

Ensuring Economic Access to Nutritious Diets During the Economic Crisis in Sri Lanka

A COtD Simulation

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Introduction

Objectives

Analysis

Results

Implications

Introduction

- Sri Lanka's worst economic recession disrupts supply chains, income, and access to food
- Prices of most of the food items had been on a steady rise since the last quarter of 2021
September 2022 : Food inflation rate **95 %**
- Severe erosion of purchasing power due to high food prices reduced households (HHs) affordability
- **54 percent** of HHs in Sri Lanka experienced food insecurity (rCARI) in 2022
October 2022 : **67 percent** of HHs in the estate sector were food insecure
- Henceforth, ensuring economic access to nutritious diets is imperative

Objectives

- To estimate the minimum cost of a nutritious diet
- To estimate the effect of short-term nutrition-sensitive cash transfers on affordability

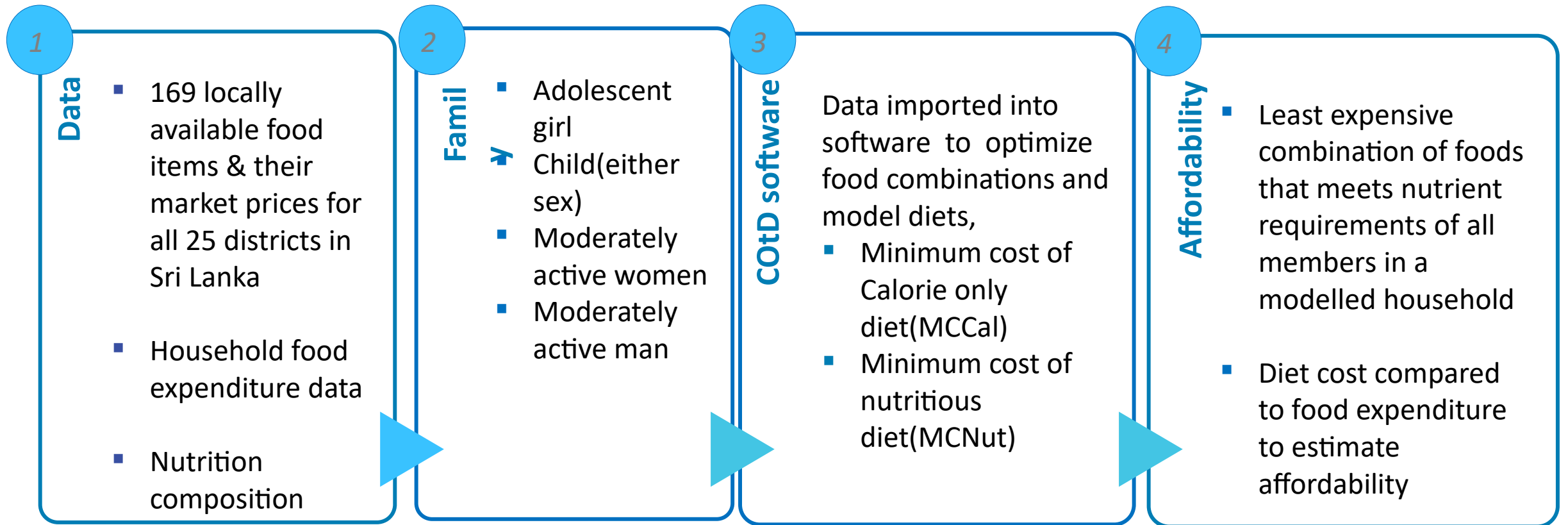
Analysis : Cost of Diet (COtD)

- Model the cost of a theoretical, simulated diet which fulfills recommended nutritional requirements, of an average representative household at the minimal possible cost, based on the availability, price, and nutrient content of locally available foods
- Data and data sources:

Data	Data source
Weekly retail price of 169 food commodities in 25 districts in Sri Lanka	HARTI, Sri Lanka
Household(HH) food expenditure data	Household income and expenditure survey 2019, Department of censuses and statistics, Sri Lanka
Typical dietary habits	Primary data: Focus group discussions
Nutrition composition of food commodities	Medical Research Institute, Sri Lanka

Analysis : Cost of Diet (COtD)

Cost of the Diet (CotD) software developed by Save the Children UK:
Application version 2.5.2



Analysis :

Interventions from different sectors could improve access to nutritious diets

Improved affordability and access to nutritious foods

Analysis : Estimate the effect of short-term nutrition-sensitive cash transfers on affordability

Interventions modelled :

Short term nutrition sensitive cash transfer,

- LKR 6,500.00/month for year to a HH with a child less than six years
- For micronutrient supplementation to a HH with a adolescent girl

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CotD software

Data imported into software to optimize food combinations and model diets

- MCCA
- MCNut
- Affordability

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Simulation

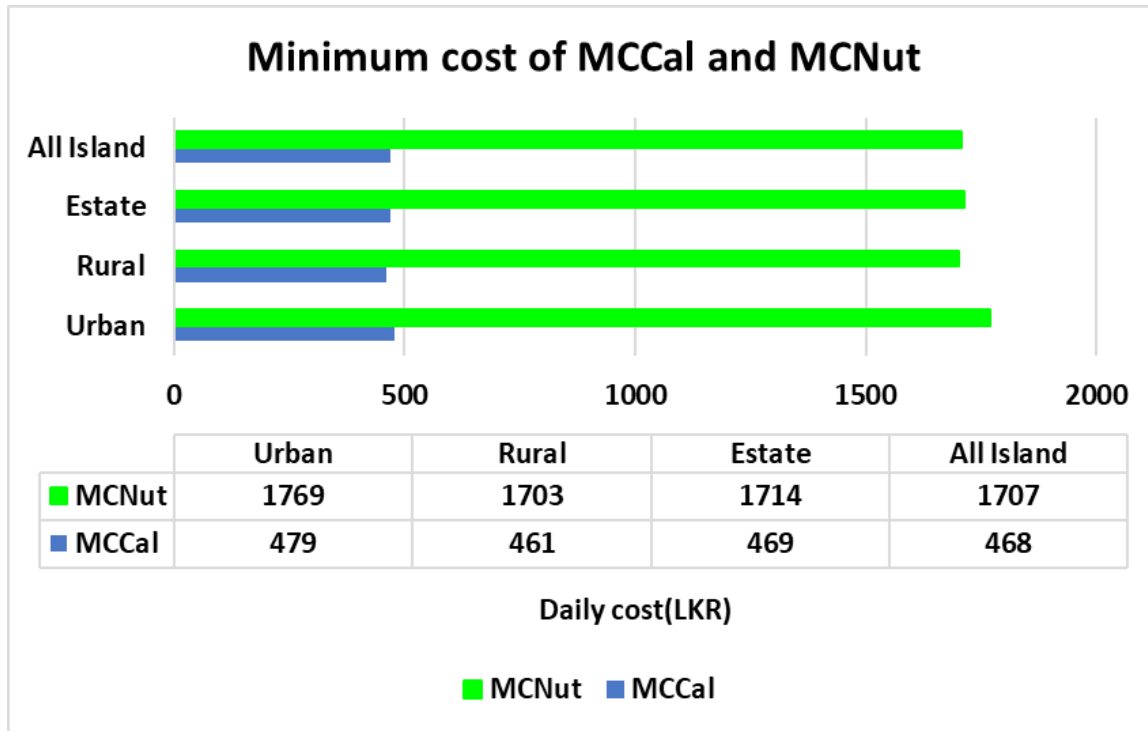
Model interventions proposed to improve access to nutritious diets

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Affordability

Diet cost + intervention compared to food expenditure to estimate affordability

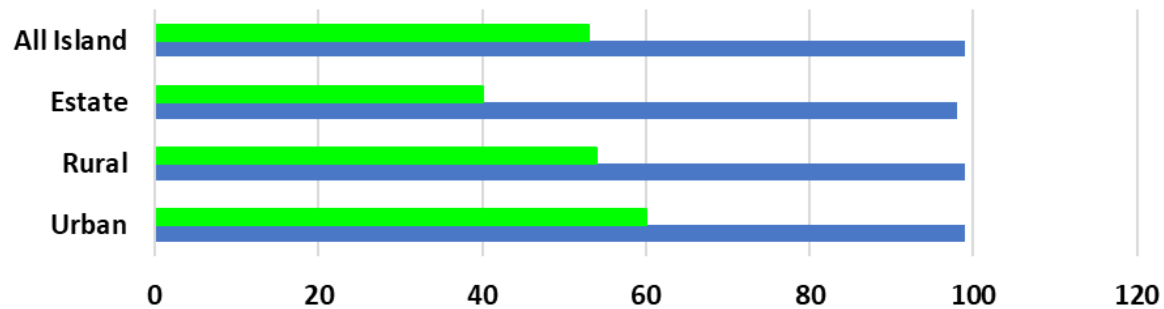
Results



- A nutritious diet (MCNut) is over **3.5 times more expensive** than a diet that meets only energy needs (MCCal) in Sri Lanka in year 2022
- Costs are higher in the urban areas
- The cost of meeting the nutrient needs of the adolescent girl contributes for **about one third** of the household food expenditure

Results

Affordability of Mccal and MCNut



	Urban	Rural	Estate	All Island
MCNut	60	54	40	53
Mccal	99	99	98	99

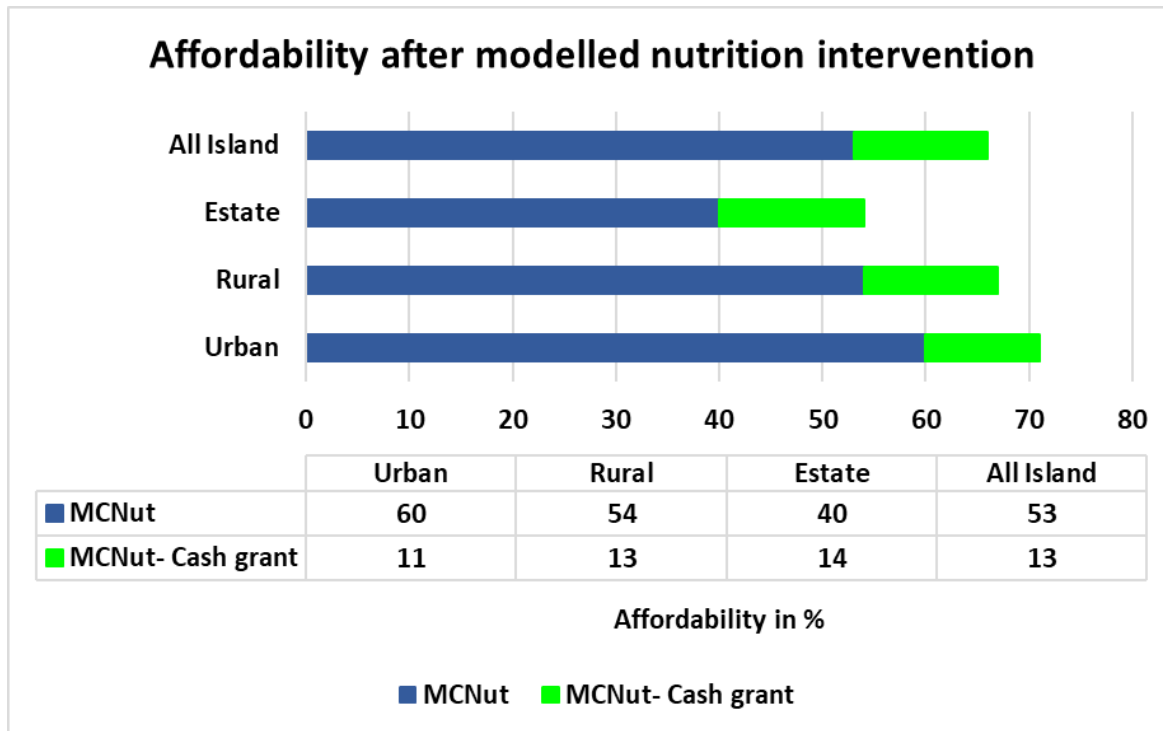
Affordability in %

MCNut Mccal

- In the estate sector, **98%** had the **affordability** to the energy only diet
- A **nutritious diet was out of reach**, for nearly half (46%) of HH in the rural sector and **two-thirds of HH in the estate sector**
- Across residential sectors, the **estate sector was the most vulnerable**

Results :

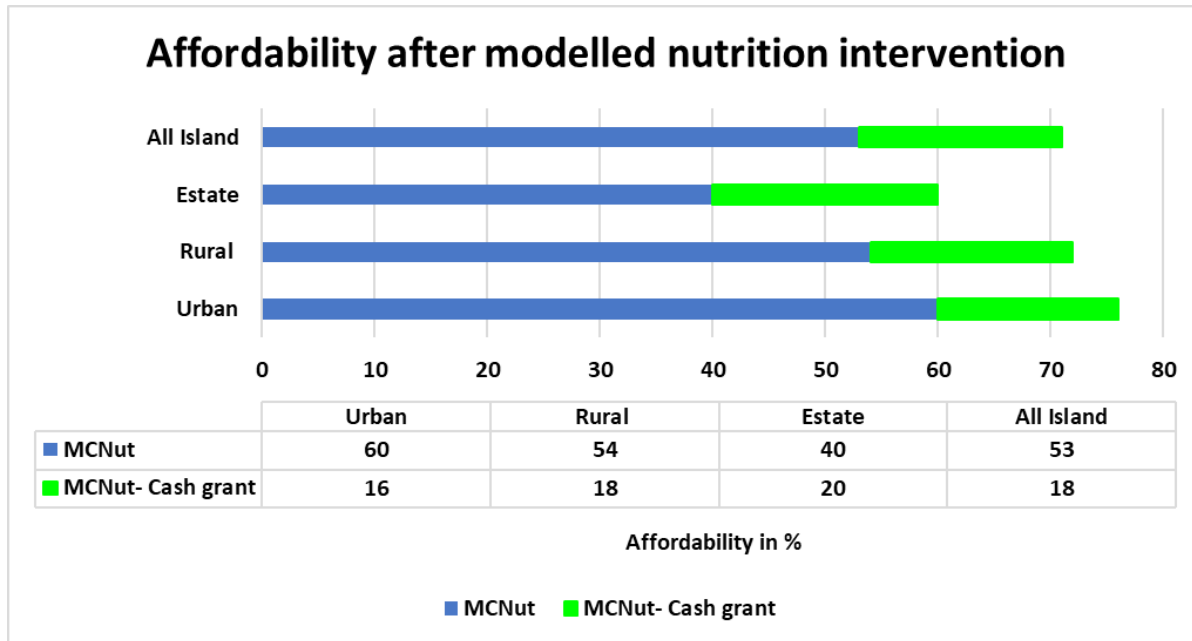
Short term nutrition sensitive cash transfer, LKR 6,500.00/month for year to a HH with a child less than six years



- Increase HH affordability by 13% nationwide, with the **estate sector experiencing the biggest nutrition improvement (14%)**

Results

Short term nutrition sensitive cash transfer, for micronutrient supplementation to a HH with a adolescent girl



- Increase HH affordability by 18% nationwide, with the **estate sector experiencing the biggest nutrition improvement (20%)**
- The nutrition interventions model enhanced nutrition inclusion

Implications

- Short-term nutrition-sensitive social protection programs for the most vulnerable are an effective policy tool to ensure economic access to nutritious diets during times of crisis
- The study recommends further research on policy interventions to be combined with long-term development perspectives that raise economic access and nutritional inclusion

Thank you