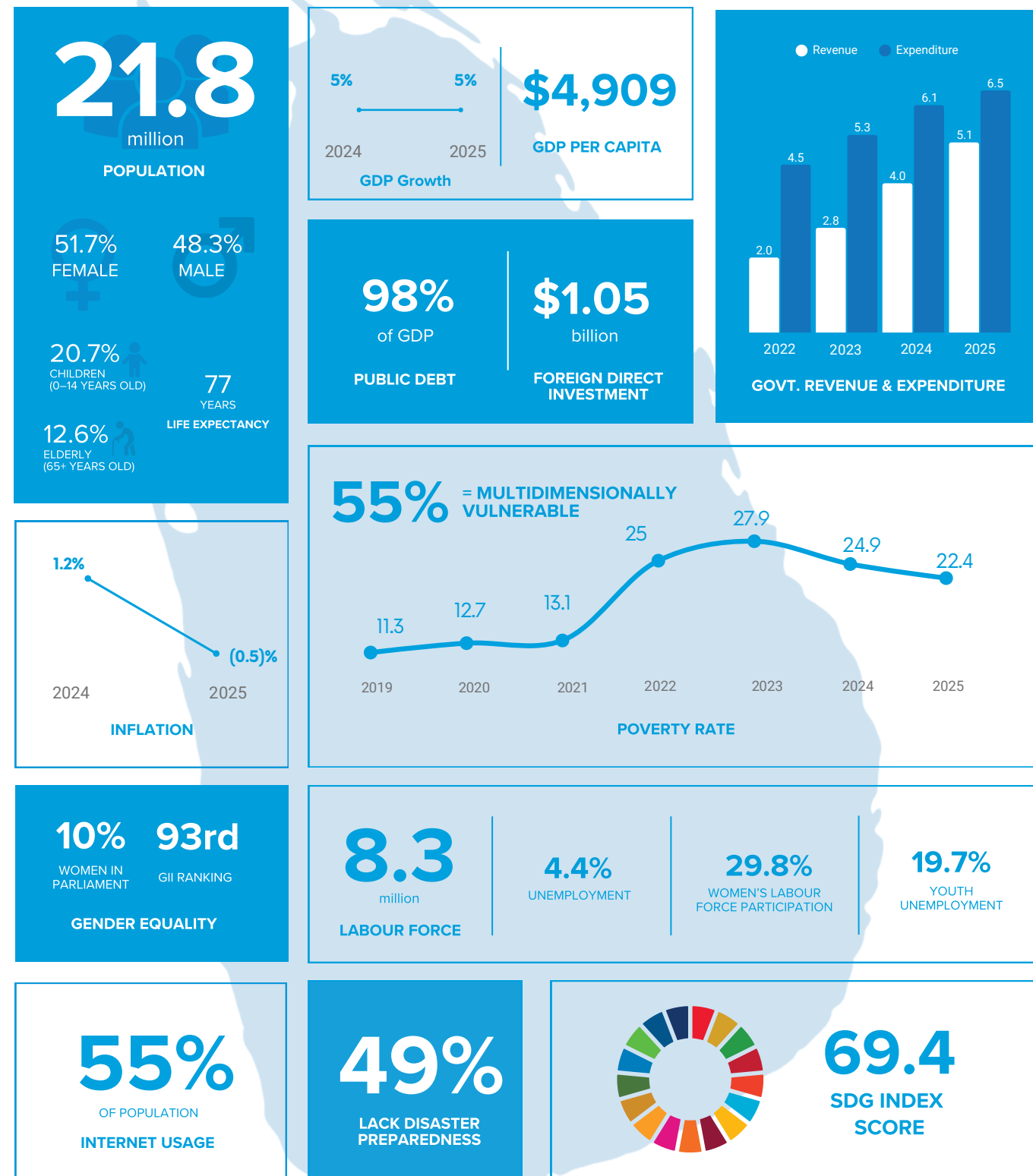


Marc-André Franche

United Nations Resident Coordinator



KEY DEVELOPMENT TRENDS



In 2025, Sri Lanka's economy continued to stabilize, with growth estimated at 5 per cent.¹ Construction and manufacturing rebounded, tourism strengthened, and remittances reached historically high levels. Implementation of the IMF Extended Fund Facility continued, debt restructuring approached completion, and public finances improved through stronger domestic revenue collection.

Progress was not felt equally, however. Many households continued to face high living costs, limited job opportunities and gaps in social protection. While poverty is projected to decline from 24.9 per cent in 2024 to 22.4 per cent in 2025,² it remained at an elevated level compared to pre-pandemic levels. Inequality continued to be a challenge, especially for women, youth and marginalized groups, including the Malayaha community.

Sri Lanka also successfully submitted its updated Nationally Determined Contributions to reducing global warming (NDC 3.0), committing to reduce emissions by 20.09% by 2035 compared to the 2021 to 2030 period. This is critical for the environment but also for energy security. A range of governance reforms advanced, including to strengthen oversight, improve the efficiency and transparency of public administration and strengthen digital services, as well as new legislation to tackle corruption and increase transparency.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, in his August 2025 report to the UN Human Rights Council, raised concerns on human rights, reconciliation and accountability, including arbitrary arrest, torture, surveillance, restrictions on

civic space especially in the North and East. His report calls for leadership and progress on accountability, truth-seeking, institutional and legal reforms.

In late November, Cyclone Ditwah triggered the most extensive flooding and landslide damage of the past two decades in Sri Lanka, impacting about 2.2 million people across all 25 districts of the country. The cyclone resulted in 687 fatalities and left 147 people missing. More than 233,000 people were displaced in the immediate aftermath of the disaster and an estimated 113,000 houses were left in need of repair. Over 10,000 households may require long-term relocation to areas less exposed to natural hazards.

Damage to over 1,000 km of national roads and approximately 750 bridges also disrupted mobility and supply chains. More than 45,000 enterprises are estimated to have experienced damage or operational disruption, particularly informal, micro and small businesses. In agriculture, there was significant damage to crops, livestock, fisheries, plantations, and productive assets, with implications for rural incomes and food security. An estimated 150,000 workers experienced temporary losses in income, with around five million lost workdays nationwide.

Cyclone Ditwah also compounded existing vulnerabilities by disrupting access to essential services such as clean water, healthcare, education, and sanitation, highlighting that despite improving socio-economic indicators, Sri Lanka remains highly vulnerable to external shocks.

¹ Department of Census and Statistics. 2025. National Accounts Estimates of Sri Lanka. DCS: 17 March 2026. ² World Bank Group (2025). Sri Lanka Development Update: Better Spending for All. WBG: October 2025.

SDG Index trends



Trends: ↑ On track/maintaining SDG achievement ↗ Moderately improving → Stagnating ↓ Decreasing ●● Trend information unavailable

CYCLONE DITWAH RESPONSE

In response to Cyclone Ditwah, the Government of Sri Lanka mounted a large-scale emergency operation focused on search and rescue, followed by the establishment of hundreds of safety centers for displaced households, measures to safeguard the provision of essential services, and the initiation of recovery efforts coordinated through the Presidential Task Force for Rebuilding Sri Lanka. National authorities went on to implement over 15 targeted support packages to help affected people rebuild homes and livelihoods, reaching over 400,000 households across all 25 districts as of 31 March 2026.

UN support to complement the national response began immediately after the disaster. Within days, the UN mobilized assistance such as energy biscuits, nutritional supplements, safe drinking water, hygiene and shelter items, as well as maternity and dignity kits focusing on the most vulnerable segments of the affected population.

To ensure a coordinated response, the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) structure was activated, bringing together the UN with key NGO and CSOs through nine priority sectors, namely food security, agriculture, health, nutrition, shelter, land site coordination, protection, education, WASH, and early recovery. Provisions were also made to cooperate on cash and voucher assistance, accountability to affected populations, and protection from sexual exploitation and abuse. The OCHA Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific provided active support throughout, including the deployment of a United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) response team for a 2-week period. The UN also rapidly submitted a priority request to its Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF).

A [Joint Rapid Needs Assessment](#) was undertaken together with the national Disaster Management Centre, UN agencies and humanitarian partners, bringing together multiple data sources, satellite imagery and field assessment for a comprehensive overview of needs across the country.

Based on this joint assessment, and at the request of the Government, the HCT launched the Sri Lanka [Humanitarian Priorities Plan \(HPP\)](#) on 11 December 2025, aiming to support 658,000 of the

most vulnerable people affected by the cyclone through a coordinated four-month response.

Out of the required funding of USD 35.3 million to implement the HPP, USD 23.9 million was contributed as of 31 March 2026, including USD 4.5 million from the CERF. Funding gaps remain in key sectors such as health, nutrition, agriculture and early recovery.

As of 31 March, support under the HPP by a total of 82 partner organizations have reached over 260,000 affected people. Key support delivered includes emergency shelter and non-food items, food security assistance, integrated health and nutrition services, protection support, including for children and women in communities and at safety centers, waste and debris removal, and the reconstruction of water and sanitation facilities, and the early restoration of livelihoods.

In addition to the assistance provided through the HPP, bilateral and multilateral development partners contributed significant in-kind resources and assistance to organizations such as the Sri Lanka Red Cross Society, as well as major budget support loans.

As we approach the end of the humanitarian response phase of the Cyclone Ditwah response, it is clear that many challenges persist even as the overall situation has stabilized. While displacement has declined from peak levels, as of 31 March 149,927 people are estimated to still remain with host families or in other locations that are not their former homes. Based on assessments undertaken, key barriers to sustainable return include unsafe housing, limited financial resources, and landslide risks, highlighting the need for continued support for relocation, housing recovery, employment and livelihood restoration. Assessments also indicate that the most vulnerable - especially those relying on informal employment and unrecognized landholding or housing - remain disproportionately impacted and may remain outside the scope of official assistance schemes. In this regard, the Malaiyaha community, long excluded from formal land ownership and social protection, often face the most severe barriers to recovery.

The UN will continue working with government and partners to address the needs of those who remain in significant need, while supporting longer-term recovery initiatives.

Cyclone Ditwah response in numbers

2.2M
people affected by Cyclone Ditwah

658k
people targeted for assistance through HPP

\$35.3
funding required

\$23.9
mobilized as of 31 March

Learn more:



Mapping the Path to Recovery

A *Post-Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA)* was undertaken under the leadership of the Government of Sri Lanka and mandated by the Presidential Task Force for Rebuilding Sri Lanka, with support from the World Bank, the European Union, the United Nations, the Asian Development Bank, and the Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre.

It provides an evidence-based assessment of disaster impacts. The PDNA will be operationalized through a post-disaster recovery plan, currently in the early stages of being developed.

According to the PDNA, Cyclone Ditwah is estimated to have caused USD 2 billion in damages and USD 1.3 billion in economic losses. Total resilient recovery and reconstruction needs are estimated at approximately USD 3.4 billion over a three-year period. Findings suggest that recovery financing will need to be prioritised and geographically targeted. Transport, housing and settlements, commerce and industry and agriculture and food systems account for over 80% of recovery requirements.



Photo © UNICEF Sri Lanka/IncepanChange

UN PROGRAMMING IN 2025

2025 EXPENDITURE

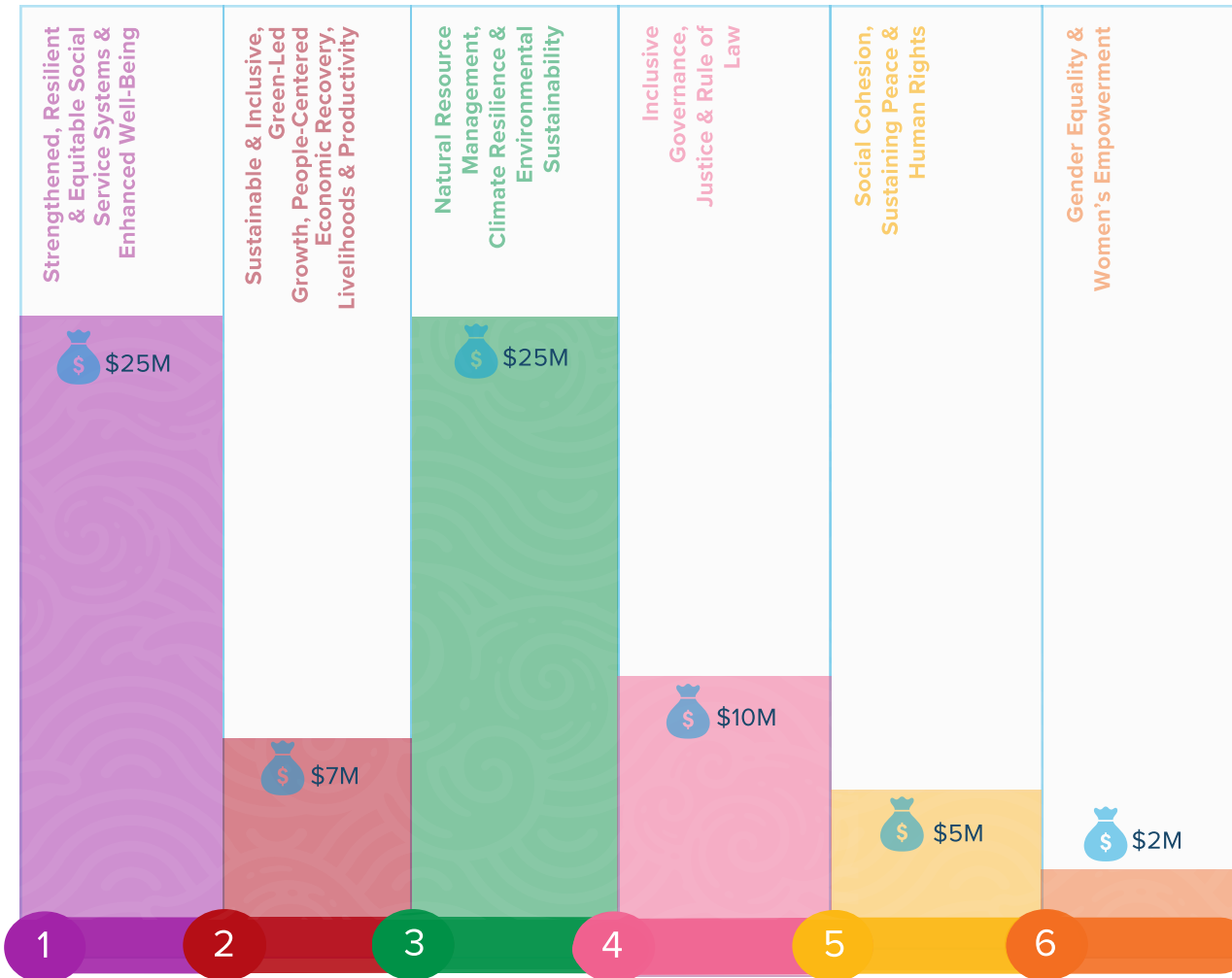
\$141
MILLION
REQUIRED

\$98
MILLION
AVAILABLE

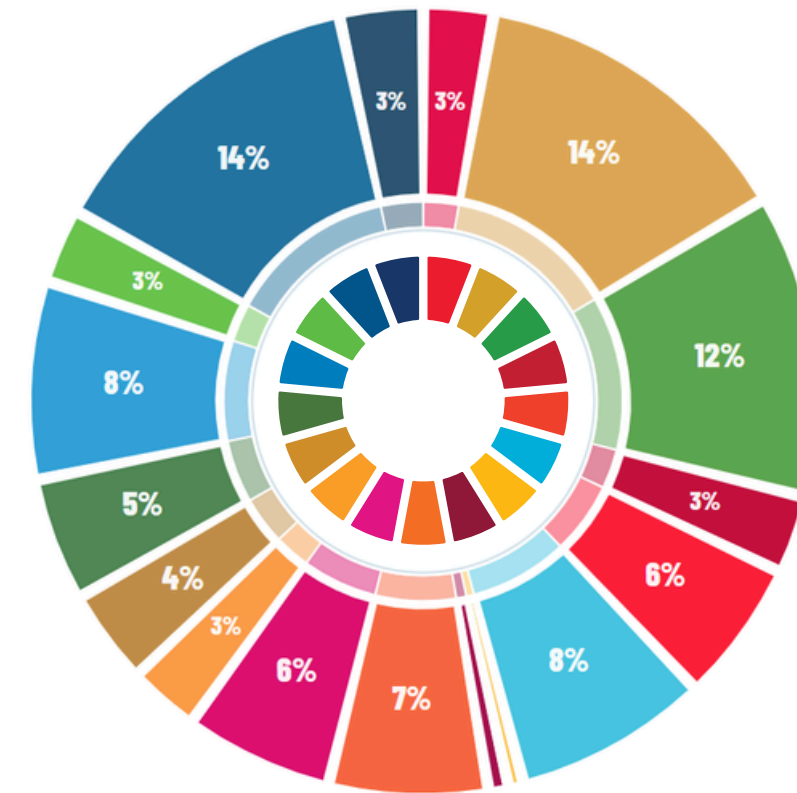
\$74
MILLION
EXPENDITURE

76%
DELIVERY

DELIVERY BY OUTCOME



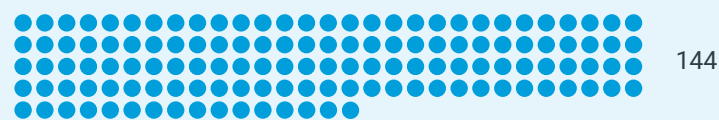
CONTRIBUTION TOWARD THE SDGS



- 1. NO POVERTY 3%
- 2. ZERO HUNGER 14%
- 3. GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING 12%
- 4. QUALITY EDUCATION 3%
- 5. GENDER EQUALITY 6%
- 6. CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION 8%
- 7. AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY 1%
- 8. DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH 1%
- 9. INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE 7%
- 10. REDUCED INEQUALITIES 6%
- 11. SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES 3%
- 12. RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION & PRODUCTION 4%
- 13. CLIMATE ACTION 5%
- 14. LIFE BELOW WATER 8%
- 15. LIFE ON LAND 3%
- 16. PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS 14%
- 17. PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS 3%

TYPES OF UN INTERVENTIONS

CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT/TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE



CONVENING/PARTNERSHIPS/KNOWLEDGE SHARING



DIRECT SUPPORT/ SERVICE DELIVERY



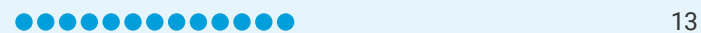
DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS



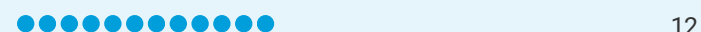
POLICY ADVICE AND THOUGHT LEADERSHIP



SUPPORT FUNCTIONS



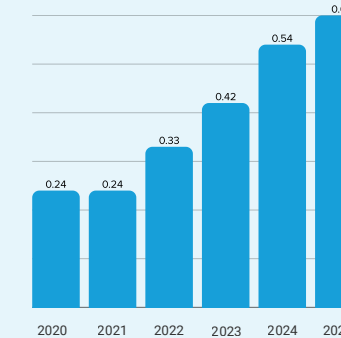
OTHER (INCLUDING COORDINATION)



OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY



56%
OF STAFF IN
COMMON PREMISES



\$2.4M
SAVINGS FROM SHARED
SERVICES SINCE 2020

HOW WE MEASURE PROGRESS

At the core of the UN's commitment is the **United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework for 2023-2027**, which articulates the collective vision and contributions of the UN system in its support of Sri Lanka.

Progress against the Cooperation Framework commitments is tracked using both outcome and output level indicators, to ensure accountability and the ability to adapt strategies as needed.

Outcome indicators capture long-term changes in people's lives or systems and are the result of actions by a wide range of stakeholders including the UN and government.

Output indicators reflect more immediate results, such as services delivered or policies developed, and are directly attributable to the work of the UN.

The UN's contributions towards the intended outcomes is tracked by using output indicators such as services delivered or policies developed with support from UN agencies, funds and programmes.

The output indicators listed in each section of this report show the level of progress made in 2025.

OUTPUT PROGRESS	
Achieved	✓
Progressing	↑
No progress	→
Regressing	↓

OUTCOME 2

Sustainable & Inclusive, Green-Led Growth, People-Centered Economic Recovery, Livelihoods & Productivity

More people in Sri Lanka, particularly youth and the most vulnerable, have equitable, decent, just work and income opportunities, and benefit from and contribute to inclusive, gender-transformative, resilient and green-led economic recovery, growth and diversification.

OUTCOME 4

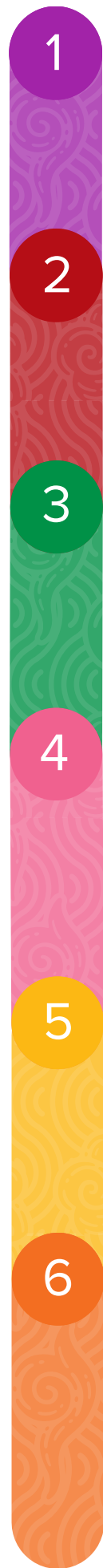
Inclusive Governance, Justice & Rule of Law

People in Sri Lanka, particularly the most vulnerable, have increased trust and confidence to claim and benefit from enhanced, non-discriminatory, gender-responsive, participatory and efficient governance and justice systems and rights-based development.

OUTCOME 6

Gender Equality & Women's Empowerment

Women and girls enjoy and are empowered to exercise their full rights, representation, and agency over all aspects of their lives, and live free from discrimination and violence.



OUTCOME 1

Strengthened, Resilient & Equitable Social Service Systems & Enhanced Well-Being

More people in Sri Lanka, particularly the most vulnerable, access and benefit from equitable, resilient and gender-responsive quality social services and with enhanced well-being and dignity.

OUTCOME 3

Natural Resource Management, Climate Resilience & Environmental Sustainability

More people and communities in Sri Lanka, especially the vulnerable and marginalized, are more resilient to climate change and disaster risks, have enhanced water and food security, and benefit equitably from ambitious climate action and increasingly sustainable management and protection of the environment and natural resources.

OUTCOME 5

Social Cohesion, Sustaining Peace & Human Rights

The people of Sri Lanka live in a society which is more cohesive and strengthened by transformative and rights-based processes and mechanisms which support peaceful coexistence and human rights for all.

1 Strengthened, Resilient & Equitable Social Service Systems & Enhanced Well-Being

OUTCOME



OUTPUT PROGRESS

1.1	New or revised national strategies/policies on health	↑	Improved comprehensive sexuality education	↑
	Strengthened primary health care system	↑	Digital and telemedicine practices in public health system	→
1.2	National policy and a multisectoral action plan to eradicate hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition	↑	Nutritionally vulnerable people receiving UN support	✓
	Advancing commitments on food systems and nutrition	↑		
1.3	Access to skills and learning programmes	↑	Effectiveness of digital learning solutions	↑
	National policy instruments ensuring inclusive, accessible, equitable and adaptive learning	↑	Gender-responsive and equitable education systems	↑
1.4	Water, sanitation and hygiene facilities in schools and healthcare settings	✓	Access to basic water, sanitation, and hygiene services	✓

Health and well-being

In 2025, the UN helped Sri Lanka advance major health reforms, strengthening the foundations for more accessible and people-centred care. With UN support, new Arogya Health and Wellbeing Centres were established, expanding primary care and bringing essential services closer to communities.

Several national strategies, developed with UN technical and policy support, were completed, including the National Policy on Health and Wellbeing (2026–2035), the Health Security Action Plan, and the Dengue Control Plan. Strategies on antimicrobial resistance, cancer, palliative care and patient safety also progressed. Together, these reforms give Sri Lanka clearer direction on disease prevention, emergency readiness and quality of care.

Upgraded data systems improved how Sri Lanka plans and delivers care. Completion of the National Health Accounts, the World Health Survey Plus and the SCORE survey strengthened key evidence for policy decisions. A national review of universal health coverage metrics set the stage for updated indicators in 2025.

Digital transformation accelerated through the launch of OneRegistry, which modernised birth, death and vital-statistics reporting. Training for 600 medical officers and mortality coders improved the accuracy of health data essential for planning.

Migration health and national health security were also strengthened. With UN support, 25,000 incoming migrants were screened for major infectious diseases, and supported with outpatient and emergency care. These efforts reduced the risk of cross-border health risks and supported safe mobility.



Photo © UNICEF Sri Lanka



Food and nutrition

In 2025, the UN helped reduce malnutrition and strengthened food systems for children, mothers and vulnerable groups. National nutrition efforts advanced under the Multisector Action Plan for Nutrition, while updated standards for workplace canteens and elder-care facilities promoted healthier environments.

The UN’s school nutrition programmes reached millions of children across the country. Over 320,000 students received fruits, vegetables and eggs through Home-Grown School Feeding, supporting child nutrition and local farmers. An additional 480,000 students benefited from fortified rice, and more than 1,700 schools received equipment to monitor children’s nutritional status.

These efforts ensured that children received safe, nutritious meals during the school day, helping them learn better and grow healthier.

Early detection and treatment of malnutrition improved. Nearly 9,600 children with severe acute malnutrition were referred to for life-saving treatment. To support healthier diets during early childhood and pregnancy, the UN provided micronutrient supplements to more than 470,000 young children and 190,000 pregnant women received micronutrient supplements. In total, 1.47 million nutritionally vulnerable people benefited from food assistance or nutrition support, improving diets and reducing nutritional risk nationwide.

Food-safety systems also improved. Draft food-safety legislation, new emergency protocols, and national risk-analysis tools strengthened the national regulatory framework, while public awareness campaigns and technical guidance helped create safer food environments across the country.

Education

In 2025, the UN made learning environments safer, more inclusive and better aligned with future skills. Early-childhood and primary education infrastructure improved, and the rollout of the Inclusive Education Master Plan gained momentum. Efforts to bring out-of-school children back into classrooms continued as 44 catch-up centres helped 600 children prepare to re-enter school.

Strengthening Food Systems, One Meal at a Time

Padmini Kumari and Nilantha Bandara are among thousands of school meal suppliers across Sri Lanka, preparing daily meals that support children’s nutrition and learning.

What once kept them in debt now brings in income. With support from the UN World Food Programme, they set up a poultry farm and moved beyond catering to producing their own food. Today, they produce nearly 1,000 eggs each week, meeting the school’s needs from their own supply while selling the surplus.

Their experience reflects a broader shift, where school meals do more than improve nutrition. By helping suppliers to produce their own food, the programme strengthens food systems, supports rural livelihoods and boosts local economies.



“After eight years of providing meals, we can finally do it without taking loans,”

Padmini Kumari
School Meal Supplier

Learn more:



1.47_M

people improved their nutrition

Teaching quality strengthened through updated learning assessments, modernised teacher-development pathways and the spread of simple “green school” practices like composting and vertical farming. Lifelong learning opportunities expanded for more than 310,000 people. Over 10,000 youth completed an updated Life Skills curriculum, and youth volunteer networks helped broaden learning access. Educators and youth leaders strengthened their skills to promote inclusion and address hate speech.

Digital learning advanced nationwide. Around nearly 2,000 schools adopted real-time connectivity tools to improve digital access, while early steps toward a national Digital Education Transformation Policy set the foundation for wider reform.

The UN helped expand access to comprehensive sexuality education, reaching over 130,000 young people with age-appropriate, evidence-based information on health and relationships. Updated sign-language tools made this content more accessible for students with hearing disabilities, while preparations to distribute adolescent kits through special-education units strengthened inclusion for learners who often face the greatest barriers.

Water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH)

In 2025, UN support expanded access to safe water, sanitation and hygiene in health facilities, schools and communities.

Better WASH infrastructure in health facilities benefited over 265,000 people through upgraded sewage systems, safer medical-waste management and renovated Maternal and Child Health Centre facilities.

Three hospitals installed modern sewage systems, 37 facilities improved waste handling, and 140 staff were trained to manage waste safely.

WASH in schools and preschools also improved across 305 institutions, including 134 healthcare facilities, 31 preschools, and 140 schools. In Uva and Central Provinces, 31 preschools received upgraded and climate-resilient WASH services, reaching 806 children and 62 teachers. Schools received advanced water filtration systems, rainwater harvesting structures, and training for nearly 839 people on how to operate and maintain these systems. Additional upgrades in 30 schools strengthened handwashing and sanitation facilities and supported the integration of climate-resilient practices into teaching and school activities.

At the community level, over 150,000 people received basic WASH services through new or rehabilitated systems. A new purification plant and central sewerage system were established, benefiting nearly 19,000 residents. In rural areas, 11 community-managed water schemes were rehabilitated with climate resilient Water Safety Plans, benefiting nearly 6,000 people. During the dry season, over 5,000 people accessed safe water through emergency trucking.

Women and girls benefited from strengthened menstrual-health support. More than 12,700 learned about hygiene and menstrual health, and 12,500 received sanitary products which helped protect their wellbeing and dignity.

National and local systems also improved. Updated Water Safety Plan guidelines reached 1,000 community-based organisations, and more than 13,000 community members and 200 officers were trained to manage water systems more safely and sustainably.



● Key results

2,000

schools with digital learning

265k

people with safer WASH systems

New National Social Protection Strategy launched

Photo © UNICEF Sri Lanka



Photo © UNFPA Sri Lanka

A Safe Space for Women with Disabilities

In Thalawa, Anuradhapura, a group of women who once faced stigma, gender-based violence and abandonment are rebuilding their lives with dignity. At the AKASA safe home, they have found what is out of reach for many women with disabilities - a place to live in safety.

When the shelter was struggling to continue, support from UNFPA helped renovate facilities and improve living conditions, restoring dignity and hope.

Jayanthi, who lived in fear and isolation, now crafts doormats and hopes to earn an income. Imesha speaks of something many take for granted - being understood and cared for.

For these women, this support has meant more than a place to stay. It has given them the chance to rebuild their lives on their own terms.



“Here, I feel safer than I ever did with my own family. This place, it’s home.”

Jayanthi Kumarihami
Resident of AKASA

Learn more:



OUTPUT PROGRESS

1.5	Services for people at risk of sexual and GBV	↑	Services to reduce or prevent exploitation and abuse	✓
	Quality assurance for the social welfare service workforce	↑		
1.6	Existence of a national social protection policy framework	✓	Integrated social protection system	↓
	Cash, voucher and/or in-kind social protection	✓		
1.7	Access to adequate housing and/or urban services	↓	National policies for sustainable cities and communities	→

Protection

In 2025, UN support helped Sri Lanka move toward a more integrated, equitable and shock-responsive protection system. A major step forward was the launch of the National Social Protection Strategy, a ten-year roadmap aligning social assistance, social care, unemployment insurance and labour-market inclusion. Initiatives on maternity protection and community-based care models provided evidence to guide future reforms and strengthened institutional and tripartite capacities to deliver inclusive, gender-responsive, and sustainable social protection systems.

To improve crisis response, a national study on shock-responsive social protection clarified how early action, disaster-risk management and social protection can work together, helping government design faster, fairer responses to emergencies.

Protection services for children and survivors of violence expanded. A new Model Continuum of Services for Child Victims of Violence introduced coordinated case management, stronger psychosocial support and child-friendly digital court processes. For example, a child-friendly witness room opened at the Kandy High Court, giving child survivors a safer place to testify—a model now planned for national expansion. A national review also clarified roles in child protection, ensuring Probation Officers lead complex violence cases under revised job and competency standards. UN support also helped finalize new national procedures to detect and prosecute child-trafficking cases and supported the development of the National Strategic Action Plan to Monitor and Combat Human Trafficking (2026-2030).

Housing and urban services

In response to rising housing demand and climate-related damage, UN Sri Lanka focused on strengthening the evidence and systems needed for a more equitable housing response.

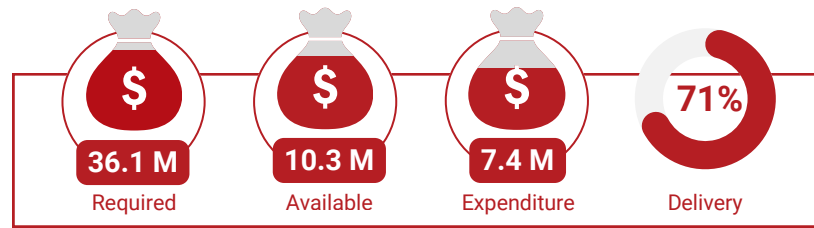
The UN provided technical guidance and oversight for post-disaster housing assessments of over 70,000 homes, helping Government plan recovery and target support. It also developed specifications for transitional shelters and repair kits, and supported procurement and material imports for 13,000 house repairs. The UN contributed technical inputs and coordination to national housing programmes, expected to benefit around 4,700 people.

In urban areas, UN Sri Lanka helped ensure displaced communities in Nuwara Eliya had temporary access to safe drinking water through rapid infrastructure assessments and emergency water trucking.

In Colombo, the UN supported the Municipal Council to secure international grant support and mobilize a potential USD 11.6 million investment for a methane-capture waste-to-energy project designed to process 250 metric tons of organic waste per day, improving environmental services for an estimated 1.2 million residents and transient populations.

At policy level, the UN assisted the revision of Sri Lanka’s national housing policy to better address affordability, informality, climate risks, and urbanization. The updated policy promotes inclusive, data-driven, and climate-resilient planning, with approval now pending.

Sustainable & Inclusive, Green-Led Growth, People-Centered Economic Recovery, Livelihoods & Productivity



OUTPUT PROGRESS

2.1	Initiatives for transformational economic strategies	✓	Innovative financing mechanisms	✓
	Services promoting economic development, employment and decent work	✓		
2.2	Enhanced capacity of TVET	✓	Inclusive labour force and digital economy	↑
	Upskilling women, youth and PwDs	↑		
2.3	Economic growth of the private sector, including MSMEs	↑	Innovation in private sector to mainstream social, economic or environmental practices	↑

In 2025, UN support helped Sri Lanka take concrete steps toward a more inclusive and environmentally responsible economy that creates better jobs and wider opportunities. Efforts focused on strengthening economic recovery while laying the groundwork for long-term, sustainable growth.

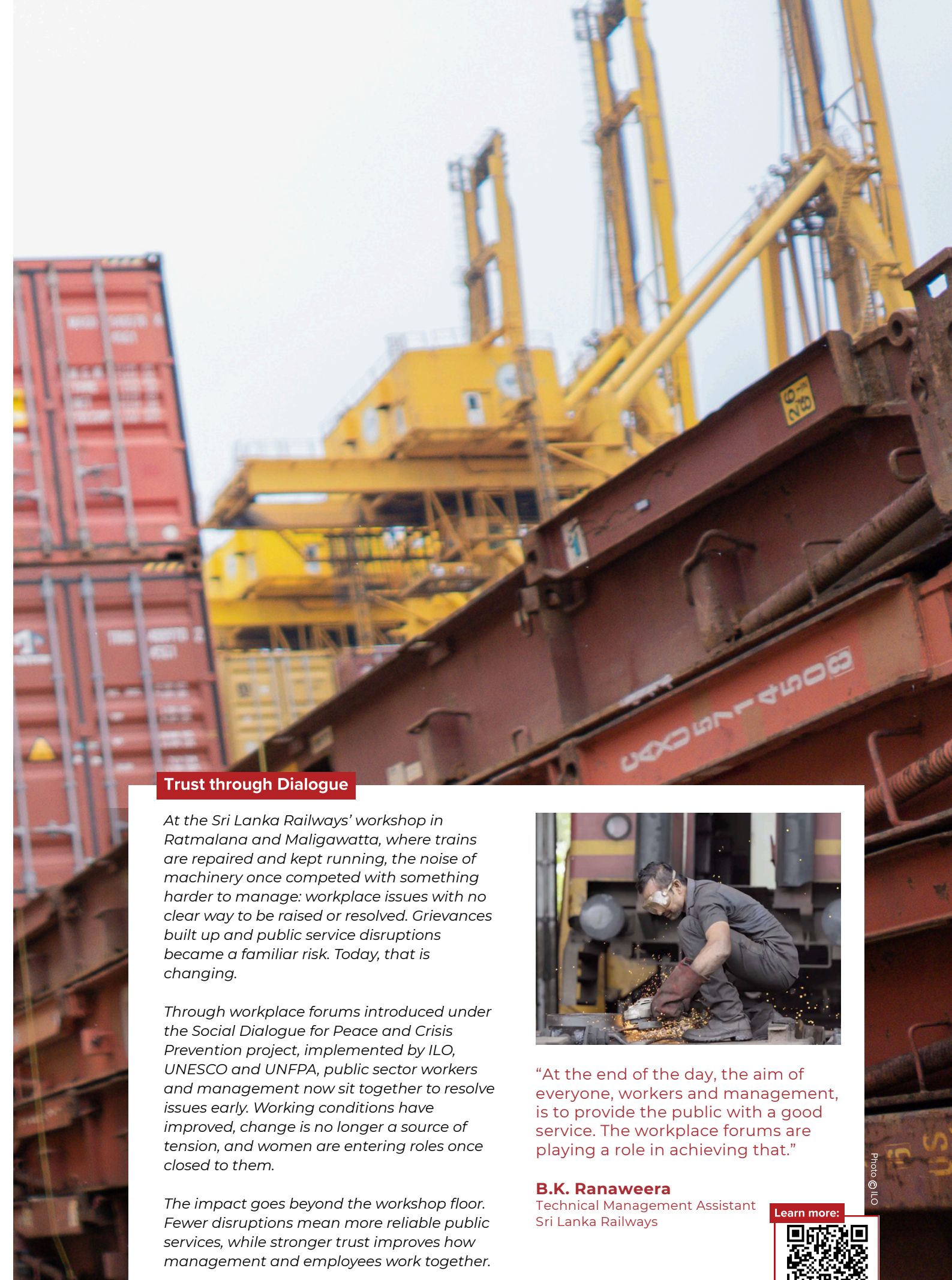
Support to national institutions helped advance 16 key policies and strategies, strengthening the systems needed for climate-resilient, data-driven and inclusive growth. These reforms improved governance across sectors and better positioned Sri Lanka to access global markets and sustain economic recovery.

The UN helped strengthen labour protections, promoting fair working conditions, equality and dignity at work. Support also focused on legislative reforms, including aligning national labour frameworks, preparation of the draft Employment Act, and the national legal framework related to domestic

workers, ensuring they are aligned with international standards.

Three new financing solutions—a community-based revolving fund, the national financing strategy under the Integrated National Financing Framework, and circular economy business models to reduce food loss—expanded access to finance and supported greener investments. Together, they helped mobilize resources for renewable energy, strengthen local resilience, and open pathways for future green enterprises.

Trainings for young people helped them gain skills for employment and entrepreneurship opportunities. Through school-based financial literacy programmes, 1,800 students—55 per cent girls—improved their ability to manage money and make informed economic decisions, building foundations for employability and self-employment and helping students transition more smoothly into work.



Trust through Dialogue

At the Sri Lanka Railways' workshop in Ratmalana and Maligawatta, where trains are repaired and kept running, the noise of machinery once competed with something harder to manage: workplace issues with no clear way to be raised or resolved. Grievances built up and public service disruptions became a familiar risk. Today, that is changing.



Through workplace forums introduced under the Social Dialogue for Peace and Crisis Prevention project, implemented by ILO, UNESCO and UNFPA, public sector workers and management now sit together to resolve issues early. Working conditions have improved, change is no longer a source of tension, and women are entering roles once closed to them.

“At the end of the day, the aim of everyone, workers and management, is to provide the public with a good service. The workplace forums are playing a role in achieving that.”

The impact goes beyond the workshop floor. Fewer disruptions mean more reliable public services, while stronger trust improves how management and employees work together.

B.K. Ranaweera
Technical Management Assistant
Sri Lanka Railways

Learn more:





Photo © FAO Sri Lanka

More Fruit for the Labour

“Here the farmers know how to make mango trees big, tall and very strong,” Zengxian said while chatting with Shantha on his farm outside Anuradhapura. It has become a kind of exposition centre where Shantha’s neighbours come to learn about the new techniques being shared through the FAO-China South-South Cooperation (SSC) project. “I explain and show Chinese pruning methods that are very different,” Zengxian said. “We are looking to make more of the plant nutrients flow to the fruits.”

Shantha describes himself as a convert to the new techniques he has learned and now plans to adopt them on the rest of his trees. He is convincing his brother-in-law Jayasekara to do the same on his nearby farm, where mango trees tower up to three times higher but with only marginal economic yields.



“When these outsiders came and hacked down all my trees to stubs with only a few leaves left, I was worried. However, the experiment turned out a complete success.”

Shantha Dissanayake
Mango Farmer

Learn more:



Support to migration governance helped unlock economic benefits while strengthening protection. Sri Lanka became a Global Compact for Migration (GCM) Champion Country and developed the National GCM Implementation Plan (2026–2028), with the support of the UN. Improvements to systems and data mean that migrant workers are better protected and able to contribute more effectively to national development and recovery including through safer and more regulated labour mobility pathways.

Productivity and income increased across agriculture and community enterprises. More than 2,900 entities, including MSMEs, improved performance as a result of the UN’s support, of which 673 were women-led businesses. Nearly 2,000 small agri-businesses adopted cleaner production and better resource-use practices. Six model farms enabled the introduction of 12 new technologies, increasing yield and revenue for producers, while supporting more sustainable livelihoods and enterprise development.

Through social dialogue with unions and employers, two union-backed care cooperatives were established, creating employment opportunities in childcare and home-based and bedside care.

National assessments, targeted trainings and the launch of model by-laws for care cooperatives, supported the development of cooperative-led care services.

Social dialogue mechanisms at public, private, and community levels, promoted inclusive and gender-responsive engagement between workers, employers, and government. This helped improve dispute resolution and strengthened workplace relations during economic recovery.

Business and worker organisations strengthened services in digital skills, market readiness and emerging care-sector models, helping enterprises adapt and provide more stable and productive employment opportunities and livelihoods option.

More people—especially women, youth, persons with disabilities and returning migrants—gained access to recognised skills and better jobs. Thousands received training in agriculture, hospitality, aquaculture, food safety and digital tools. Updates to national training systems, digital platforms and disability-inclusive training standards improved access to qualifications based on labour-market demand, supporting better quality employment and stronger long-term economic resilience.

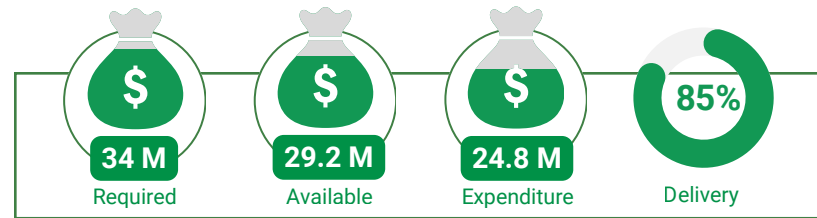
● Key results

<h1>3</h1> <p>innovative financing solutions operationalized</p>	<h1>16</h1> <p>national policies and strategies advanced on sustainable growth</p>	<p>Nearly</p> <h1>2,000</h1> <p>businesses adopted sustainable practices</p>
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3

OUTCOME

Natural Resource Management, Climate Resilience & Environmental Sustainability



OUTPUT PROGRESS

3.1	Policies supporting the Nationally Determined Contributions	↑	National policies promoting sustainable consumption and production	✓
	Implementation of multilateral environmental agreements	↑		
3.2	People benefiting from initiatives to protect nature	↑	Beneficiaries of initiatives to protect natural resources, biodiversity and ecosystems	✓
3.3	Adoption of environmentally-friendly and climate-smart practices by businesses	↑	Access to clean, affordable and sustainable energy	✓
	Existence of a national disaster risk reduction strategy	↑	Development of environmental statistics, assessments, and early warning systems	✓
	Climate-resilient water and sanitation national strategy	↑		

In 2025, Sri Lanka made meaningful progress in strengthening national climate and environmental policy frameworks, alongside advances in community-level action, and risk informed recovery.

At the national level, the UN supported major policy milestones, including the development of the NDC 3.0 (with a commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 20% within the next decade), the National Climate Finance Strategy and updated biodiversity and land degradation targets.

These advances improved coordination across climate, land and biodiversity commitments and strengthened the systems needed to mobilize climate finance and plan for long-term climate resilience. Government-wide collaboration increased through updated technology-needs assessments and the integration of climate-risk analytics into agriculture, energy, forestry, fisheries and water planning.

Community-level support from the UN translated these policy gains into practical benefits. Nearly 250,000 people—including over 126,000 women—improved their skills in ecosystem protection, nature-based resource management and sustainable practices.

Communities in multiple regions expanded pollution-reduction efforts, strengthened local conservation initiatives and advanced blue-green livelihoods that reduce pressure on natural ecosystems. Support to households reliant on climate-sensitive resources also increased significantly. More than 800,000 farmers, fishers, aquaculture workers and nature-based livelihood groups—over half of them women—benefited from climate-resilient agriculture, better irrigation, stronger water security, sustainable fisheries management, improved climate information and local ecosystem restoration.



What Experience Brings to the Table

A specialist in veterinary medicine and agriculture, Dr. Samson Daniel worked with smallholder farmers supplying eggs to local schools through WFP, focusing on flock health, disease prevention and hygiene. Eggs met food safety standards more consistently, losses declined and production became more reliable.

Today, that change is felt beyond the farm. Schools receive a steady supply of fresh eggs, supporting children's nutrition and learning. Farmers have more stable incomes, with less waste and fewer setbacks. Women, in particular, are earning a more reliable income from poultry.

At 79, Dr. Sam was among the oldest UN Volunteers globally, showing how experience, when put to use, can strengthen both the quality and sustainability of local food systems.



“Seeing farmers grow confident reminded me why volunteerism matters. It is about helping people believe in themselves and create lasting change.”

Dr. Samson Daniel
UN Volunteer

Learn more:



Photo © UNV / Sri Lanka



More than 8,000 people benefited from access to sustainable energy solutions, energy-efficient cooling systems, solarized school-meal facilities and other essential clean-energy services. This strengthened education delivery, rural operations and technical capacity for a low-carbon transition.

Together, these results show clear shift from planning to action, with measurable improvements in climate-resilient agriculture, water security, ecosystem conservation, circular-economy practices, disaster preparedness and clean energy access—reaching well over one million people.

The UN helped strengthen disaster-risk governance by providing new hydrological models, automated early-warning sensors, updated flood-risk procedures, improved multi-hazard analytics and nationwide training on loss-and-damage and PDNA methods.

Sri Lanka ended the year with stronger climate governance, more empowered communities and a more resilient foundation for sustainable development, demonstrated by its ability to withstand and recover from the severe shock of Cyclone Ditwah.

A Mother's Dream for Energy Independence

For years, Lajith Dansi spent long hours gathering firewood, a time-consuming task that left little room for tending to crops or family.

Everything changed when Dansi's family received a mini-biogas plant as part of UNDP's Climate Promise initiative. The biogas plant produces a rich liquid fertilizer, helping Dansi transition her home garden to fully organic methods.

Within just three weeks of installation, she was seeing results. Every rupee saved through the biogas plant is now invested back into their family's future, helping them slowly repay their housing loan and plan for a better tomorrow.



"Before, cooking took so much time -just collecting firewood was exhausting. Now I can use that time in my garden and with my children."

Lajith Dansi

Learn more:



Photo © UNDP Sri Lanka

Better waste management under the UNOPS PLEASE project is reducing pollution, protecting public health, and improving everyday life for communities.

Photo © UNOPS Sri Lanka

Key results

800,000

people benefited from climate-resilient agriculture

250,000

people gained skills in sustainable resource management

7,000

people accessed clean energy

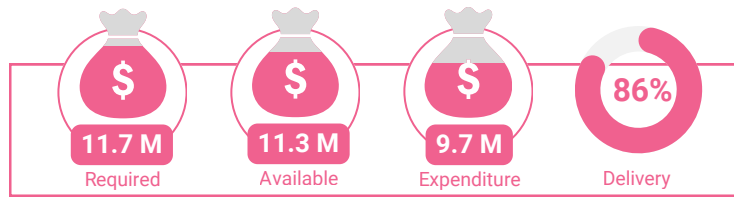
20%

reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2035, committed through NDC 3.0

4

OUTCOME

Inclusive Governance, Justice & Rule of Law



OUTPUT PROGRESS

4.1	Capacity-building for an inclusive, transparent and effective public administration	✓	Public satisfaction of services provided by public institutions	✓
	Public consultations during policy formulation	✓		
4.2	Aligning national budgeting system with SDGs	✓	Existence of national SDG financing strategy	→
	Monitor SDGs' progress and enhance policy coherence for sustainable development	✓		
4.3	Monitor SDGs' progress and enhance policy coherence for sustainable development	✓	New / revised laws, policies and procedures aligned with international standards	✓
	Institutions and initiatives that prevent human rights violations and ensure equal access to justice	✓	People provided access to justice	✓

In 2025, with UN support, national and local institutions improved how they plan, oversee and deliver services.

Parliamentary committees strengthened their oversight role and created new channels for young people and civil society to contribute to policy debates by amending Parliamentary Standing Orders. Technical bodies advanced the standardization of Divisional Secretariat manuals, helping frontline services become more consistent and predictable.

Across nine provinces, 870 internal auditors gained practical skills in performance audits, land and construction oversight and risk-based financial management, promoting more efficient and accountable use of public resources. These shifts lay the foundation for fairer services and greater public trust in state institutions.

Public consultations shaped key national policies on anti-corruption, citizen engagement in Parliament, media regulation, human trafficking, and human rights education, ensuring they reflect people's priorities. Local forums and social dialogue structures reduced workplace disputes and broadened participation—especially for women and young people—in community decision-making.

Investments in border-management equipment and training for 460 frontline officers, along with specialized skills development for police and local officials, improved border security and strengthened the response to trafficking, irregular migration and maritime crime. These improvements contribute to safer communities and more responsive institutions.



Photo © UNDP Sri Lanka

Knowing Your Rights and Seeking Justice

At the 'Know Your Neethi' legal camp, Rashmiya found a space to speak in her own language, explain her situation, and understand her options under the law. She was not alone.

Hundreds came forward, many of them women who had long faced barriers to accessing support and understanding their rights.

For many in Sri Lanka, not knowing the law comes at a cost, contributing to 65% becoming victims of crime. Through the JURE project, implemented by UNDP and UNICEF with the Ministry of Justice, efforts like this are helping people seek justice.



"I had this fear that if I go to seek legal help, there will be a problem. That's not the case here. Even more than men, women can get a lot of help."

Rashmiya Jauffer Mohammad
"Know Your Neethi" Participant

Learn more:



Progress also accelerated toward evidence-driven, SDG-aligned planning, as the UN helped move from ad hoc data collection toward more systematic, nationally owned systems. New crisis-analytics tools and continued support to the national statistics strategy helped advance the national data ecosystem.

A Gender-Responsive Climate-Security Assessment helped to fill important data gaps by providing the first integrated analysis on how women, men, and marginalized groups experience climate stressors differently, particularly in conflict-affected and disaster-prone areas. A new national platform for migration-related SDG data created the first integrated system to capture, analyse and visualize this information, helping improve policy coherence and coordination across agencies.

Implementation of the multi-sectoral national action plan on gender-based violence engaged around 750 officials nationwide, aligning provincial plans and budgets with national priorities and strengthening gender-responsive planning, even as SDG-tagged budgeting and financing strategies remain at an early stage.

In the justice sector, the UN helped advance key legal reforms, modernize institutions, and expand access to redress.

Draft laws and procedures progressed to expand mediation, strengthen child protection, modernize immigration systems and the national statistical act, and combat human trafficking in line with international standards. Justice institutions adopted digital tools for case management and accountability. Legal aid, community outreach, and digital campaigns improved access to legal services and information for nearly 37,000 people.

Survivors of trafficking and gender-based violence benefited from more coordinated, survivor-centred services and clearer referral pathways.

Together, these results strengthened the basis for equal, affordable and non-discriminatory access to justice and more resilient, rights-based governance.



● Key results

<p>870</p> <p>civil servants trained on public sector financial management</p>	<p>750</p> <p>officials supported in addressing gender-based violence</p>	<p>37,000</p> <p>gained access to legal services and information</p>
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A Second Chance for Children

At 17, Kajan* is back home after being placed in a remand home for a bailable offence, where he was cut off from family and missed lessons and exams for nearly three weeks. His return prevented the stigma and setbacks that time in remand can bring, long after a child is released.

Through the JURE project, supported by UNICEF and UNDP, discussions bring judges and probation officers together to review how children in conflict with the law are treated. In Kajan's* case, a probation officer recommended that he be supported within his community instead of being kept in an institution. The court agreed.

For children like Kajan*, child-friendly justice means staying connected to family, education and the support systems that shape their future.



"I feel like I've been given a second chance. Coming back home gave me a new life."

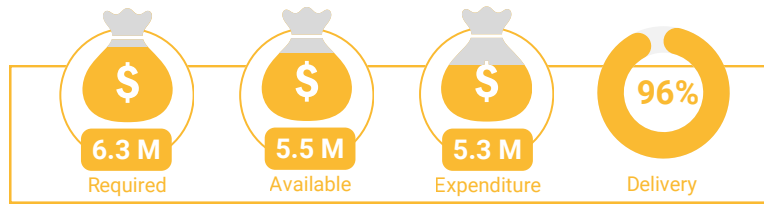
Kajan*

*Name changed to protect his identity

Learn more:

5 Social Cohesion, Sustaining Peace & Human Rights

OUTCOME



OUTPUT PROGRESS

5.1	Mechanisms aligned with international human rights standards	→	Action plan on education for social cohesion	→
	Institutions and initiatives that prevent human rights violations and strengthen social cohesion	✓		
5.2	Participation of right-holders in public processes	↑	Engagement of youth and vulnerable groups in governance and decision-making processes	✓
	Capacity to address social cohesion and harmful speech	✓		

In 2025, the UN helped strengthen Sri Lanka’s national oversight and rights-protection systems, even as civic space remained constrained. National bodies continued to play critical roles: the Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka (HRCSL) maintained its “A” status; the Right to Information Commission resolved most appeals; and the Office for Reparations settled 86% of claims while reopening applications for people previously unable to seek redress.

The UN provided technical assistance and capacity building to the Human Rights Commission and facilitated cooperation between the Human Rights Commission, and the Commission to Investigate Allegations of Bribery or Corruption (CIABOC) through the development of a draft Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).

The UN advised the Government on the establishment of an independent, national, human rights screening mechanism for Sri Lankan peacekeepers, which is yet to be established.

These advances improved access to rights and remedies and reinforced institutional accountability.

At community level, 31 UN-supported civil society partners strengthened protection mechanisms, enhanced digital safety and improved legal preparedness. Their work helped communities monitor risks in real time, engage local authorities and respond more effectively to rights violations.

Two national initiatives—the Digital Media Collective and progress toward a Gender-Responsive National Media Policy—also improved how public information is shaped and how media contributes to social cohesion.

The UN provided a platform for 17 civil society organizations and fact-checkers working on countering online harmful speech to engage in collective advocacy by forming a community of practice, which then proposed substantive improvements to the Online Safety Act via the government-appointed committee.



Photo © UNICEF Sri Lanka



Photo © UNDP Sri Lanka

Turning the Tide for Resettled Communities

Fishing communities in Trincomalee are rebuilding their lives after a civil conflict that displaced families and disrupted livelihoods more than 15 years ago.

Senthilnathan, who leads the Kalaimahal Fisheries Cooperative, saw members leave during the conflict and return many years later. Through the UNDP and IOM-led Support for Resettlement Project, the group has regained stability. Today, members earn more reliable incomes and are no longer dependent on others to sell their catch.

The change goes beyond livelihoods. Fishermen work together, sharing boats, knowledge and decisions. They also give back, using part of their earnings to support children's education.

For Senthilnathan and others, this is about more than recovery. It is about rebuilding trust and finding their place in the community again.



"We love our motherland, and finally, it feels like we are living in our own home."

Senthilnathan
Fisherman from
Trincomalee

Learn more:



#UNListens: The UN Country Team in Jaffna

In 2025, the United Nations Country Team visited Jaffna to hear directly from government, civil society and communities, helping to better understand people's realities and strengthen partnerships at the local level. Across discussions, a clear message emerged. Progress is visible, but gaps remain in livelihoods, land, equal access to services and the lasting impact of displacement, alongside calls for stronger legal protections for marginalized groups.

At the University of Jaffna, conversations with students brought these issues into sharp focus. Young people spoke openly about their hopes and frustrations, raising concerns about unemployment, limited career pathways and the need for a stronger voice in decision making. As one student put it, they had the education but not the opportunities. Others pointed to the impact of climate change on local livelihoods and the uncertainty it brings.

These conversations highlighted areas where continued support is needed, particularly in expanding opportunities for young people and strengthening inclusion. The visit took place as the United Nations marked its 80th anniversary and Sri Lanka marked 70 years of partnership with the organization, reflecting a continued commitment to an inclusive and resilient future.



Photo © UN Sri Lanka

Learn more:



Despite slow progression on education for social cohesion, local organizations continued to deliver activities that encouraged peaceful engagement, supported by training for more than 1,000 people and outreach to over 31,000 community members.

A UN-supported national platform also brought youth and civil society together to strengthen dialogue and highlight local solutions.

Youth, women and vulnerable groups gained a stronger role in decision-making through UN-supported consultations and local initiatives. Forty national and sub-national institutions engaged young people and diverse groups in governance and social-cohesion efforts.

UN support to 64 local organizations—many of them women-led—advanced work on social cohesion, gender equality and countering hate speech, helping create safer and more inclusive spaces for public participation.

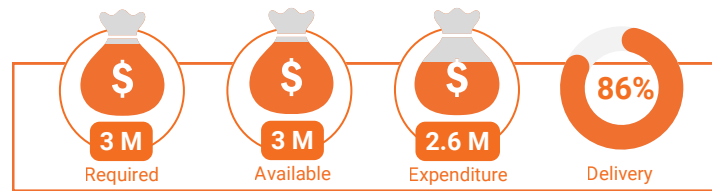
Together, these changes helped protect civic space, deepen rights awareness and support communities facing discrimination—key foundations for long-term peace, equal treatment and social stability.

In parallel, UN support helped ensure that 381 asylum-seekers and refugees were registered, protected and able to move freely within the country. The voluntary repatriation of 92 Sri Lankan refugee returnees from India was also facilitated.

6

Gender Equality & Women's Empowerment

OUTCOME



OUTPUT PROGRESS

6.1	Mechanisms to address discriminatory gender norms and practices	✓	Laws and policies targeting gender equality and women's empowerment	✓
	Eliminating gender-based discrimination in labour market, increasing women's access to digital technologies, and economic empowerment		↑	
6.2	Measures to advance female leadership and participation in decision-making	↑	Addressing gender inequality in development, peace and humanitarian contexts	✓

In 2025, Sri Lanka took important steps to strengthen the national framework for gender equality. The country began operationalizing the Women's Empowerment Act No. 37 of 2024, including progress toward establishing the National Commission on Women—an important institutional milestone, even as full functionality awaited final budget and staffing decisions.

Stronger national action against gender-based violence also took shape. UN technical support helped roll out the Multi-Sectoral National Action Plan on Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (2024–2028), improving coordination across all 25 districts. As a result, planning, reporting and accountability for violence prevention and response became more consistent nationwide.

Progress toward safer workplaces advanced as the UN supported Sri Lanka's preparation for ratifying ILO Convention No. 190 on Violence and Harassment in the World of Work including awareness-raising, development of information materials, and consultations with stakeholders. This work culminated in Cabinet approval of the legal

requirements for ratification in December 2025—a major step toward stronger labour protections for women.

The UN also supported the development of the Government of Sri Lanka's ninth periodic report to the CEDAW Committee and its participation at the review session in February 2025. The report recognized gains such as increased women's representation in Parliament and renewed action against violence, while highlighting ongoing challenges in employment, legal reform and survivor services.

During the reporting period, the UN supported the strengthening of 28 multi-sectoral initiatives and platforms addressing gender inequality across development, peace, and humanitarian contexts. This included support to the national Steering Committee and six Technical Committees under the National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security, alongside multi-stakeholder dialogue platforms focused on GBV in the transport sector; gender-responsive workplaces; and several initiatives on mainstreaming gender equality, disability and social inclusion.



Photo © IOM Sri Lanka

Empowering Women to Lead, Earn and Thrive

When Dushyanthini lost her husband to the war, she picked up the only sewing machine she had and started her tailoring business. Today, Aadhavan Tailoring is flourishing, with a reputation for quality and reliability.

Through the UN Women 'Pathways to Peace' initiative, Dushyanthini gained the knowledge to run her business differently. With the guidance received, she no longer works at random, but plans her work, sets goals and makes decisions that help her business grow. She also trains women from nearby villages, passing on skills that help them earn an income of their own.

Across conflict-affected communities supported by the project, women are moving beyond gender norms that once held them back. For Dushyanthini, this is about more than business. It is about building a future she can rely on, and helping other women do the same.



“Women need to learn self-employment. After the war, we depended on others. Now we can stand on our own.”

Dushyanthini
Proprietor of Aadhavan Tailoring

These mechanisms improved coordination among government, civil society, and local actors and improved gender-responsive planning, implementation, and oversight across sectors.

The UN also helped launch the Northern Province's first Provincial Gender Policy to advance women's economic empowerment and access to decent work opportunities.

Throughout the year, national and community-level efforts expanded women's participation and leadership. 326 officials from the Ministry of Women and Child Affairs and 162 police officers received training on gender-responsive services.

At the community level, 508 women gained skills in negotiation, mediation and conflict analysis, enabling them to lead 39 peacebuilding initiatives that reached over 12,000 people.

UN interventions contributed to transformative shifts in gender norms, including increased support for women's economic activities and more equitable sharing of household responsibilities. By the end of 2025, UN support had contributed to a stronger national gender-equality architecture, more capable institutions, and expanded opportunities for women to participate safely and meaningfully in public life—laying the groundwork for more inclusive development nationwide.

Photo © UN Women





#සමතීචු - An Island Where Equality Thrives

At a time when progress on gender equality is uneven, the සමතීචු (SamaTheevu) exhibition by UN Women offered a simple but powerful idea: an island where everyone, regardless of gender, has equal rights and opportunities in all aspects of life.

Through interactive displays and guided sessions, visitors engaged with topics often left unspoken. Discussions on violence and discrimination against women, consent, and exploitation challenged myths and filled knowledge gaps.

Teachers brought students with little prior exposure. Many left better informed, more confident to ask questions, and more aware of the risks of being uninformed.

By opening space for learning and dialogue, SamaTheevu helped shift attitudes, showing that with information and support, equality becomes something people can actively shape.



By showing children that there is a world beyond societal norms, we can foster change through education and awareness.

Suranga Ranasinghe
Teacher

Learn more:



Photo © UN Women

Key results

12,000
people benefitted from women-led peacebuilding initiatives

9th
CEDAW report strengthened accountability on women's rights

Cabinet approved legal requirements for ILO safer workplaces

IN FOCUS SRI LANKA SDG FUND

In 2025, the UN Sri Lanka SDG Fund continued to serve as a strategic financing instrument supporting the Cooperation Framework, promoting joint, catalytic and integrated interventions aligned with national priorities. Since its establishment in 2020, the Fund has mobilised over USD 45 million through its Peacebuilding and Resilience Windows, including USD 1.4 million secured in 2025 from the Government of Canada, the Peacebuilding Fund and the Joint SDG Fund.

Through its **Resilience Window**, the Fund advanced digital transformation and social protection efforts. The One Registry programme, which supports the digitalization of civil registration and vital statistics records, as well as broader digital transformation in the civils service, progressed from design to implementation, with capacity-building for over 600 officials helping to lay the foundations for future scaling.

The new joint initiative by the UN and the World Bank, 'Towards an impactful and scalable Empowerment programme in Sri Lanka', aimed at supporting beneficiary transitions from social assistance to sustainable livelihoods, has been approved and will begin implementation shortly.

Through the **Peacebuilding Window**, the Fund strengthened social dialogue, institutional cooperation and social cohesion. Interventions supported government institutions and trade unions across key sectors to prevent workplace disputes and improve service delivery, while also building the capacity

of civil society organisations to engage in inclusive local governance. Reintegration and recovery efforts demonstrated strong results, with beneficiaries reporting improved livelihoods, living conditions and community cohesion.

In parallel, the Fund continued to address hate speech and disinformation, promoting more informed and inclusive public discourse as a foundation for peacebuilding. Together, these investments contributed to strengthened institutional resilience, inclusive governance, and social cohesion.

Looking ahead, the Fund will prioritise three interconnected areas, under its Peacebuilding Window: building trust among communities and institutions, promoting social dialogue, and strengthening early warning mechanisms while countering online harmful speech and disinformation. Under the Resilience Window, the Fund will continue to support strategic interventions aligned with the Government's digital transformation agenda and social empowerment initiatives, contributing to improved service delivery, strengthened institutional capacities, and expanded opportunities for vulnerable communities.

CONTRIBUTING PARTNERS



Joint
SDG Fund



United Nations
Peacebuilding

UN PBF



Canada



European
Union



United
Kingdom



United
States



PRIORITIES FOR 2026



Building back better after Cyclone Ditwah

After the conclusion of the Humanitarian Priorities Plan (HPP), the UN will continue to support the long-term recovery efforts. The UN played a key role in supporting the government to prepare a Post-Disaster Needs Assessment and will extend similar support for the development of a recovery framework in line with Building Back Better principles. The UN's role will include technical expertise, support for recovery planning and prioritization, convening of multilateral and bilateral partners, and the private sector, and exploring innovative and blended financing mechanisms to mobilize resources for resilient recovery.



Protecting and empowering vulnerable individuals and diverse communities

As Cyclone Ditwah has shown, it is those already at the margins of society who bear the brunt of natural or economic shocks. The UN in Sri Lanka will continue to help advance solutions for those most in need, including by strengthening national social protection systems.

The UN is also looking to scale up initiatives that help connect communities and build social cohesion, for example by helping to address online hate speech and disinformation, supporting increased access to land ownership, and facilitating trust-building engagements across all of Sri Lanka's communities.



Supporting digital transformation

The UN in Sri Lanka is a key partner in advancing the Government's digital transformation agenda, supporting national strategies for inclusive Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI), change management and institutional strengthening, digital trade, investment, and public procurement, and sectoral digital service delivery.

Support for digital civil registration and vital statistics and data interoperability also contributes to the milestone Sri Lanka Unique Digital Identity project.



Planning for the future

The UN and the Government of Sri Lanka have begun developing the new United Nations Sustainable Cooperation Framework for 2028-2032. Throughout 2026, the UN will hold broad consultations with Government, development partners, civil society, private sector and other stakeholders for an inclusive mapping of sustainable pathways for Sri Lanka to inform the new Cooperation Framework.



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