

COVID-19: Lessons and Reflections from Sri Lanka



July 10th 2020, 10:00-12:20 (GMT+8)

The members of the Meeting are from:

China/Japan/Pakistan/Mexico/Philippines/Sri Lanka/Malaysia/Myanmar/India/Indonesia/Bangladesh/Nepal/Italy and other countries and regions

- * Dr. Novil Wijesekara 《 Capturing Community Perceptions in Covid-19 Response: Synopsis of Three Online Surveys 》**
- * Dr. Vinya Ariyaratne 《 Covid-19 Civil Society Engagement: Best Practices and Challenges from Sri Lanka 》**
- * Dr. Aslam Saja 《 COVID19 risk and resilience- Lessons from Sri Lanka for future integrated approach 》**



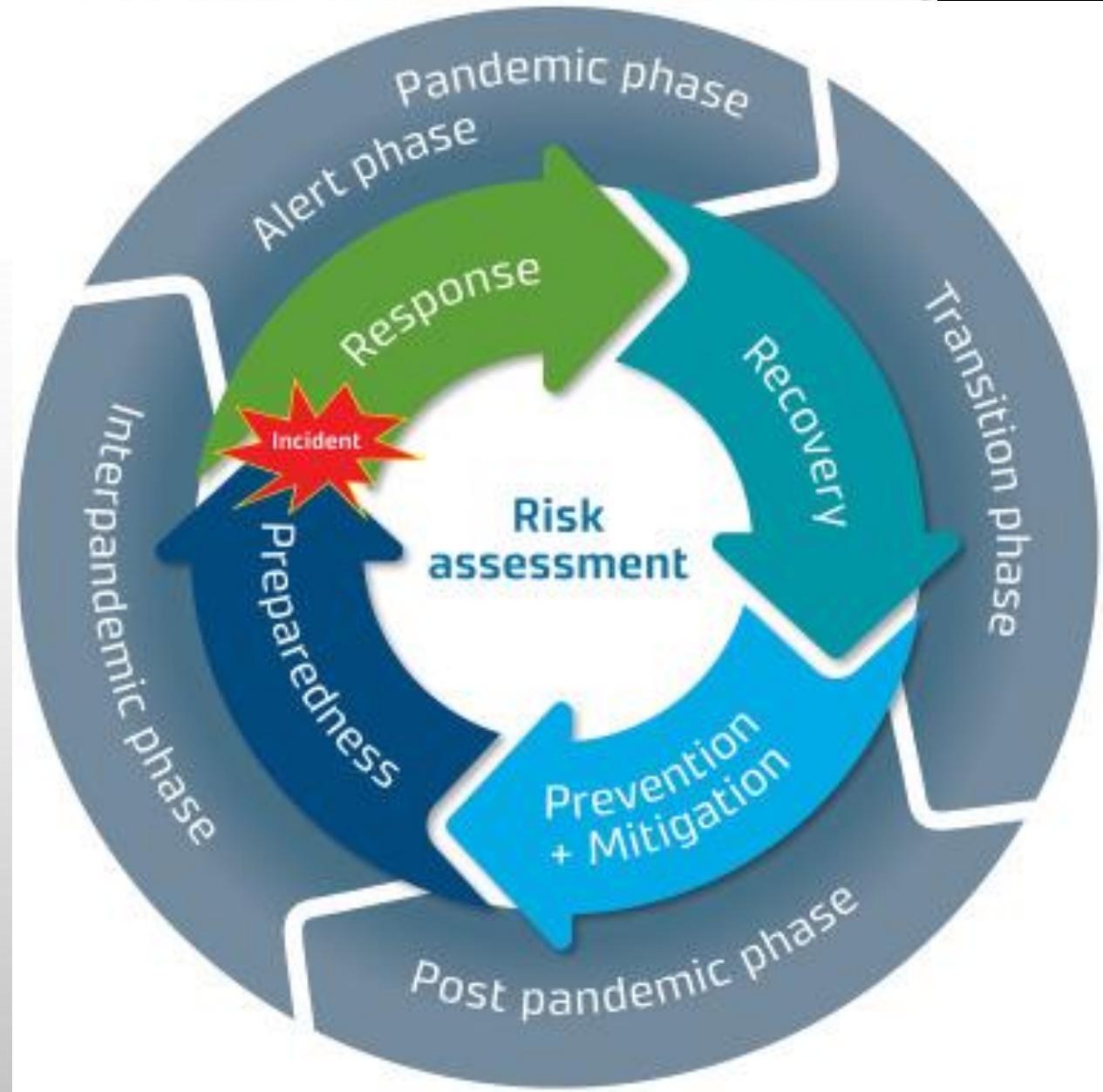
COVID-19 RISK AND RESILIENCE - LESSONS FROM SRI LANKA FOR FUTURE INTEGRATED APPROACH

**INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE FOR COVID-19
COMMUNITY RESPONSE**

10 JULY 2020

**Saja Aslam, PhD
Sri Lanka**

COVID-19 Risk Management Cycle



Sources:
Fakhruddin (2020)

Sri Lanka COVID-19 Context

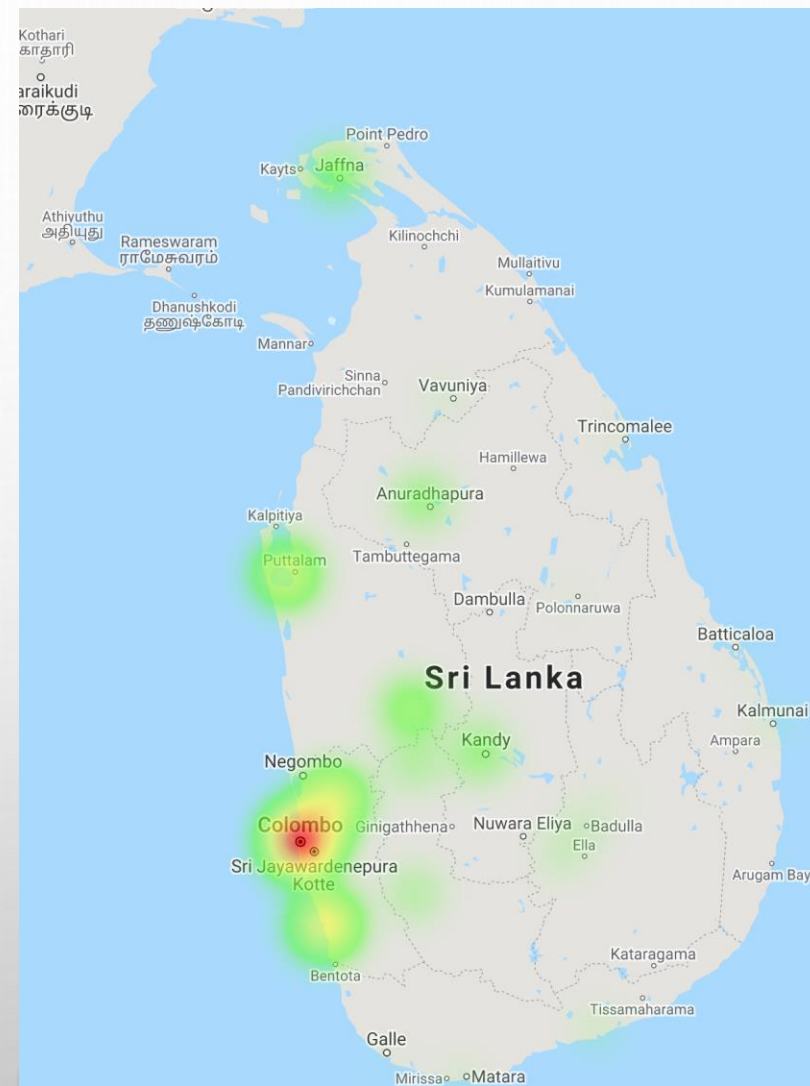
Last Updated: July 09 2020, 07:30 IST

(+0) 116 Active ⓘ	(+0) 1 Critical	(+0) 11 (0.53%) Deaths ⓘ
(+0) 117557 Tested ⓘ (Admitted)	(+0) 2094 Confirmed	(+0) 1967 Recovered

COVID-19 Risk informatics

Urban cities are at higher risk

The capital city - COLOMBO has recorded more number of cases



Sources:

<https://covidsl.com/>

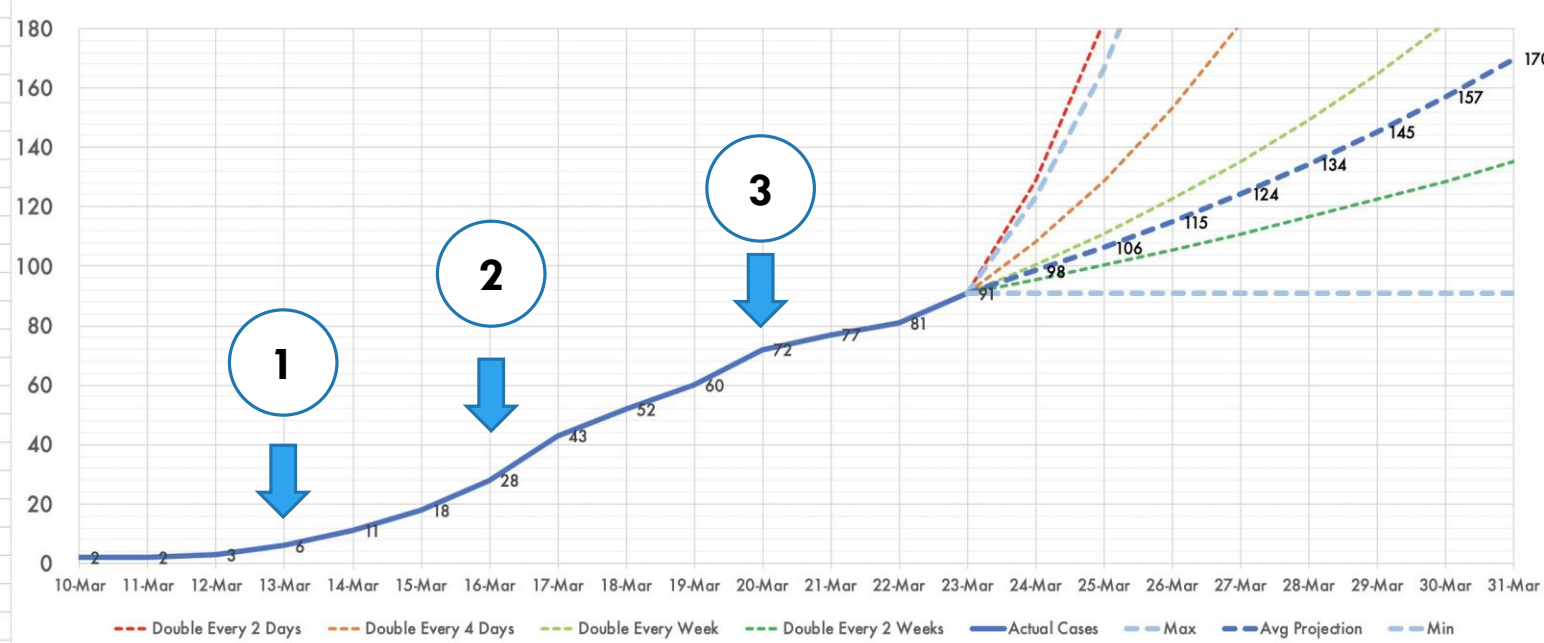
Epidemiology unit, Ministry of Health, SL

WHO Sri Lanka

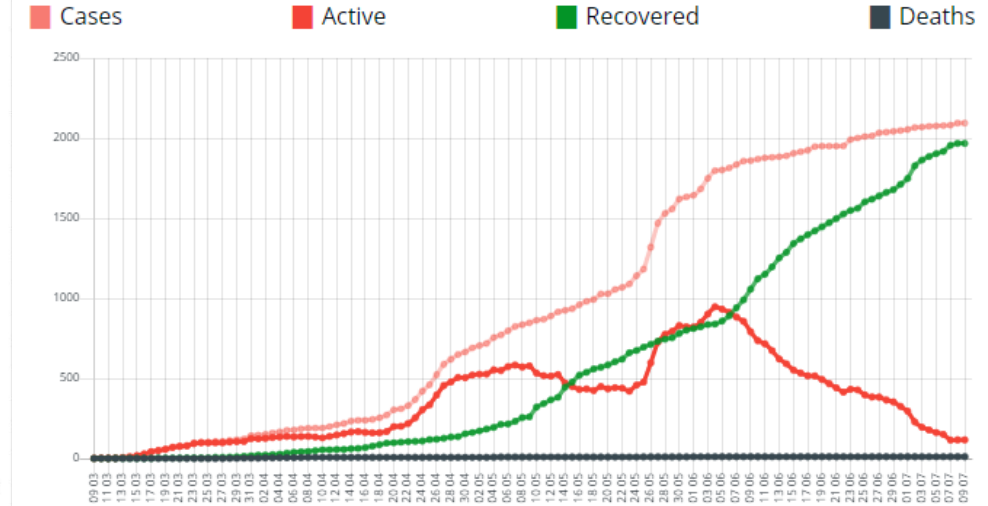
Sri Lanka CoViD-19 Reported Cases & Growth Projections* (6pm, 23-Mar)

Data Source: <https://github.com/CSSEGISandData/COVID-19>

*Projection assumes the average growth rate of the last 3 days



Outbreak Spread Trend



Nuwan I. Senaratna, 16/23 March 2020

<https://covidsl.com>, 09 July 2020

1 13 March 2020 and 14-15 March 2020

2 16-19 March 2020

3 From 20 March 2020

Last patient from the community reported on 30/04/2020



CHRONOLOGY OF MEASURES TAKEN BY THE GOVERNMENT OF SRI LANKA

1

13 March 2020 and 4-15 March 2020

All Government schools were closed till 20 April (Education Ministry) – Just reopened (Not fully opened)

All state universities were closed for two weeks (Higher Education Ministry) – Not reopened fully (Stage reopening)

All religious places were closed for gatherings and no mass gatherings in public places were allowed – Allowed with restrictions

Airport is not open yet for departure – scheduled repatriation of Sri Lankans continue (Ministry of Foreign Affairs)

Sri Lankans are not permitted to travel overseas for employment (Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment)

2

16-19 March 2020

Public, Bank and Mercantile holiday in Sri Lanka

3

From 20 March 2020

Island wide curfew was imposed in Sri Lanka, with lifting curfew in regular time interval for shorter time period

Curfew was slowly lifted and later completely lifted.

SOCIAL DISTANCING – CURRENT PRACTICE AND CHALLENGES

Good practices



Challenges:
Continuing
supply of food
and basic needs
to people



New methods
are being
discussed



DAILY LIFE WHILE SOCIAL DISTANCING

- During the lockdown – When the curfew was lifted for 6-8 hours after 2-3 days and then imposed for another 2-3 days. This lead to overcrowding at the shops and markets for stock piling ---→ New alternative methods needed
- ICT use in handling the situation -→ online orders and delivery
Innovative methods needed
- Increased awareness for proper use of masks and handwashing



ACTIONS BY GOVERNMENT OF SRI LANKA

- His excellency the President, announced special fund “COVID19-Health Care and social security fund”
- Government provided support to the most vulnerable families (Subsidies, price control, and assistance through social security mechanisms) – social dimension and economic conditions
- SAARC Forum and funding pool is initiated by the Heads of Governments (SAARC Corona Emergency Fund)

COVID-19 CONTROL MEASURES AND RESILIENCE INDICATORS



- Testing is limited, However, deaths reported due to COVID19 is also very low (is a good proxy indicator to show the good control/response)
- Preparedness or control measures may be high at the social and economic cost
- Sri Lanka has good public health indicators in general, however large scale emergency management (Facilities for critical care) capacity is limited.
- South Asia has an estimated 0.7-2.8 critical care beds per 100,000 population (Phua 2020)



COVID-19 RISK COMMUNICATION

- Wearing masks, washing hands and social distancing - widely promoted in TV, radio, newspapers, and social media to raise awareness of the public

Are they continue to be practiced? Risk perception has changed.

**Enhancing social and economic resilience
through establishing social trust**

Risk Awareness is the best way to prevent and slow-down the transmission of the COVID-19

Risk Awareness is achieved through **Risk Communication of Risk Assessment**

Chatterjee (2020)



COVID-19 RISK PERCEPTION AND GENDER

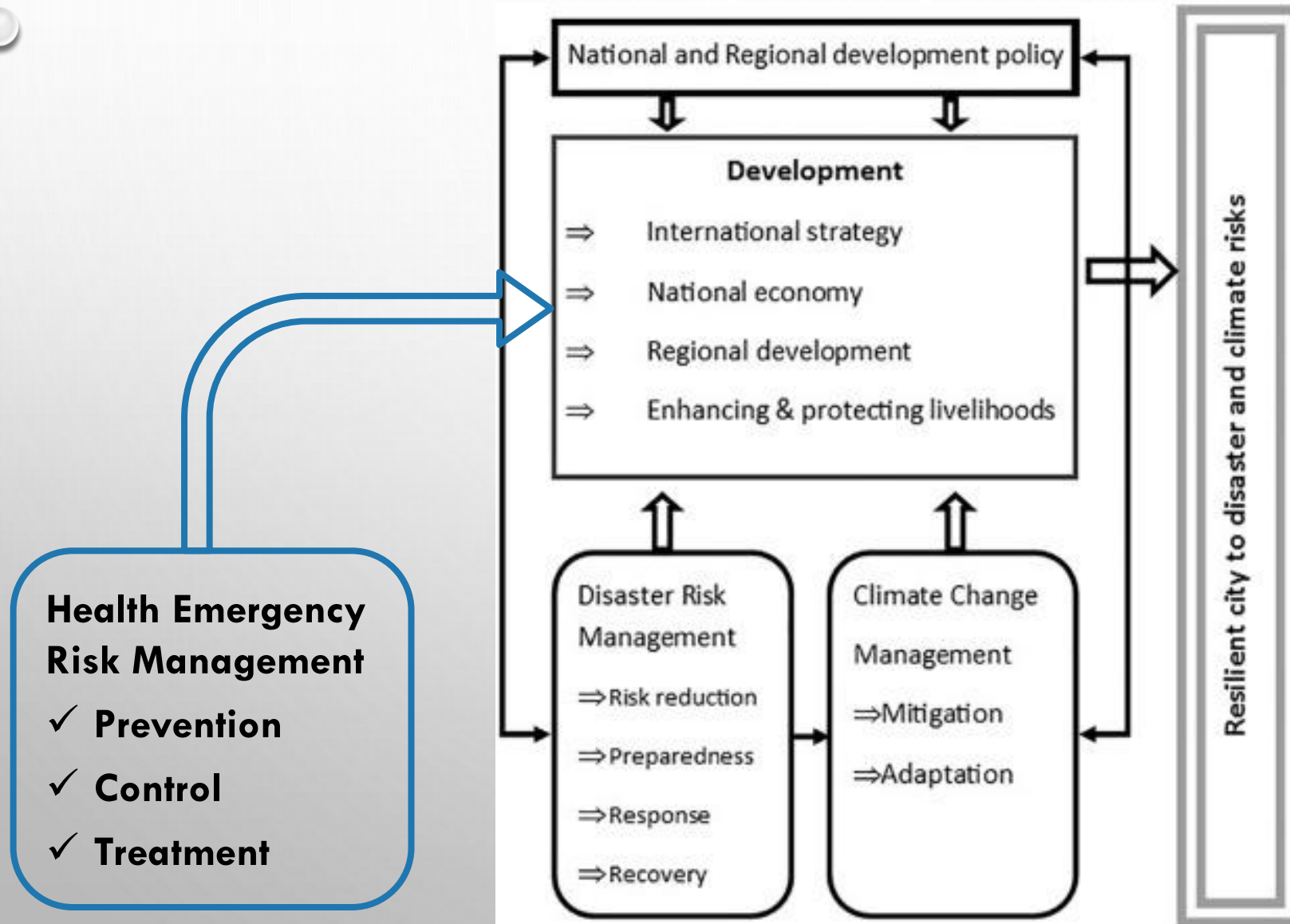
- Of the quarantined health workers, approximately 90% are nurses (the majority being women) – 67% of health workers in intimate care of patients are women (McLaren 2020)
- Due to fear, women health workers were asked to leave their rented accommodation (McLaren 2020)



MANAGE RISK OF FUTURE OUTBREAKS (PREVENTION, CONTROL AND TREATMENT)

- INTEGRATED RISK MANAGEMENT MEASURES FOR PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCIES
- ADDED ECONOMIC COST OF MEASURES RELATED TO PREVENTION OF COVID-19 (EX, IMPLEMENTATION OF HAND HYGIENE MEASURES, REDUCED CAPACITY)
 - WHEN OPENING PUBLIC, EDUCATIONAL, RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS
 - MASS GATHERING EVENTS
 - PARLIAMENT ELECTION IN AUGUST

RISK-SENSITIVE INTEGRATED APPROACH



Adapted from
Saja et.al (2020)



Photo credit: WHO

Thank You