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Item 4 (a) of the provisional agenda*

Country programme document

Sri Lanka

Summary

The country programme document (CPD) for Sri Lanka is presented to the Executive Board for discussion and approval at the present session, on a no-objection basis. The CPD includes a proposed aggregate indicative budget of \$4,760,000 from regular resources, subject to the availability of funds, and \$25,000,000 in other resources, subject to the availability of specific-purpose contributions, for the period 2023 to 2027.

* [E/ICEF/2022/22](#).

Note: The present document was processed in its entirety by UNICEF.



Programme rationale

1. Sri Lanka, a lower-middle-income country, is facing an acute crisis following the impact of the coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic and other compounding factors that have profoundly affected the country and jeopardized progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals. Despite important progress made for children over the past decades across most dimensions, many children do not have an adequate standard of living and significant inequalities have been aggravated by the current crisis, which has disproportionately affected urban daily wage labourers, and families from poor households in the estate sector¹, rural areas and the Northern and Eastern Provinces. UNICEF is taking urgent action by supporting emergency measures in the short term that safeguard children and mitigate a worsening situation, while also supporting the State to recover and expand services in the medium term.
2. The 2019 government tax cuts and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic widened fiscal deficits to 11.4 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP) in 2021, raising public debt well above 100 per cent of GDP.² External debt repayments and a widening current account deficit have led to foreign exchange shortages. Sri Lanka defaulted on its debt on 12 April 2022 and has initiated debt restructuring negotiations with the International Monetary Fund. These will take time and likely necessitate implementation of austerity measures. Total inflation hit 39.1 per cent in May, reflecting exchange rate depreciation, supply shortages and significant increases in fuel and food prices; food costs rose to 57.4 per cent and non-food costs to 30.6 per cent.³
3. The national monetary poverty rate increased from 4.1 per cent (2016) to 14.3 per cent (2019). Multidimensional poverty, predominantly found in the estate sector,⁴ affects 42.2 per cent of children under the age of 5 years. Amid the current crisis, both monetary and multidimensional poverty are likely to increase substantially in the medium term.
4. Sri Lanka has an estimated child population of 6.2 million and a total population of 22.2 million.⁵ Price increases of basic food items have accelerated food insecurity for vulnerable families, while millions endure daily power cuts and queue for hours due to fuel shortages. The crisis has also disrupted key services for children, such as health, nutrition, education and protection, putting children – particularly the most vulnerable – at risk of malnutrition, dropping out of school, violence and exploitation.
5. Without proper safeguards to protect investments in children, the social sectors will face unprecedented challenges that will have a direct and long-term impact on the development of human capital. It is anticipated that the crisis will further reduce spending on the social sectors,⁶ with funding allocated only to the most essential services and covering only recurring expenditures.

¹ Estate sector consists of all plantations which are 20 acres or more in extent and with ten or more resident labourers, Sri Lanka Census of Population and Housing, 2011.

² International Monetary Fund, 2021 Article IV Consultation – Press Release: Staff Report: And Statement By The Executive Director For Sri Lanka, 25th March 2022, <https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/CR/Issues/2022/03/25/Sri-Lanka-2021-Article-IV-Consultation-Press-Release-Staff-Report-and-Statement-by-the-515737>.

³ Central Bank of Sri Lanka, May 2022, www.cbsl.gov.lk/en/news/inflation-in-may-2022-ccpi.

⁴ Department of Census and Statistics, Ministry of Economic Policies and Plan Implementation, Household and Income Expenditure Survey, 2019.

⁵ Central Bank of Sri Lanka, Annual Report, Volume I 2021.

⁶ According to the World Bank, in Sri Lanka less than 5 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP) is allocated to education, health and some key social protection programmes combined, compared to an average of 9.5 per cent of GDP on health and education combined in lower- and middle-income countries.

6. Globally, Sri Lanka has the seventh worst rate of child wasting.⁷ The crisis, together with consecutive poor crop yields, has heightened food insecurity and reduced food consumption in quantity and quality, putting young children at greater risk and worsening already poor levels of child malnutrition. Nationally 17.3 per cent of children under the age of 5 years are stunted, with almost one third (32 per cent) of these children living in the estate sector. Poor nutrition implies that one in four children are not thriving, two in five children aged 6 to 23 months are not fed the minimum acceptable diet, and one in six babies are born with low birthweight, jeopardizing their optimum growth.⁸ Importantly, low maternal body mass index linked to low birthweight in babies contributes to intergenerational undernutrition.

7. While Sri Lanka has achieved gender parity and high rates of access in primary and secondary education,⁹ the effects of COVID-19 have worsened disparities in learning and skills development. The digital divide in connectivity (50.8 per cent penetration),¹⁰ access to electronic devices and digital skills has resulted in vulnerable groups, including in rural and estate areas, being deprived of continuous learning. The economic crisis further threatens access to and the functioning of schools, which may result in increasing learning losses and school dropouts. Further, the quality of education needs to be enhanced to address unequal learning outcomes and skills development for girls and boys based on their background and location.

8. Preschool education is neither compulsory nor free of charge, and only 60.1 per cent of children aged 3 to 4 years attend preschool (2016), limiting their school readiness. There are socioeconomic and geographical disparities, with attendance rates significantly worse among children in the lowest quintile and those living in estate areas.¹¹ Since most preschools are privately managed, the crisis is likely to negatively impact the provision and quality of such services as well as the demand from parents, who have reduced spending power.

9. Ensuring a protective, caring and safe environment for children is more important than ever. The crisis threatens to increase the institutionalization of children, with more than 10,000 children (over 60 per cent girls)¹² already living in poor quality residential care homes. Rising reports of violence against children are also concerning, with corporal punishment widely accepted and practised at home and in schools. The justice system needs to be more child-friendly; children aged 16 to 18 years who are in conflict with the law are treated as adults. The country's child protection and justice systems lack the necessary framework, capacity and resources to monitor and prevent violence against children and provide critical responses during this crisis.

10. The 2021 Global Gender Gap Index ranked Sri Lanka 116 out of 156 countries (a decrease from 100th place in 2018). Although gender parity has been achieved across many social indicators for children, including in the health and education sectors, disparities emerge during adolescence and adulthood. Gender-based violence and sexual harassment remain significant concerns that directly affect the physical

⁷ United Nations Children's Fund, World Health Organization and World Bank, Joint child malnutrition estimates, 2020.

⁸ Department of Census and Statistics and Ministry of Health, Sri Lanka, Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) 2016.

⁹ United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Institute for Statistics, Sri Lanka, <http://uis.unesco.org/en/country/lk>, accessed on 6 June 2022.

¹⁰ Datareportal, Digital 2021: Sri Lanka, February 2021, <https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2021-sri-lanka>, accessed on 6 June 2022.

¹¹ Sri Lanka DHS 2016.

¹² Department of Census and Statistics, Census of Children in Child Care Institutions, 2019 <http://www.statistics.gov.lk/Resource/reference/CensusofChildreninChildCareInstitutions2019Final>

and economic security of women and girls. Providing justice to victims, the majority of whom are female, requires an improved and gender-responsive justice system.

11. The increasing frequency of extreme weather events results in Sri Lanka being ranked among the top 10 countries most vulnerable to the effects of climate change. The UNICEF Children's Climate Risk Index places Sri Lanka as an extremely high-risk country in terms of children's exposure to climate change. Children are susceptible to the effects of climate change due to their early stage of physiological and immunological development. Further, 74.5 per cent of rural water schemes have been negatively impacted by climate change, affecting children, particularly those in estates, marginalized rural pockets and poor urban settlements who have limited access to safe drinking water.

12. Since 2009, the Government has focused on reconciliation efforts, however, progress was quickly eroded by the Easter bomb attacks in April 2019 and the country's withdrawal of co-sponsorship of United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees resolution 30/1 of 1 October 2015 (promoting reconciliation, accountability and human rights in Sri Lanka) in March 2020. Since then, there have been instances where ethnic tensions have surfaced that have tested the extent to which social cohesion is durable. The economic crisis and resulting shortages and high prices of basic needs have increased social unrest and resulted in violent protests across the country.

13. UNICEF will support the social services and systems that have been stretched during the crisis, building on its comparative advantage and role as a convenor and an expert on child rights. This is increasingly important during a crisis where children are among the most vulnerable and are often overlooked in proposed solutions. UNICEF will continue to monitor the impact of the crisis on children, particularly the operation of key social services that children depend on and address gaps in services. UNICEF will adopt a nexus approach that enables it to respond to the crisis and its impact on children in the short term, and to strengthen existing but overwhelmed systems that need to continue to deliver essential social services for all children, particularly the most vulnerable, over the medium term.

14. A key lesson learned during the country programme period 2018–2022 is that a coherent and concerted approach to United Nations engagement is important, increasingly so now that the country is facing a severe economic crisis. UNICEF will strengthen collaboration with other United Nations agencies to support Sri Lanka to progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, with a focus on bringing about positive changes for children. The importance of prioritizing to avoid an over-ambitious programme constrained by limited funding and fundraising opportunities also informed the development of the country programme, 2023–2027.

Programme priorities and partnerships

15. Guided by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF), 2023–2027, the National Policy Framework Vistas of Prosperity and Splendour, and in line with the UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2022–2025 and Gender Action Plan, 2022–2025, the goal of the country programme is to support the Government and partners to ensure that, even in a crisis, no child is left behind and that all children and adolescents, especially the most disadvantaged and excluded, can have their rights progressively fulfilled so that they survive, thrive, learn, are protected and can participate as active citizens.

16. The theory of change is that, by 2027, children and adolescents, especially the most disadvantaged, have continued access to the services they need and opportunities to develop to their full potential, so that Sri Lanka has stronger, more

resilient and productive human capital as it recovers from the crisis and moves forward. This can only be achieved if:

(a) More pregnant women and children under the age of 5 years, including the most vulnerable groups, have equitable access to and use essential and life-saving, quality and gender-responsive health and nutrition services, and parents and caregivers adopt appropriate diet and care practices to prevent all forms of malnutrition among both girls and boys.

(b) More children, especially the most vulnerable, benefit from an inclusive, quality and resilient education and skills development system that contributes to continued and improved learning and acquisition of skills for the future.

(c) More children, especially the most vulnerable, benefit from child-friendly services and positive social norms that better protect them from violence and exploitation in all settings and prevent family separation.

(d) More children, particularly the most disadvantaged and excluded, progressively benefit from a more inclusive, child-sensitive, gender-responsive and shock-responsive social protection system and key social services.

17. Identifying those children who are at greatest risk is a prerequisite for leaving no child behind, especially children most affected by the economic crisis: children in the estate sector, living in vulnerable urban areas, belonging to minorities, in institutions, with disabilities, or affected by natural disasters or climate change. UNICEF will use diverse strategies, including data and evidence generation, strategic policy advocacy and programming, innovations, technical guidance and social and behaviour change interventions, complemented by expanding partnerships, including with the private sector.

18. To address gender inequality, UNICEF will design an evidence-based, context-specific social and behaviour change strategy that shifts discriminatory social norms and promotes shared parenting responsibilities and care and nutrition of pregnant and lactating women. UNICEF will continue to build the capacity of front-line functionaries to deliver gender-responsive essential services. The organization will focus on gender-based violence in its work on violence against children, and engage adolescents on issues such as gender equality and gender stereotyping.

Health and nutrition

19. Sri Lanka faces shortages and increased food costs and interruptions in routine maternal and child health services, particularly related to growth monitoring and management of severe and moderate acute malnutrition. On the demand side, efforts are needed to address challenges in the willingness and ability of caregivers and communities to adopt healthy behaviours and appropriate nutrition and care practices, particularly when their purchasing power is reduced. This situation is compounded by inefficient resource allocations and expenditure on nutrition, as well as limited multisectoral coordination across relevant ministries.

20. This component will contribute to UNSDCF outcome 1 and towards achievement of Sustainable Development Goals 2 (zero hunger) and 3 (good health and well-being). UNICEF will advocate for and support the delivery of critical evidence-based interventions through all service-delivery platforms to ensure all children, particularly the most vulnerable, have access to essential and life-saving health and nutrition, nutritious diets and appropriate feeding and care in the first 1,000 days of life. UNICEF will help the Government to maintain critical obstetric, newborn and paediatric services through emergency preparedness planning and provision of essential health and nutrition supplies and equipment. UNICEF will support coordination of service providers and strengthen the health information

system to monitor and report on child nutrition outcomes and service coverage, including on the impact of the crisis, to identify and help to address gaps in service delivery.

21. UNICEF will support the Government to address the alarming food insecurity and nutrition situation. UNICEF will facilitate nutrition outreach services to vulnerable groups and strengthen infant and young child feeding counselling services, complemented by a social and behaviour change strategy for parents and caregivers. UNICEF, with sister United Nations agencies, will support, pilot and advocate for the scale up of nutrition-sensitive social protection programmes for pregnant and lactating women and children under 5 years of age to address increasing levels of food insecurity and poor diets. UNICEF will advocate for nutrition as the country formulates its recovery strategies and will help to estimate the investments required to implement a multisectoral action plan to improve child nutrition outcomes.

Education

22. Nationwide school and pre-school closures for most of 2020 and 2021 disrupted learning for 4.7 million students across all levels, including pre-school. Prolonged school closures worsened a pre-existing learning crisis, generating further learning losses and widening learning disparities. The crisis may compel families to prioritize food and medical needs over education. Compounded by the lack of funding for schools to provide free and nutritious school meals, the crisis has increased the risk of children dropping out of school. There is inadequate investment in all levels of the education system and targeted services are needed so that the most vulnerable children can continue their education. Learning outcomes are constrained by an outdated curriculum and pedagogy, academic-focused assessments and inadequate professional development for educators. Sector strategies and plans need to be more risk-informed and to integrate climate change. The curricula need to embed skills development that contributes to social cohesion and climate adaptation.

23. This component will contribute to UNSDCF outcomes 1, 3 and 5, and towards achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 4 (quality education). UNICEF will support the Government so that more young children become capable learners and have the cognitive and socioemotional skills to thrive and transition to primary education with the support of nurturing parents/caregivers. UNICEF will advocate for and support improved models of early learning that are contextually, socially and culturally grounded, and support expanded access to and participation in age- and developmentally-appropriate preschool education, particularly in the estate sector. UNICEF will strengthen and scale up existing systems for data collection, monitoring and analysis, building on collaboration with the World Bank, to ensure adequate investments in early learning as the foundation of a country's human capital.

24. In formal education, UNICEF will assist the Ministry of Education to ensure that all children, particularly the most vulnerable, have continued access to education, stay in school and have the needed support to catch up on their learning and mitigate learning losses. UNICEF will engage in real-time monitoring of the impact of the evolving economic crisis on the delivery of education services. UNICEF will generate evidence on learning losses and school dropouts to support the Ministry with learning recovery initiatives and blended and distance-learning strategies and solutions. This monitoring will help to strength systems for data collection and budget analysis to facilitate pro-equity, risk-informed decision-making by partners. UNICEF will support the Government so that more girls and boys acquire skills for the future, including foundational and soft skills, through the integration of soft skills into the curriculum and teacher education systems under the ongoing education reform process. UNICEF will strengthen cost-effective teacher development systems to deliver child-centred teaching and formative assessments that enable teachers to

better cater to the different learning needs of children, including children with disabilities.

25. A risk-informed and resilient education system that provides a safe and protective learning environment for children, particularly during times of crisis, is critical. UNICEF will advocate for government commitment to operationalize the action plan on education for social cohesion to give children the skills and opportunities they need to foster shared values and understanding. UNICEF will also continue its high-level, evidence-based advocacy and technical assistance to end corporal punishment in schools. To ensure continued education for all, UNICEF will develop and implement a strategy for a more climate-resilient education and school system, which will include the climate smart school concept as well as cost- and energy-efficient alternative solutions. Further, UNICEF will amplify its efforts in water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) in schools, with a focus on hygiene and other behaviour changes for sustainable impact.

Child protection

26. The main bottlenecks in the sector include an inadequately resourced social service workforce with limited capacity to provide effective protection and psychosocial services, particularly services that reach the most vulnerable. There is also a lack of national prevalence data on violence against children, which undermines monitoring. In the justice sector, an outdated legal framework, limited implementation of key policies, lack of a policy framework to divert children in conflict with the law from the justice system and limited budget allocations have reduced capacities to deliver effective justice services.

27. This component will contribute to UNSDCF outcomes 1, 4, 5 and 6, and towards achieving Sustainable Development Goals 5 (gender equality) and 16 (peace, justice and strong institutions). UNICEF will monitor the impact of the crisis on child protection and psychosocial well-being and will strengthen the child protection system by involving social welfare, justice and psychosocial actors, to provide accessible, preventive and responsive services in the best interests of the child. This will include budget analysis and advocacy for adequate resource allocation for front-line child protection officers. UNICEF will support the ongoing justice reform process to introduce child-friendly legal reforms in line with international standards and support the Ministry of Justice to develop and implement sentencing guidelines related to children, and improve case management, access to legal aid and routine data collection.

28. In line with the Government's alternative care policy, UNICEF will strengthen the alternative care system to deliver care and probation options and targeted social protection support to promote family-based care. UNICEF will help to generate evidence on the impact of the crisis on institutionalization and best practices to deinstitutionalize children, as well as ensure adequate standards of care for children remaining in institutions as they prepare to return to or enter family-based care. UNICEF will strengthen the case management approach, including on mental health and psychosocial support, participation and the prevention of sexual abuse and exploitation and violence against children. UNICEF will help to design an innovative and cost-effective, system-wide capacity-building programme for social service and justice sector professionals to deliver child-friendly and age-appropriate services for children in contact with the law.

29. UNICEF will support the first national survey in Sri Lanka to identify and measure the drivers of violence against children, in addition to advocating for the inclusion of standard modules in other surveys to gather data on violence. This survey will inform preventive measures by understanding the impact of stress and pressure

on families and how that results in the use of violence. As part of these measures, UNICEF will develop scalable, evidence-based models that promote positive social and gender norms to prevent violence against women and children, complemented by an advocacy plan to end corporal punishment.

Social policy

30. This component will prioritize supporting children in households with insecure incomes or children living in poverty. While the Government's Samurdhi social protection programme is extensive, it is highly fragmented, managed by multiple departments and is not child sensitive. UNICEF estimates that 59 per cent of households with children who should be eligible are not included in the programme.¹³ While much of the population lacks social protection, particular groups – including pregnant and lactating women and children under the age of 2 years – are increasingly vulnerable. The public finance landscape is characterized by a large public debt and limited access to and lack of opportunity to engage on the budget process. Budget transparency, as measured by the Open Budget Survey, is limited.¹⁴

31. The component will contribute to UNSDCF outcomes 1 and 2 and towards achievement of Sustainable Development Goals 1 (no poverty), 8 (decent work and economic growth) and 11 (sustainable cities and communities). UNICEF will advocate for institutionalization of the measurement of child poverty in all its forms and will work with the Department of Census and Statistics to support future surveys that systematically and regularly calculate and publish data on child multidimensional poverty. UNICEF will help to facilitate wide dissemination of this data for policymaking and will work with international financial institutions and other partners to identify the most vulnerable groups and present an investment case for children.

32. Given the effective role of social protection in reducing vulnerability and extreme poverty while contributing to strengthening human capital, UNICEF will advocate for sufficient allocations to the sector and for every child, particularly the most vulnerable, to have access to social protection services. To do this, UNICEF will provide evidence-based policy recommendations to address key gaps in the social protection system and structure. UNICEF will continue to advocate for and support an inclusive and gender-responsive social protection system, including improvements of key features, such as digitization of the registration process.

33. The component will advocate for investments in children across sectors to remain a priority in Government approaches to allocate and spend resources amid a shrinking fiscal space. UNICEF will engage strategically in critical planning and budgeting processes at sectoral, central and, where possible, decentralized levels. UNICEF will generate quality evidence on the level, efficiency and equity of public resources allocated to social sectors that most directly impact children, including those particularly vulnerable to exclusion, such as young children, children with disabilities and children living in disaster-risk areas and in the estate sector. UNICEF will also leverage existing opportunities and public demands to undertake initiatives that increase budget transparency and participation for equitable public investment in children.

Programme effectiveness

34. UNICEF will consolidate wider programme gains to maximise programme effectiveness. The country programme will include standard outputs of coordination,

¹³ UNICEF Sri Lanka (2020). Investing in the future: A universal benefit for Sri Lanka's children.

¹⁴ The OBI score for Sri Lanka which stood at 67 [out of a score of 100] in 2010 decreased to 47 by 2019.

external communications, planning and monitoring linked with a strong gender focus, the harmonized approach to cash transfers, knowledge and learning. In addition, it will emphasize partnerships and advocacy, and key cross-cutting areas to support results across all outcomes. These cross-cutting areas will include climate change, disaster risk reduction, emergency preparedness and response, business for results, community engagement and social and behaviour change, and adolescent empowerment. Building on its role as a trusted voice for children, UNICEF will seek shared-value partnerships that benefit children and adolescents and promote the adoption of child rights-related business principles.

Summary budget table

<i>Programme component</i>	<i>(In thousands of United States dollars)</i>		
	<i>Regular resources</i>	<i>Other resources</i>	<i>Total</i>
Health and nutrition	1 475	4 000	5 475
Education	490	7 675	8 165
Child protection	490	9 825	10 315
Social policy	1 475	1 000	2 475
Programme effectiveness	830	2 500	3 330
Total	4 760	25 000	29 760

Programme and risk management

35. This draft country programme document summarizes UNICEF contributions to national results and is the principal unit of accountability to the Executive Board for alignment of results with resources allocated to the programme at the country level. Accountabilities of managers at the country, regional and headquarters levels with respect to country programmes are prescribed in UNICEF policies and procedures.

36. UNICEF actively participated in the design of the UNSDCF, 2023–2027, and is a key partner. UNICEF leads the largest outcome on equitable and resilient social services and enhanced well-being and contributes to the other five outcomes.

37. The programme considers potential risks that could impact the work of UNICEF, including the current economic crisis and natural hazards such as cyclones, landslides or floods. Early-warning mechanisms will be used to anticipate these risks with mitigating actions identified through the UNICEF enterprise risk management tool, including risks associated with the harmonized approach to cash transfers, private sector fundraising, emergencies, office greening and staff changes.

38. UNICEF will be attentive to opportunities that may arise that can contribute to achievement of the expected programme outcomes. Activities will include child rights monitoring, monitoring services for children, exploring private sector fundraising and engagement, and advocating for and identifying entry points to advance child rights.

Monitoring, learning and evaluation

39. In keeping with the role of UNICEF in a lower-middle-income country, monitoring the rights of children and adolescents is at the core of the country programme, alongside analysis of the barriers and bottlenecks affecting their

fulfilment. The evolving situation of children in the current crisis will be monitored primarily through national data systems and surveys, studies and evaluations, whenever possible. UNICEF will strengthen routine data systems to enable more effective, timely and quality data collection, analysis and dissemination. Key evaluations planned over the programme period are listed in the annexed costing evaluation plan.

40. A gender and equity focus will be applied during programme monitoring, which will help to identify if progress towards planned results is timely, efficient and effective. Joint field monitoring will be encouraged for shared responsibility of results between government counterparts and implementing partners, and to promote a cost-efficient approach. Midyear and annual reviews will also be used to monitor progress.

41. Monitoring will draw on lessons learned from the country programme, 2018–2022, and expertise from other UNICEF offices to develop systematic, real-time approaches for monitoring key indicators, in close consultation with the Government as required. In the spirit of “One UN” and in line with the UNSDCF, UNICEF will work closely with sister United Nations agencies to jointly implement, monitor and report on key initiatives that advance progress to achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Annex

Results and resources framework

Sri Lanka – UNICEF country programme of cooperation, 2023–2027

Convention on the Rights of the Child: Article 4, 6–7, 9, 19, 23–26, 28–29

National priorities: Sustainable Development Goals 1–6, 8, 11, 13 and 16; National Policy Framework Vistas of Prosperity and Splendour; National Nutrition Policy; Re-imagining Education in Sri Lanka; National Child Protection Policy, National Policy for Alternative Care of Children in Sri Lanka; and the reform agenda of the justice sector.

UNSDCF outcomes involving UNICEF:

By 2027...

- 1: more people in Sri Lanka, particularly the most vulnerable, access and benefit from equitable, resilient, gender-responsive and quality social services with enhanced wellbeing and dignity.
- 2: 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.
- 3: 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 equitably benefit from ambitious climate action and increasingly sustainable management and protection of the environment and natural resources.
- 4: 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.
- 5: 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.
- 6: 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.

Related UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2022–2025 Goal Areas: 1–5

UNSDCF outcomes	UNICEF outcomes	Key progress indicators, baselines(B) and targets (T)	Means of verification	Indicative country programme outputs	Major partners, partnership frameworks	Indicative resources by country programme outcome: regular resources (RR), other resources (OR) (In thousands of United States dollars)		
						RR	OR	Total
Outcome 1	1. By 2027, more pregnant women and children under 5 years, including the most vulnerable groups, have equitable access to and use essential and life-saving, quality and gender-responsive health and nutrition services, and parents and caregivers adopt appropriate diet and care practices to prevent all forms of malnutrition among both girls and boys	*Percentage of children under 5 who are wasted B:15.1% (2016) T:5%	Demographic and Health Survey (DHS)	1. Government and other stakeholders at national and subnational level have strengthened capacity to deliver essential and life-saving, quality and gender-responsive health and nutrition services, together with parents/caregivers, on appropriate care and diets for children. 2. Government has increased capacity to coordinate evidence-based resource allocations for nutrition-sensitive and specific, comprehensive, gender and age-appropriate interventions across sectors in development and humanitarian contexts.	Ministry of Health; Ministry of Finance and Planning (MoFP); Ministry of Agriculture; Ministry of Women and Child Affairs	1 475	4 000	5 475
		*Percentage of babies born with a low birthweight (<2500g) B:16% (2016) T:12%	DHS; Medical statistician data					
		Percentage of children under 5 years with severe wasting and other forms of severe acute malnutrition who are admitted for treatment B: 15% (2020) T: 50%	Reproductive Health Management Information System					
Outcomes 1, 3 and 5	2. By 2027, children, especially the most	*Percentage of children aged 3 to 4 years who attend a pre-school or an early childhood	DHS	1. Early childhood education systems strengthened to provide equitable	Ministry of Education (MoE); State Ministry of Education;	490	7 675	8 165

UNSDCF outcomes	UNICEF outcomes	Key progress indicators, baselines(B) and targets (T)	Means of verification	Indicative country programme outputs	Major partners, partnership frameworks	Indicative resources by country programme outcome: regular resources (RR), other resources (OR) (In thousands of United States dollars)		
						RR	OR	Total
	disadvantaged, benefit from an inclusive, quality and resilient education system that contributes to continued and improved learning and acquisition of skills for the future.	development centre, according to background characteristics B: 60.1 % (National) 47.6% (Estate) 52.3% (Lowest quintile) 72.6% (Highest quintile) (2016) T: 25% increase against each baseline		access to high quality and inclusive early learning services, particularly for the most vulnerable groups. 2.Primary and secondary education system strengthened to deliver continuous learning for all children, particularly the most vulnerable, and inclusive and equitable learning and skills development. 3. Risk-informed and resilient education system strengthened at all levels to provide a safe and protective environment for children, particularly those living in vulnerable areas.	National Institute of Education			
National exam pass rates at the end of compulsory education (Grade 11; General Certificate of Education Ordinary Level) B: 75.12 % (National) 74.67% (Central) 72.38 % (East) 74.99% (Uva) (2020) T: 10% increase against the baseline		Exam Department/MoE						
*Proportion of youth (aged 15–24 years) not in education, employment or training (NEET) ^a B: 21.5% (2020) Male: 15.3% Female: 27.5% T: Less than 20.0%		Department of Census and Statistics (DCS), Labour Force Survey						
Outcomes 1, 4, 5 and 6	3. By 2027, more children, especially the most vulnerable, benefit from child-friendly services and	Percentage of children in conflict with the law subject to a diversion order or a non-custodial sentence B:0% (2022) T:50%	Department of Probation and Child Care Services (DPCCS) annual statistics	1. The child protection system is strengthened to provide multisectoral, child-friendly, effective and efficient services,	DPCCS; Department of Prisons; Police; Mediation Boards Commission; DCS	490	9 825	10 315

UNSDCF outcomes	UNICEF outcomes	Key progress indicators, baselines(B) and targets (T)	Means of verification	Indicative country programme outputs	Major partners, partnership frameworks	Indicative resources by country programme outcome: regular resources (RR), other resources (OR) (In thousands of United States dollars)		
						RR	OR	Total
	positive social norms that better protect them from violence in all settings, and exploitation, and prevents family separation.	Percentage of children in family-based care out of the total number of children in all forms of formal alternative care B: 31% (2020) T: 50%		in times of crisis and beyond 2. The alternative care system is strengthened with a skilled and accountable workforce and required resources to deliver the full range of care and probation options to support families, particularly those affected by the crisis, and promote family based care. 3. Government, parents/caregivers, teachers and children have increased capacities to practice positive behaviours and promote positive social and gender norms that better protect girls, boys and women from violence in all settings.				
Outcomes 1 and 2	4.-More children, particularly those most disadvantaged	*Number of children covered by social protection systems B: 3.5 million children (2021)	Central Bank Annual Report	1. The Government of Sri Lanka has increased capacity to systematically	State Ministry of Samurdhi; MoFP; National Planning	1 475	1 000	2 475

UNSDCF outcomes	UNICEF outcomes	Key progress indicators, baselines(B) and targets (T)	Means of verification	Indicative country programme outputs	Major partners, partnership frameworks	Indicative resources by country programme outcome: regular resources (RR), other resources (OR) (In thousands of United States dollars)		
						RR	OR	Total
	and excluded, progressively benefit from a more inclusive, child-sensitive, gender-responsive and shock-responsive social protection system and key social services.	T: 3.57 million children (by 2027) *Percentage of children living in multidimensional poverty B:0–4 years (14%) 5–17 year (16.9%)(2019) T:0–4 years (14%) 5–17 year (16.9%)	Household and Income Expenditure Survey, DCS	measure and report on child poverty in all its forms and use this data to inform policymaking. 2. The social protection system is strengthened to progressively address the vulnerabilities faced by all children and their families, particularly those most at risk from the crisis. 3. National and subnational government officials have enhanced capacities to use a more evidence-based, child-sensitive and gender-responsive approach to ensuring adequate and equitable investments in children.	Department; DCS.			
Outcomes 1–6	5. Programme effectiveness	Overall country office performance against key performance indicators on an annual basis B:88% (2021) T: 100%	InSight performance scorecard	Programme coordination, communication, advocacy, partnerships, planning, monitoring,	Relevant government partners	830	2 500	3 330

<i>UNSDCF outcomes</i>	<i>UNICEF outcomes</i>	<i>Key progress indicators, baselines(B) and targets (T)</i>	<i>Means of verification</i>	<i>Indicative country programme outputs</i>	<i>Major partners, partnership frameworks</i>	<i>Indicative resources by country programme outcome: regular resources (RR), other resources (OR) (In thousands of United States dollars)</i>		
						<i>RR</i>	<i>OR</i>	<i>Total</i>
				evaluation, cross-cutting and operations support.				
	Total resources					4 760	25 000	29 760

^a UNICEF will contribute through its support to ongoing education reforms in the country.

* Outcome indicator aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework indicator.