



BUDGET BRIEF: CHILD PROTECTION SECTOR

SRI LANKA 2021

KEY MESSAGES:



This is the first-ever attempt to develop a budget brief for child protection in Sri Lanka. In collaboration with UNICEF, the budgets from 2015 to 2021 were analysed to identify what budget lines could be included as child protection spending. For Child Protection, this is not an easy task as the child protection system and its boundaries are not clearly defined.



Child protection covers a wide range of issues impacting on children: violence, abuse and neglect of children, child marriage, teenage pregnancies, child labour, child trafficking, sexual violence against and sexual exploitation of children, alternative care for children, adoptions, child poverty, bullying, children in contact/ conflict with the law and the incarceration of children. Due to the limited availability of information available on budget allocations to address these child protection issues, this first brief on child protection focuses on allocations related to what can broadly be identified as prevention and response interventions such as: the school nutritional programs, distribution of the uniforms and shoes, development of child friendly environmental facilities, prevention of child abuse and other administration and capital expenditure.



The National Child Protection Policy refers to the protection of children from all forms of abuse, neglect and other forms of maltreatment and harm. The National Alternative Care Policy outlines the Government's objective to support children in need of care and protection, with a focus on moving from institutional care to family-based care. This brief, drawing on UNICEF's definition, identifies child protection as the prevention and response to violence, abuse, neglect, exploitation, and harmful practices. Public expenditure on child protection falls under several ministries including, the State Ministry of Women and Child Development, Preschools and Primary Education, School Infrastructure and Education Services, the Ministry of Justice and the Police, the Ministry of Health, and the Ministry of Education. There is also spending at Provincial Council level as Probation and Child Care is a devolved subject.



Central government-level expenditure (nominal terms) in the child protection sector has increased continuously from 2015 to 2018, with a major decrease in 2019. A similar pattern is visible in the actual expenditure in the sector: The expenditure has dropped drastically in 2018 and 2019, in comparison to the previous years. For 2021, the child protection sector expenditure allocation was 0.28% of the total expenditure allocation.



The majority of the spending allocation, as well as the actual spending, consists of recurrent expenditure, which on average accounts for approximately 97% of the total expenditure. The balance allocation and the expenditure are for capital expenditure.



As per the budget estimates of 2021, the School Nutritional Food Programme and School Uniforms Programme contribute to almost 88.3% of the total allocation in the Child Protection sector. If these two-line items are removed, the data available for analysis would be limited, as the amount spent on other child protection line items is very small. This highlights that government's budget allocations for child protection, to prevent and respond to violence and prevent family separation and institutionalisation are negligible.



The allocation and spending for the child protection sector at the provincial level does not show a clear pattern over the years and does not appear to be linked to a rational basis such as the number of children in care. According to the Census of Children in Child Care Institutions published by the Department of Census and Statistics in 2019, the highest number of children placed in childcare institutions is recorded from the Western, Northern and Eastern provinces¹, which rank in 3rd, 5th, and 4th places, respectively, in terms of the allocation of funds in 2018 while Sabaragamuwa (Lowest number of children in childcare institutions) and Central Provinces received the highest budget allocations.



The data in relation to child protection sector from sources such as NCPA, DPCC, Police departments, and other relevant ministries is not routinely collected and analysed, thus failing to identify a pattern and a link between data in the sector, outcomes, and budget allocations.



With the COVID-19 pandemic, a rise in cases of domestic violence and child maltreatment was recorded during the lockdown period.² However, no special spending allocations could be demonstrated through the perusal of official budget documents to better prevent or respond to the rise in cases of domestic violence and child maltreatment.

1. Department of Census and Statistics, Census of Children in Child Care Institutions 2019, p8. Available at: <http://www.statistics.gov.lk/Resource/reference/CensusofChildreninChildCareInstitutions2019Final>

2. Ministry of Health, Nutrition and Indigenous Medicine, Weekly Epidemiological Report Volume 47 Available at: https://www.epid.gov.lk/web/images/pdf/wer/2020/vol_47_no_42-english.pdf



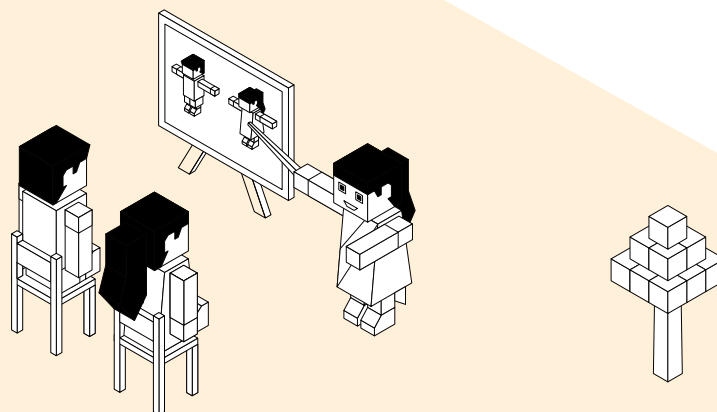
1. INTRODUCTION

This child protection budget brief explores the extent to which the Sri Lankan government funds the needs of the child protection sector of the country through its budgets. The other briefs on Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH), education, health and social protection sectors explore public expenditure patterns relating to these sectors.

This brief on Sri Lanka's child protection sector analyses the composition and trends in budget allocations for the sector during the fiscal years 2015–2021. This analysis includes the underlying policy goals and the functional and regional distribution of budget allocations. The brief also offers insights into the efficiency, equity, and adequacy of the budget execution process. The main objective of the brief is to function as an informative piece on the child protection sector budget. As such, the brief summarises budget information in a manner that would be easily understood by different stakeholders, including civil society and the broader population, who may lack technical knowledge on the subject. This piece also serves to increase transparency on how much is being spent to meet the goals of the child protection sector. The brief is the result of a research partnership between UNICEF and Verité Research that aims to unpack the contours of government budgets in Sri Lanka.

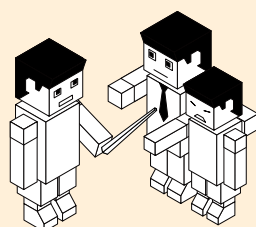
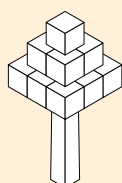
Data for the brief was collected from Sri Lanka's Central Government Annual Budget Estimates 2015–2021. The child protection sector includes the relevant budget allocations from the State Ministry of Women and Child Development, Preschools and Primary Education, School Infrastructure and Education Services, the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Education. Central government budget allocations have been added to the budget given to each of Sri Lanka's nine Provincial Councils (PCs) for child protection-related expenditures. Data on child protection-related expenditures was obtained from the PC Budget Estimates for each province. Individual expenditures relevant to the sector were obtained from the different provincial-level ministries that have responsibilities within the subject of child protection. Health Sector expenditure on child abuse cases was not possible to establish.

Local authority-level [(municipal councils (MC), urban councils (UC) and *pradeshiya sabhas* (PS)] data have not been included in this brief, because of the inherent difficulties associated with accessing this information. Disaggregated information at this level is not publicly available.



The brief was developed under several constraints:

- First, the availability and comparability of data/information change over time. Both the central government and the nine PCs have these distinctions. While central government budgets are available in electronic format, PCs budgets are not. Past PC budgets need to be physically retrieved from the relevant entities and, in some cases, physical copies are not available.
- Second, ministerial portfolios have undergone significant changes, making meaningful budget comparisons between years impossible. Since 2014, portfolio fluidity and movement have risen significantly.
- Third, there is no consistent definition of “child protection” in national budgets. Furthermore, various governments over the years have used different definitions of child protection. The lack of a coherent definition posed a challenge to the analysis in this brief and some budget line items were included that are not direct child protection expenditure, such as the purchase of school uniforms and shoes, but may protect children from school drop-out and child labour. Furthermore, the cross-cutting nature of the sector added complexity to the analysis. For example, some elements of child protection may have an overlap with other areas such as social protection, health and education.
- A key limitation associated with the definition used is the difficulty in identifying separate budget allocations at the central and provincial levels. At the PC level, the lack of uniformity in the structure of the budgets from year to year and between PCs exacerbates the situation.
- Fourth, 2019 budget data at the PC level was not available due to the lack of updated publicly available data.
- Finally, as previously stated, budget data at the local authority level was not used in this analysis, and disbursements at this level were not considered in the brief.





2. WHAT ENCOMPASSES CHILD PROTECTION?

Child protection covers issues impacting vulnerable children such as violence against children, child marriages, teenage pregnancies, child labour, child trafficking, sexual violence against and sexual exploitation of children, alternative care for children, adoptions, child poverty, bullying, children in conflict with the law and the incarceration of children. As a result, several ministries, departments, and agencies (MDAs) are involved in services related to child protection. There is no single “budget” for child protection, but rather allocations are provided in various sub-programmes and activities within different ministries, such as the Ministry of Women and Children’s Affairs, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, and Ministry of Labour.

According to UNICEF, a child protection system can be defined as: ‘Certain formal and informal structures, functions and capacities that have been assembled to prevent and respond to violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation of children. A child protection system is generally agreed to be comprised of the following components: human resources, finance, laws and policies, governance, monitoring and data collection as well as protection and response services and care management’³ The major focus is given to Article 19 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which highlights that the “States Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child.”⁴ These protective measures could include effective procedures for the establishment of social programmes to provide the necessary support for the child and for those who have the care of the child, as well as for other forms of prevention and identification, reporting, referral, investigation, treatment and follow-up of instances of child

maltreatment described heretofore, and, as appropriate, for judicial involvement.

The National Department of Probation and Child Care Services (DPCCS) is the main state agency dedicated to the welfare of children in conflict with the law and those in need of care and protection. Its mandate is primarily for children under 16 years of age. Other state entities such as the Department of Prisons have a responsibility towards children 16-18 who have violated the law. The DPCCS’s establishment in 1956 marked the beginning of public investment in the protection of children in Sri Lanka.⁵

In 1990 Sri Lanka ratified the CRC. As a result, new laws, regulations, and processes were then supposed to be established to accommodate the new thinking on the care and protection of vulnerable children, as well as the treatment of young offenders. However, reform in the sector has been slow. Despite policy changes, the law governing the sector – the Children’s and Young Persons Ordinance (1939 with minor amendments in 1956) remains the main legislation. Child protection is still not fully organised as a sector, and lacks coordination across several agencies at both national and sub-national levels. This situation was further fragmented by the 13th amendment to the constitution in 1987, which brought Probation and Child Care under the purview of PCs, whilst Child Protection remains a centralized responsibility under the NCPA.⁶

The National Department of Probation and Child Care Services, which falls under the Ministry of Women and Child Affairs, redirected its services and is currently in charge of developing national policy and monitoring child rights. However, the Department also has a cadre of Child Rights Promotion Officers to promote children’s rights. The recruited officials are stationed in each DS to provide the environment and facilities needed to protect children’s rights at the regional level.

3. Child protection systems. Available at: <https://www.endvawnow.org/en/articles/1727-child-protection-systems.html?next=1727>

4. Convention on the Rights of the Child. Available at: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/crc.aspx>

5. History of the Department, Department of Probation and Child Care Services. Available at: http://www.probation.gov.lk/ourHistory_e.php

6. United Nation’s Convention on the Rights of the Child-UNCRC, Department of Probation and Child Care Services. Available at: http://www.probation.gov.lk/sProgram1_e.php?id=32

2.1 Institutional framework

Sector definition

The definition of the child protection sector varies from country to country and covers a number of thematic areas depending on the context. In Sri Lanka, the National Child Protection Authority (NCPA), the DPCCS, and the Children's Secretariat within MoWCA, the Ministry of Justice together comprise the core of the child protection system.

The following areas were considered in this brief, which includes significant assistance programmes along with their administrative expenditure.

- Strengthening of child protection system and violence against children
- Prevention of child abuse and violence against women
- School nutritional food programme – in relation to the prevention of school drop-out and child labour
- Refurbishment and supervision of children's homes
- Empowerment of vulnerable children providing vocational skills & financial assistance

The responsibility pertaining to child protection services and programmes is shared between central and provincial governments.

Central government

The child protection sector of Sri Lanka highlighted in this budget brief identifies a key ministry for spending, which is the State Ministry of Women and Child Development, Pre-Schools and Primary Education, School Infrastructure and Education Services, while the Ministry of Justice and Ministry of Education support the sector in a smaller capacity.

The Ministry of Justice is responsible for spending concerning the Department of the Attorney General and Courts Administration on child protection. The Ministry of Education is responsible for spending on shoes for students in difficult & very difficult schools. In 2019, this line item was considered under children's development in the State Ministry of Women and Child Development, Preschools and Primary Education, School Infrastructure and Education Services.

Under the direction and guidance of the Ministry of Education, the State Ministry of Women and Child Development, Pre-Schools & Primary Education, School Infrastructure and Education Services was introduced to support the formulation of policies for this sector. These policies were mainly related to women and child development, preschools and primary education, school infrastructure and education services for the creation of a "knowledgeable society" in accordance with the prescribed laws, acts, and ordinances, and implementing projects under the national budget. The State Ministry of Women and Child Development, Pre-Schools & Primary Education, School Infrastructure & Education Services is also responsible for the following special priorities according to the gazette.⁷

- Putting in place long-term measures to offer protection and mitigate adversity for people who are vulnerable regularly, particularly women and children.
- Taking the required steps to protect children's rights in line with the International Convention on the Rights of the Child, involving all relevant institutions.
- Creating a division in each district court committed to addressing the backlog of all child-related court matters.
- Creating a nationwide initiative to implement a "foster family system" for all children in childcare centres.

7. Overview - Subjects and Functions, State Ministry of Women and Child Development, Pre-Schools & Primary Education, School Infrastructure & Education Services. Available at: <http://www.childwomenmin.gov.lk/about/overview>

The National Child Protection Authority (NCPA) is responsible for many areas in the child protection sector beginning with providing advice to the government on the development of a national strategy on the prevention of child abuse as well as the protection and treatment of children who have been abused.⁸ Further, the NCPA provides advice to the government on how to prevent child abuse, safeguard victims of such abuse and support raising awareness of a child’s right to be protected against abuse as well as the techniques for preventing it. The NCPA also advises appropriate ministries, PCs, local authorities, district and divisional secretaries and public and private sector organisations. It suggests all necessary steps to prevent child abuse and to protect and preserve the rights of child-abuse victims.⁹

Statutory boards and institutions

Under the stated scope of child protection, there are four statutory boards and institutions that operate under the following specified ministries:

State Ministry of Women and Child Development, Preschools and Primary Education, School Infrastructure and Education Services

- NCPA
- DPCCS
- Children’s Secretariat
- Sri Lanka Thripasha Co. Ltd
- Department of Probation and Child Care Services

Ministry of Justice

- National Authority for the Protection of Victims of Crime and Witnesses

The following institutional framework can be seen in the budget estimates from 2015 to 2021 in relation to the composition of the ministerial portfolio of child protection in Sri Lanka.

TABLE 1 | Changes in the composition of ministries in the child protection sector 2015–2021

2015	Ministry of Women and Child Affairs		Ministry of Education (Administration and Establishment Services [General Education])
2016			
2017			
2018			
2019	Ministry of Women and Child Affairs and Dry Zone Development	Ministry of Justice (Department of Attorney General)	
2020	State Ministry of Women and Child Development, Preschools and Primary Education, School Infrastructure and Education Services		
2021		Ministry of Justice (Courts Administration)	

Source: Ministry of Finance Budget Estimates 2015–2021¹⁰

8. About NCPA, National Child Protection Authority. Available at: <http://www.childprotection.gov.lk/about-us/about-ncpa>

9. About NCPA, National Child Protection Authority. Available at: <http://www.childprotection.gov.lk/about-us/about-ncpa>

10. 2021 Ministry names are those provided in the 2021 Budget Estimates

2.2 Strategic and policy framework

There is no overarching policy framework for the strengthening or reform of the entire child protection system. Different ministries design and implement policies depending on the assigned responsibility. The National Child Protection Policy¹¹ and the National Alternative Care

Policy are identified as the key policy in the child protection sector. Some measures are underlined in the National Policy Framework 'Vistas of Prosperity and Splendour', of which some are mentioned below.

TABLE 2 | Measures under child protection in the National Policy Framework 'Vistas of Prosperity and Splendour'

Key Policy	Sectoral Policies and Policy Component	Strategies	Activities
A safe and secure country for all	A country free from drugs	Protect school children from harmful drugs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing a programme to rehabilitate the children who have fallen prey to drugs. Establishing a proper inspection mechanism to supervise all places that could easily lure children into using drugs.
A productive citizen and a happy family	Re-awakening of school education	Infrastructure development in the school system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop primary schools into "child-friendly schools" and provide sufficient human resources.
	Creation of knowledgeable child population	Guide children to be healthy and productive citizens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide financial and other facilities for the children from low-income families. Establish a programme with the Ministries of Justice, Child and Women Affairs, and Defence as well as all related state agencies to address and prevent all forms of exploitation, abuse and violence against children. Establish a dedicated section in each district court to resolve court cases about children without delay. Establish a national programme to introduce a "foster family system" for all children in child care and development centres/institutions.

In addition to the above policy framework, the following are some legislations regulating the child protection sector in Sri Lanka.

- National Child Protection Act, No. 50 of 1998¹²
- Prevention Of Domestic Violence Act, No. 34 Of 2005¹³,
- Adoption of Children Ordinance, No. 24 of 1949 as amended by Act Nos: 38 of 1979 and 15 of 1992
- Children & Young Persons Ordinance, No. 48 of 1939
- Employment of Women, Young Persons and Children's Ordinance, No. 47 of 1956 as amended by Act Nos 43 of 1964, 29 of 1973, 32 of 1984 and the regulations made thereunder

11. National Policy on Child Protection 2020, National Child Protection Authority. Available at: <http://www.childprotection.gov.lk/images/pdfs/acts-guidelines/2020.12.31%20National%20Policy%20on%20Child%20Protection.pdf>

12. National Child Protection Act, No. 50 of 1998

13. National Child Protection Authority Available at: http://www.childprotection.gov.lk/Child_Related_ACTs/Prevention%20of%20Domestic%20Violence%20Act,%20No.%2034%20of%202005.pdf

- Factory Ordinance (1942)
- Houses of Detention Ordinance (1907) as amended
- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights Act No. 56 of 2007
- Offences Committed Under the Influence of liquor Act, (1979)
- Orphanages Ordinance, (1941) as amended
- Prevention of Domestic Violence Act, No. 34 of 2005

BUDGET AND EXPENDITURE ANALYSIS

This section of the budget brief analyses the public spending trends in Sri Lanka's child protection sector. This analysis is based on publicly available budget and expenditure data. The brief focuses on budget and expenditure trends at the central level for the years 2015—2021. Due to a lack of publicly available data, provincial-level budget assessments are limited to certain provinces and years.

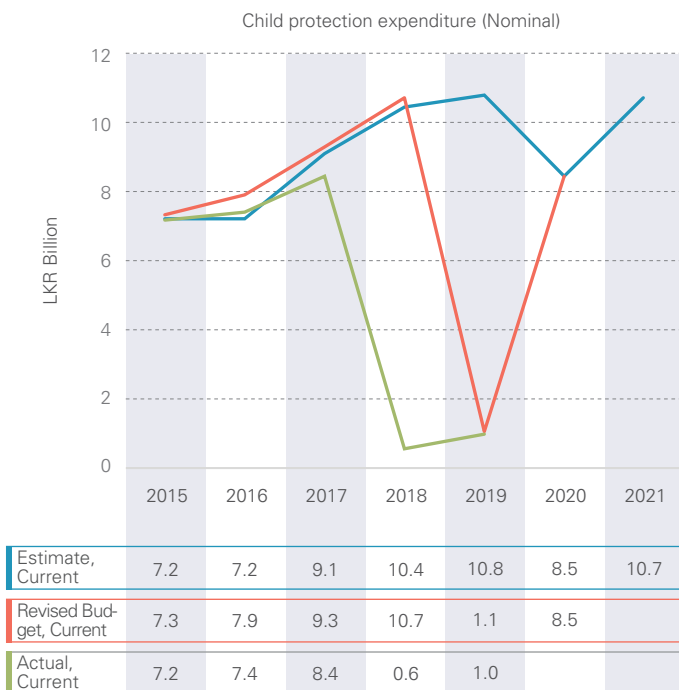




3. WHAT TRENDS EMERGE FROM THE CHILD PROTECTION SECTOR BUDGET AND EXPENDITURE?

The 2021 budget estimate at the central level allocated LKR 10.7 billion for the child protection sector. This represents a nominal increase of 21% relative to the 2020 revised budget estimate. When compared to the 2019 estimated expenditure, this represents a nominal decrease of 0.7%. The actual spending in the child protection sector has decreased in 2019 by 90.7% from the revised budget estimates, based on the availability of data.

FIGURE 1 | Child protection sector total budgetary allocations (Nominal)



Source: Author’s calculations using Ministry of Finance Budget Estimates 2015–2021. Inflation for 2021 as measured by the Colombo Consumer Price Index (CCPI) was estimated by the author by adjusting the 2020 CCPI with the 12-month moving average as of July 2021.

The actual spending in relation to the child protection sector was LKR 1 billion in 2019 (see Figure 1). This represents an increase of the actual spending by 78.3% in comparison with 2018. The main contributor for this spending increment was the increment in the spending for shoes for students in difficult and very difficult schools under the Ministry of Education and the increments in the spending heads of Administration and Establishment Services and Probation and Child Care Services under the Department of Probation and Childcare Services. It is important to note that the estimated expenditure may not be a reliable indication of how much will be spent in the sector by the end of the fiscal year due to divergences between estimated and actual expenditure in both 2018 and 2019. (This is due to the information unavailability for certain spending heads in the years).

A clear pattern is visible in the revised budget and the actual spending from 2015 to 2017, but in 2018, the actual spending in the child protection sector is far lower than the revised estimate (see Figure 1). In 2019, as per available data, the revised budget of the child protection sector is 90.1% lower than the allocation in 2018. This is mainly because the information concerning the revised estimates and the actual spending for certain line items in the State Minister of Women and Child Development, Preschools and Primary Education, School, Infrastructure and Education Services is not available in the budget estimates of 2018 and 2019.

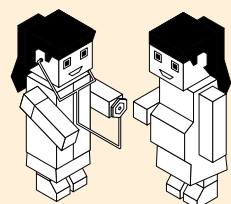
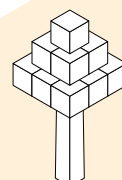


FIGURE 2 | Child protection sector total budgetary allocations (Real)

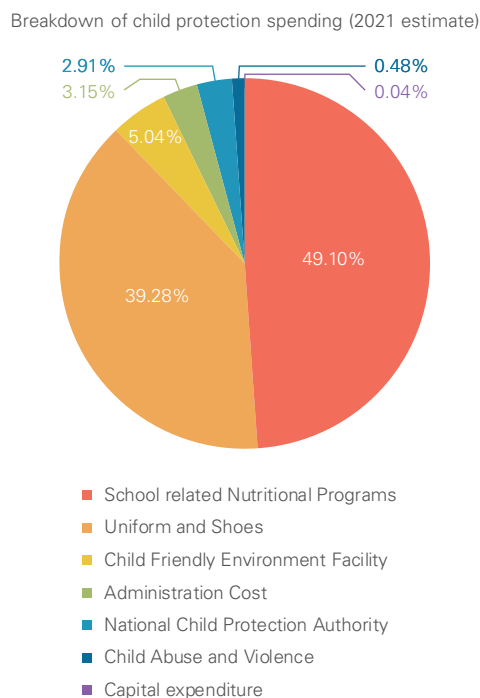


Source: Author’s calculations using Ministry of Finance Budget Estimates 2015–2021, and annual average inflation as measured by the CCPI, for which data is available from the Central Bank of Sri Lanka. Inflation for 2021 as measured by the CCPI was estimated by the author by adjusting the 2020 CCPI with the 12-month moving average as of July 2021.

Breakdown of child protection spending

Figure 3 shows that of the total expenditure allocation, the majority of spending in the child protection sector is allocated to the nutritional programmes related to children (49%) and the supply of uniforms and shoes for children (39%). If these two expenditure line items are excluded from the analysis, only 3.4% of the total child protection sector’s expenditure is allocated for pure child protection-related activities such as, expenses under the National Child Protection Authority and expenses for child abuse and violence (excluding capital and administration expenditure). Even though the allocation seems to be higher under the broader definition of child protection (that is including national and uniforms and shoes programmes), the allocation is rather low when considering direct expenditure on child protection related activities.

FIGURE 3 | Overall breakdown of child protection spending (LKR 10.7 billion)



Source: Author’s calculation using Ministry of Finance Budget Estimates 2021.

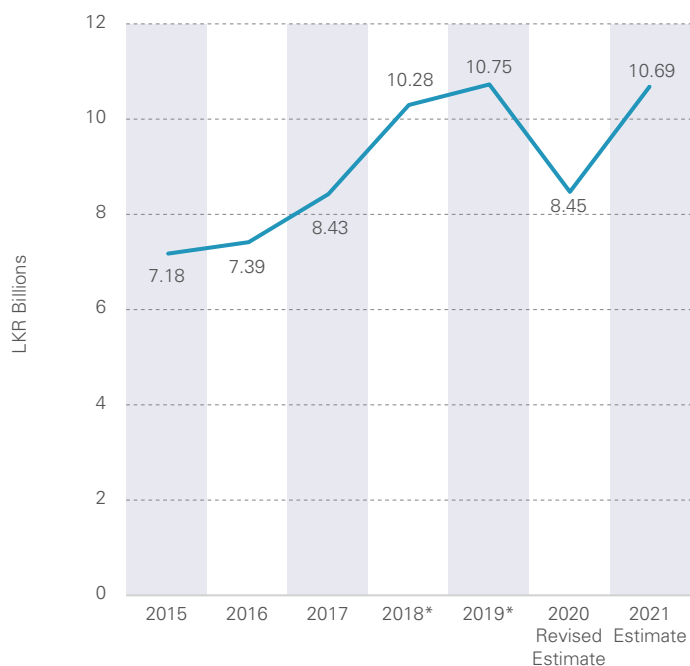
It is evident that given the limitations in data, it is difficult to compare expenditure allocations in the child protection sector over time. To overcome this, the following assumptions were made to better explain actual expenditure in this sector.

*Note 1: With the recent changes in government in 2019, some of the ministries were discontinued and some were renamed. Actual expenditure for 2018 and 2019 data for certain ministries, (ideally could have been found in the 2020 and 2021 budget estimates respectively), were not available at a disaggregated level in the latest estimates. Thus, the actual spending of Administration and Establishment Services, Children’s Development and Assistance for General Education Development under the State Minister of Women and Child Development, Preschools and Primary Education, School, Infrastructure and Education Service cannot be identified. To present a better picture of the actual spending, the revised estimate for 2019 and the estimates for 2020 are combined with the actual data. Therefore, this definition of actual spending will be continued in the rest of the budget brief unless specified otherwise.

TABLE 3 | Summary of child protection actual expenditure as defined by note 1

Year	Line items
2015	All line items from actual expenditure
2016	All line items from actual expenditure
2017	All line items from actual expenditure
2018	All line items where an actual expenditure is presented and the below line items from the revised budget estimates <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capital and recurrent expenditure allocations to National Child Protection Authority • Prevention of child abuse and violence against women • Morning meal for pre-school children • Social protection for children- (Save the Children) • Strengthen day care centres and community evening centres • School nutritional food programme • School uniforms
2019	All line items where an actual expenditure is presented and the below line items from the budget estimates <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capital and recurrent expenditure allocations to National Child Protection Authority • Prevention of child abuse and violence against women • Morning meal for pre-school children • Social protection for children- (Save the Children) • Strengthen day care centres and community evening centres • School nutritional food programme • School uniforms • Strengthening of child protection system and violence against children
2020	All line items from revised budget estimates
2021	All line items from budget estimates

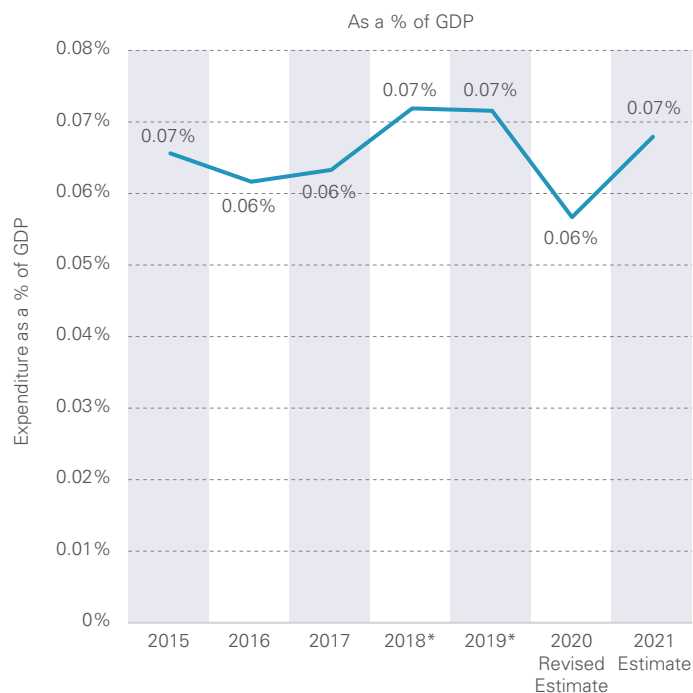


FIGURE 4 | Child protection actual expenditure as defined by note 1

Source: Author's calculations using Ministry of Finance Budget Estimates 2015–2021.

*Child protection actual expenditure for 2018 and 2019 is based on Note 1.

Two key factors could cause a drop in the actual expenditure in 2020 (see Figure 4). The first factor is the drop in estimates for the line item on School Nutritional Food Programme from LKR 6.3 billion in 2019 to LKR 3.3 billion in 2020. A second possible factor is highlighted in the annual report of the Ministry of Finance. It shows a decrease in the number of students benefited by major welfare programmes during this period. In 2017, 1.10 million students benefited from the School Nutritional Food Programme, which decreased to 1.08, 1.06 and 1.07 in 2018, 2019 and 2020 respectively. (Note: 2020 figures provided in the annual report of the Ministry of Finance are provisional).¹⁴ Further, in 2021, additional line items are recorded, as the child-friendly environment facility under the Ministry of Justice, which has resulted in an increase in the 2021 estimates.

FIGURE 5 | Child protection expenditure as a % of GDP

Source: Author's calculations using Ministry of Finance Budget Estimates 2015–2021. The 2021 GDP estimate was obtained by adjusting the 2020 GDP figure with the growth rate of 5% for 2021 projected by the Central Bank of Sri Lanka.¹⁵

*Child protection actual expenditure for 2018 and 2019 is based on Note 1.

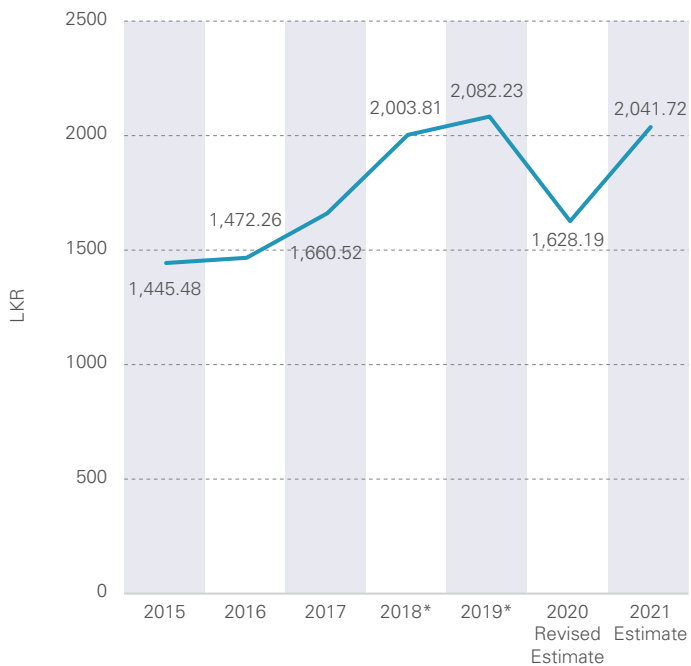
In comparison to 2015/2016, overall child protection spending as a proportion of GDP is flat or declining marginally, implying that child protection spending is not increasing in lockstep with GDP (see Figure 5).

The per capita allocation for the child protection sector has seen an increment from 2018 to 2019 and drops in 2020. However, there is an increase in the per capita allocation for the 2021 estimates.

14. Ministry of Finance, Annual Report 2020. Available at: <https://www.treasury.gov.lk/api/file/0b7d1935-6235-4156-97b6-752d6a8039d0>

15. Central Bank of Sri Lanka, Monetary Policy Review: No. 05 (July 2021), p1. Available at: https://www.cbsl.gov.lk/sites/default/files/cbslweb_documents/press/pr/press_20210708_Monetary_Policy_Review_No_5_2021_e_K82di.pdf

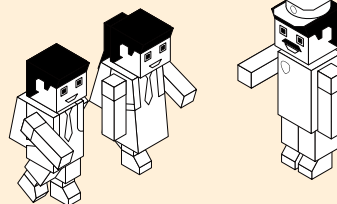
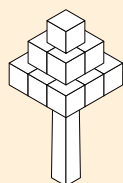
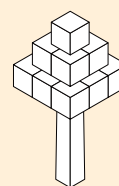
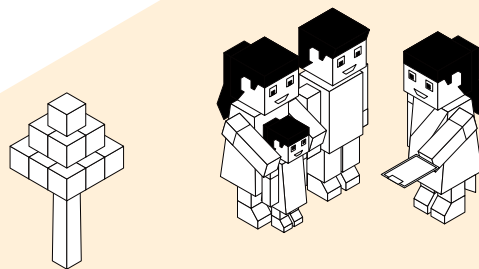
FIGURE 6 | Child protection expenditure per capita



Source: Author's calculations using Budget Estimates 2015—2021. Population figures from 2015 to 2020 were obtained from the Department of Census and Statistics (DCS), Sri Lanka. The 2021 population was obtained as an estimate by the author by adjusting the 2020 population with the 5-year annual average population growth rate.

*Child protection actual expenditure for 2018 and 2019 is based on Note 1.

**Children between the ages of 1 and 14 years are considered for the population.





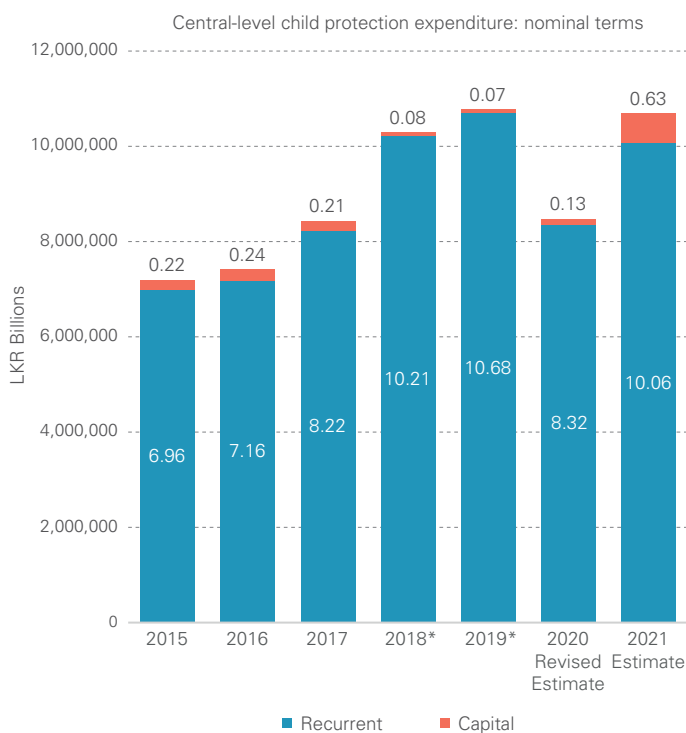
4. HOW ARE CHILD PROTECTION SECTOR RESOURCES SPENT?

4.1 Recurrent versus capital expenditure

The government budget breaks down expenditure into two categories: recurrent and capital. Recurrent expenditure is the set of resources used to keep a system or an institution functioning and includes spending on salaries/remunerations, goods and services, operating costs, transfers, and financial operations. Capital expenditure (investment) is defined as funding aimed at enhancing longer-term productivity and efficiency through investment in the acquisition of assets.

Recurrent expenditure has dominated the child protection sector expenditure over the years. 97% of the child protection sector expenditure comes from recurrent expenditure (Figure 7). The high percentage of recurrent expenditure is in part due to the high level of cash/non-cash transfers that are classified as recurrent spending.

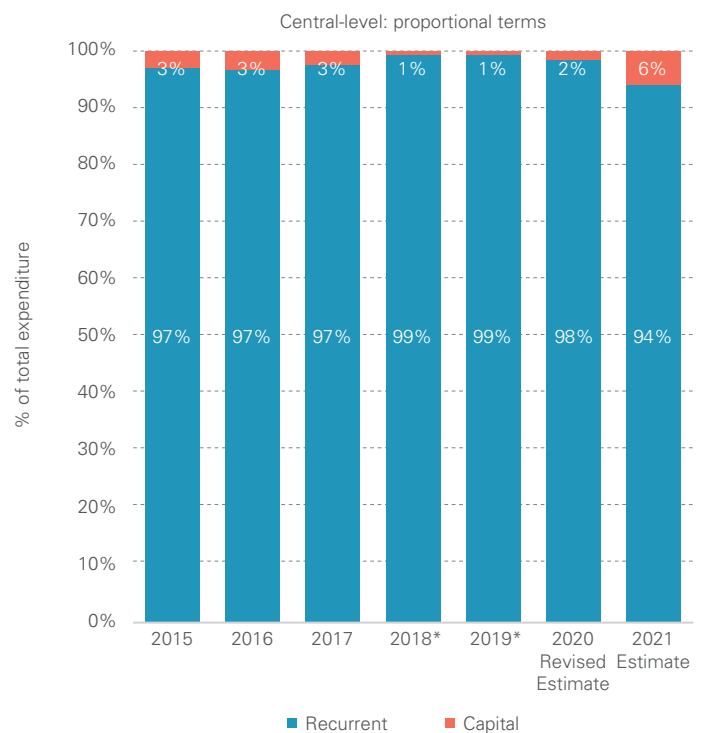
FIGURE 7 | Recurrent vs. capital expenditure for child protection



Source: Author's calculation using Ministry of Finance Budget Estimates 2015–2021.

*Child protection actual expenditure for 2018 and 2019 is based on Note 1.

FIGURE 8 | Recurrent vs. capital expenditure for child protection – proportional terms



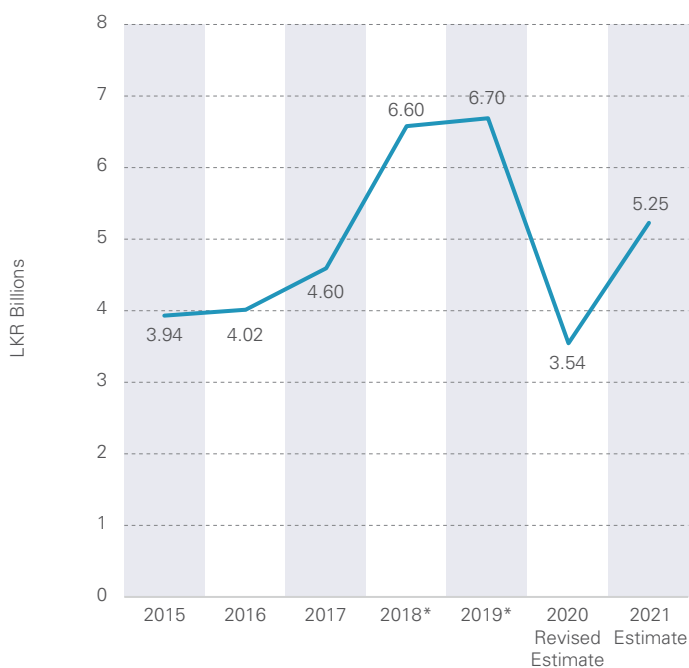
Source: Author's calculation using Ministry of Finance Budget Estimates 2015–2021.

*Child protection actual expenditure for 2018 and 2019 is based on Note 1.

Children’s food programmes

The expenditure in relation to the children’s food programmes is identified under two main spending heads, namely, morning meal for pre-school children and school nutritional food programme. Both these programmes come under the State Ministry of Women and Child Development, Preschools and Primary Education, School Infrastructure and Education Services. The decline in the expenditure for children’s food programmes for 2020 could have resulted from the closure of the schools due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Based on the information obtained from the annual report of the Ministry of Finance, only dry food packets were distributed among the homes of eligible students.¹⁶

FIGURE 9 | Children’s food programmes from 2015–2020



Source: Ministry of Finance Budget Estimates 2015–2021.

*Child protection actual expenditure for 2018 and 2019 is based on Note 1.

Uniforms and shoes for children

The expenditure on uniforms and shoes for the children has increased over the years as indicated in figure 10. The line items taken into account for this section are school uniforms allocated under the State Ministry of Women and Child Development, Preschools and Primary Education, School Infrastructure and Education Services and shoes for students in difficult & very difficult schools, which was allocated under the Minister of Education till 2019 and then transferred to the State Ministry of Women and Child Development, Preschools and Primary Education, School Infrastructure and Education Services in 2020. The Ministry of Finance Annual report for 2020 highlights that even though the COVID-19 restrictions obstructed the attendance government has taken measures to continue the provision of uniforms during these periods.¹⁷

FIGURE 10 | Uniforms and shoes for children from 2015–2020



Source: Ministry of Finance Budget Estimates 2015–2021.

*Child protection actual expenditure for 2018 and 2019 is based on Note 1.

16. Ministry of Finance, Annual Report 2020. Available at: <https://www.treasury.gov.lk/api/file/0b7d1935-6235-4156-97b6-752d6a8039d0>

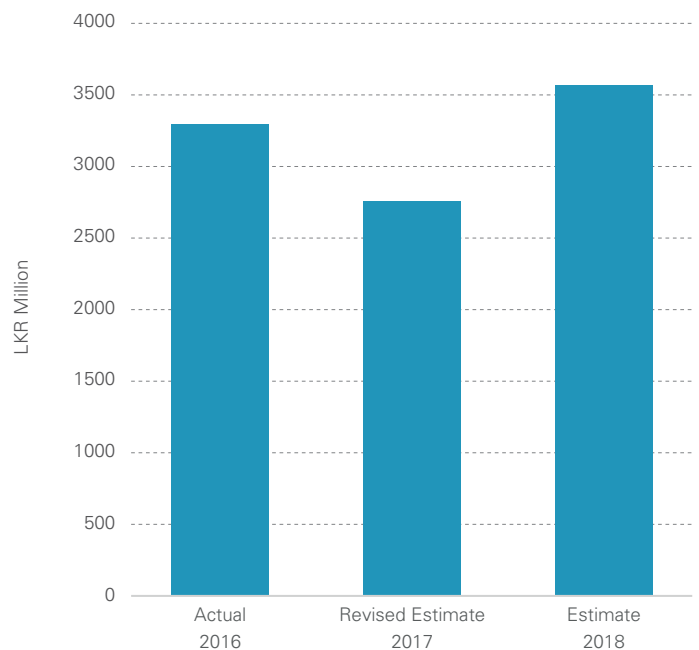
17. Ministry of Finance, Annual Report 2020. Available at: <https://www.treasury.gov.lk/api/file/0b7d1935-6235-4156-97b6-752d6a8039d0>

Provincial Council allocations

Due to a lack of disaggregated data at the sub-national government level, this component of the research uses a broader definition of child protection and is therefore not a like for like comparison with the rest of the analysis based on central government allocations. The areas covered are public assistance, welfare, child protection and rehabilitation and probation and childcare services of each of the provinces. Furthermore, due to data availability constraints, the study is limited to 2016—2018. Provincial-level allocations under Probation and Child Care Services in the Department of Probation and Child Care Services and Social Services were considered for this child protection budget brief, whereas all other allocations falling in this department were considered under the social protection sector budget brief. Further, in the reports provided by North Central and the North-Western Provinces, the breakdown of the information for Child protection was not available as all the data was collected under social protection, as opposed to other provinces hence not considered in the analysis.

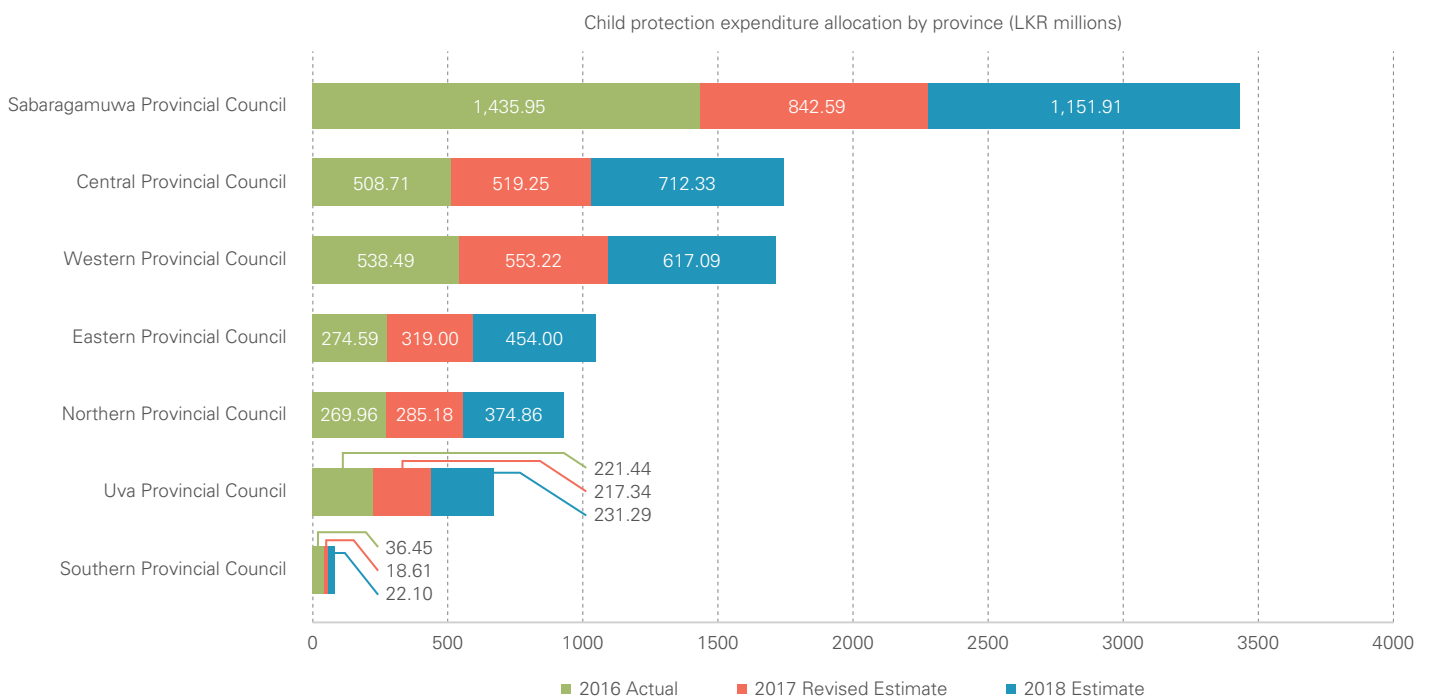
As seen in Figure 11 below, allocations for child protection at the PC level have increased from 2017 to 2018. The 2018 estimate is LKR 4 billion, an increase of LKR 0.8 billion from 2017 and representing a 29% increase in expenditure on child protection at the PC level.

FIGURE 11 | PC allocations for child protection



Source: PC Budget Estimates 2015—2018.

FIGURE 12 | PC allocations for child protection



Source: Author's calculations using PC Budget Estimates 2015—2018.

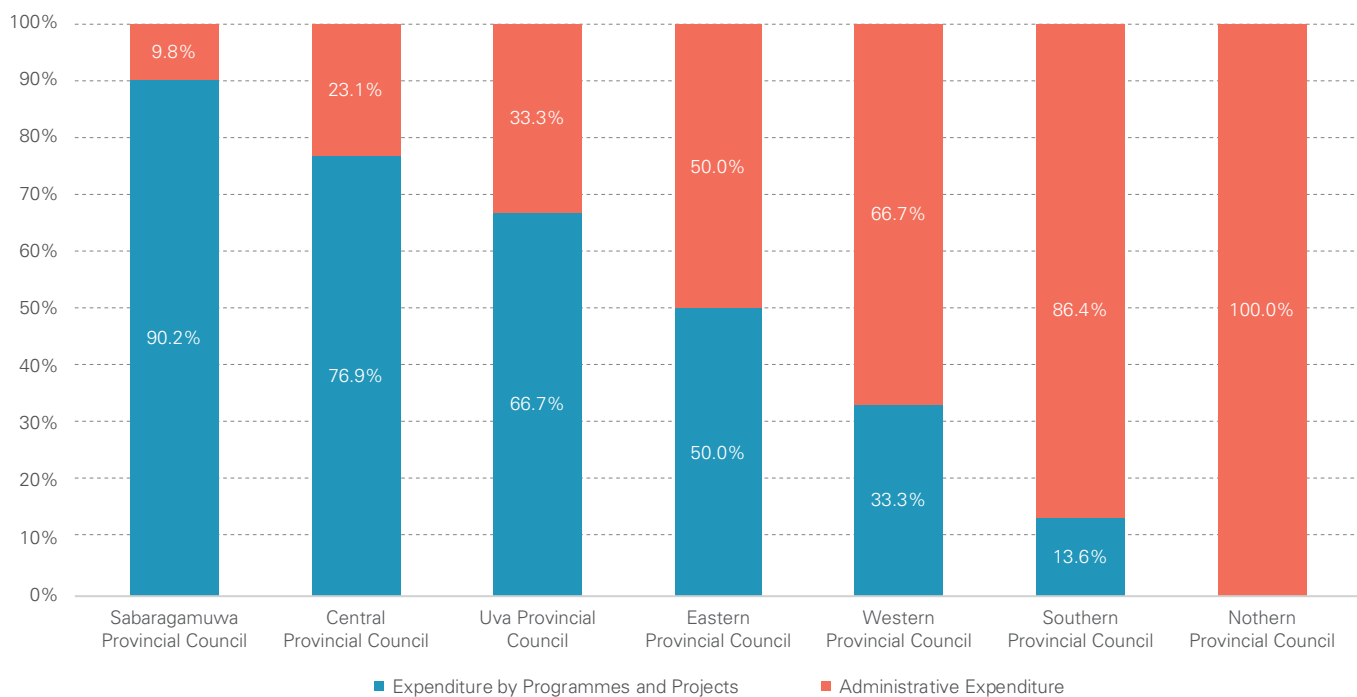
Child protection spending is not uniform among provinces, with Uva and Southern provinces receiving far lower allocations than others. The Sabaragamuwa Province receives the largest amount of funding. This is seen in Figure 13 below, where the Sabaragamuwa Province receives allocations ranging from 44% to 32% of the PC child protection spending in the years 2016 and 2018 respectively, while the Southern Province receives only 1%.

A detailed analysis of the above PC allocation depicts that LKR 1.03 billion (90.2% of the total allocation) of the Sabaragamuwa Province is from the expenditure by programmes and projects under the Ministry of Social Welfare, Probation and Child Care, Rural Development, and Rural Industries,

whereas the balance LKR 112.4 million (9.8% of the total allocation) is from the administrative expenditure. On the other hand, in the Southern Province, majority allocations that amount to LKR 19.0 million (86.4% of the total allocation) are from the administrative expenditure while the balance of LKR 3 million (13.6% of the total allocation) is allocated for the programmes and projects. Provinces such as Sabaragamuwa Province had a higher allocation and spending in 2017 due to various programmes and projects implemented by the Ministry of Social Welfare, Probation and Child Care, Rural Development, and Rural Industries. This may be due to the emergency response in Kegalle and Rathnapura district to landslides and floods at the time.



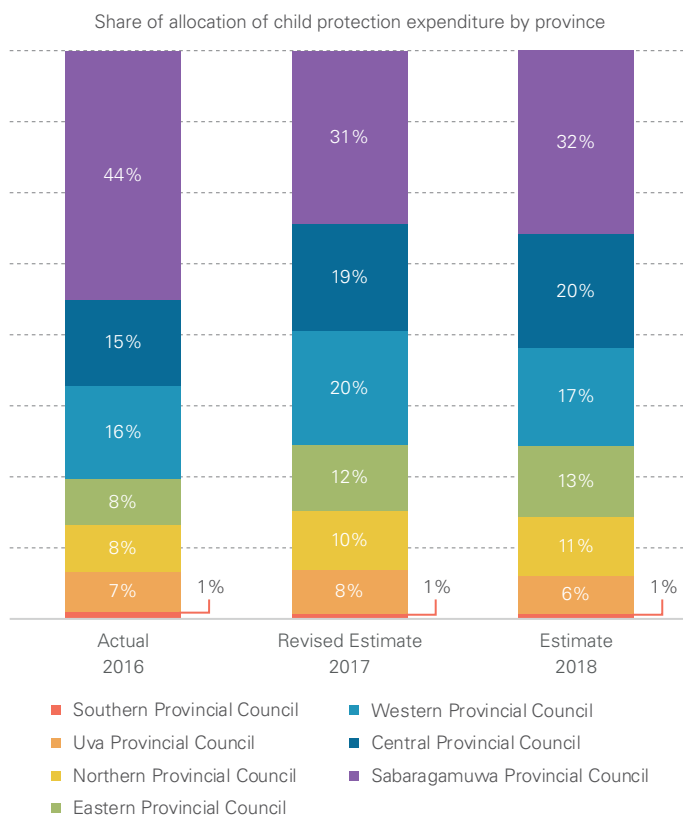
FIGURE 13 | PC allocations for child protection breakdown of expenditure



Source: Author’s calculations using PC Budget Estimates 2015—2018.

Considering the Southern province and the Northern province, the sources do not provide any explanation as to the exceptional levels of admin expenditure.

FIGURE 14 | PC allocations for child protection



Source: Author’s calculations using PC Budget Estimates 2015—2018.



5. HOW WELL HAS THE CHILD PROTECTION SECTOR PERFORMED?

Unlike in the health, education and WASH sectors, there is limited data on outcomes relating to the child protection sector. A routine system to obtain the information in relation to the child protection sector allocation and related activities are not present in the country and, therefore, the actual spending allocation related to the sector cannot be determined. However, as previously stated, if School Nutritional Food Programme and School Uniforms Programme line items are removed, government's budget allocations for child protection sector is negligible and does not adequately support other child protection areas.

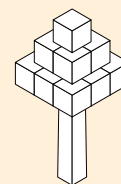
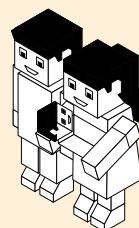
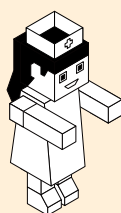
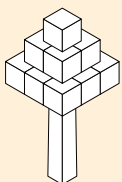
Even when looking at the provincial council allocations, the data pertaining to the child protection sector cannot be clearly identified through the provincial council budgets. Therefore, the performance on child protection sector at provincial levels cannot be determined. The Western Province – with the highest population density in Sri Lanka and highest number of childcare institutions– does not have the highest expenditure allocations for child protection services. As a result, allocations, and spending for child protection services for provinces do not show a clear pattern over the years.

However, the government has recently taken measures to collate information related to child protection. The very first Census of Children in Child Care Institutions was conducted by the DCS for the DPCCS with financial assistance from UNICEF Sri Lanka in 2019.¹⁸

The report highlights 379 child care institutions in the country in 2019, spread across all nine provinces. These institutions are categorised into many types as remand homes, certified schools, state receiving homes, training and counselling centres, etc., and one-third of these homes are located in the Western Province as they serve 30% of the total population of the country. Four safe homes are located in the Eastern and the Northern Provinces to offer care and protection for children made vulnerable by the civil war and the aftermath.

According to the Census of Children in Child Care Institutions, 24% of the children in childcare institutions have been victimised, children. 46.6% of these victimised children have been subjected to physical, psychological, or sexual abuse and the majority was recorded as being 10 years and above. 86.4% of children in childcare institutions have been institutionalised through a court order/on approval of the provincial commissioner of probation.

18. The Department of Census and Statistics and Department of Probation and Child Care Services, The Census of Children in Child Care Institutions 2019. Available at: <http://www.statistics.gov.lk/Resource/reference/CensusofChildreninChildCareInstitutions2019Final>



ANNEXURE

TABLE 1 | Line-Item Expenditure considered under the Child Protection Sector

Ministry/State Ministry	Type of Expenditure	Department Head	Line Item
State Ministry of Women and Child Development, Preschools and Primary Education, School Infrastructure and Education Services	Recurrent	State Minister of Women and Child Development, Preschools and Primary Education, School, Infrastructure and Education Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Child Protection Authority Morning Meal for Pre-School Children School Nutritional Food Programme School Uniforms Shoes for Students in Difficult & Very Difficult Schools
		Department of Probation and Child Care Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Administration and Establishment Services
	Capital	State Minister of Women and Child Development, Preschools and Primary Education, School, Infrastructure and Education Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Child Protection Authority Prevention of Child Abuse and Violence Against Women Social Protection for Children- (Save the Children) Strengthen Day Care Centers and Community Evening Centers Strengthening of Child Protection System and Violence Against Children
		Department of Probation and Child Care Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rehabilitation and Improvement of Capital Assets Acquisition of Capital Assets Capacity Building Refurbishment of Children's Homes Supervision of Children's Homes Empowerment of Vulnerable Children Providing Vocational Skills & Financial Assistance Ensuring Child Rights
Ministry of Justice	Recurrent	-	-
	Capital	Department of Attorney General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child Protection Unit File Disposal (UNICEF)
		Courts Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child-Friendly Environment Facility
Ministry of Education	Recurrent	Administration & Establishment Services (General Education)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shoes for Students in Difficult & Very Difficult Schools
	Capital	-	-

Source: Budget Estimates from 2015 – 2021

