



World Food Programme

SAVING
LIVES
CHANGING
LIVES

World Food Programme: Overview

The World Food Programme (WFP) is the world's largest humanitarian organization working towards zero hunger by 2030, supporting governments and communities in 88 countries. WFP was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in October 2020 for its efforts to combat hunger, for its contribution to bettering conditions for peace in conflict-affected areas and for acting as a driving force in efforts to prevent the use of hunger as a weapon of war and conflict.

WFP is a first responder in emergencies, providing food and other assistance to the survivors of conflict, drought, floods, earthquakes, hurricanes, crop failures and, most recently, the global COVID-19 pandemic.

COVID-19 has plunged millions more people into food insecurity by disrupting production, trade and livelihoods, putting millions out of work. WFP has stepped up its food and cash assistance by putting its logistics strength and technical expertise at the service of the global humanitarian community, and by supporting governments as they create or expand social safety nets such as cash transfers.

WFP also has a strong emphasis on sustainable development as a bedrock for changing lives as well as saving them. We work with governments, communities and households to break persistent cycles of hunger and malnutrition, to strengthen resilience to shocks and to build sustainable, prosperous futures.

November 2020



Saving lives

About two-thirds of WFP's life-saving food assistance goes to people facing severe food crises, most of them caused by conflict. The threat of famine looms over four – **Burkina Faso, northeast Nigeria, South Sudan and Yemen** – as COVID-19 compounds challenges already posed by ongoing instability.

Our response in these and other countries includes a combination of food, cash, nutrition supplements and school feeding.

- Our largest and most complex emergency response is in **Yemen**, where protracted conflict, a collapsed economy and a decimated health system unable to cope with COVID-19 are causing one of the worst hunger crises in the world.
- In **Syria**, we are providing food assistance to more than 4.5 million people affected by the country's ongoing civil war, which has displaced over 6.5 million.
- In **South Sudan**, where violence persists despite a fragile peace deal, WFP is assisting an additional 1.6 million people affected by COVID-19, on top of providing regular assistance to 5 million.
- In the **Democratic Republic of the Congo**, another country where conflict and hunger fuel one another, WFP is supporting 9 million people, including an extra 1.4 million suffering from food insecurity due to the pandemic, while also helping to contain an Ebola outbreak by providing food and logistical services.

Our engineers are critically important in emergency response. To lessen the impact of monsoons on Rohingya refugees in **Bangladesh**, engineering teams created safe, level land at Kutupalong camp, where WFP is providing thousands of residents with food and cash assistance.

A rapidly increasing number of climate shocks also demands swift and decisive responses. When floods ravaged **Sudan** in July 2020, we scaled up emergency food assistance to reach nearly 160,000 people across the country.

As the lead agency of the Logistics Cluster and the Emergency Telecommunications Cluster, we coordinate responses to large-scale emergencies on behalf of the wider humanitarian community. We also co-lead the Food Security Cluster.

The WFP-managed United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS) serves over 300 destinations globally. We also manage the United Nations Humanitarian Response Depot (UNHRD), a global network of hubs that procures, stores and rapidly transports emergency supplies for the humanitarian community.

WFP logistical support has proved pivotal during COVID-19 in ensuring staff and supplies from WFP and partner organizations were able to reach areas where commercial flights have not been available, enabling humanitarian workers to stay and deliver.

Our emergency work is also pre-emptive as we seek to offset the potential impact of disasters. In the **Sahel** region of Africa, where economic challenges, climate variability and armed militants create a highly unstable environment, WFP worked with local communities and partners to harvest water for irrigation and restore degraded land. We also promoted improved health and education services while supporting livelihoods through measures such as skills training. Pre-emptive actions can be highly cost-effective. For example, each US\$1 invested in climate risk management and disaster risk reduction can save around US\$3 through reducing the need for humanitarian response.

Changing lives

WFP also focuses on sustainable solutions to hunger and undernutrition. We work with governments and communities to build their resilience and self-reliance in the long-term, while helping to create the conditions that can support peace and stability.

NUTRITION

Malnutrition has a significant impact on human development, contributing to the persistence of poverty and inequality through intergenerational cycles of hunger and poor nutrition. WFP supports countries in the reduction of all forms of malnutrition, including vitamin and mineral deficiencies, and overweight and obesity. We address malnutrition from the earliest stages through a wide range of programmes, including targeting the first 1,000 days from pregnancy to a child's second birthday. WFP also provides specialized nutrition services to prevent and treat malnutrition in children up to 5 years old, adolescents, pregnant and breastfeeding women, and people living with HIV and TB. Together with governments, other UN agencies, NGOs and the private sector, we support nutrition interventions, policies and programmes such as nutritious school meals and food fortification.

SCHOOL FEEDING

WFP has six decades of experience supporting school feeding and has worked with more than 100 countries to set up sustainable national school feeding programmes. School meals encourage parents in vulnerable families to send their children to school and are a deterrent to child labour. When girls are out of school, they are more vulnerable to forced marriage, early pregnancy and gender-based violence. We work with partners to ensure school feeding is part of integrated school health and nutrition programmes, which include services such as malaria control, deworming, and guidance on sanitation and hygiene, including menstrual hygiene. During school closures due to COVID-19, about 370 million children have missed out on meals and essential health services. WFP and partners have supported governments by providing take-home rations, vouchers or cash transfers in more than 40 countries. WFP has also supported governments in planning for the safe re-opening of schools.

SOCIAL PROTECTION

WFP is increasingly called upon by governments to help strengthen their national social protection systems to reduce hunger and inequality. These systems also

provide economic stimulus during crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic, helping economies to recover from the fallout. Within these systems, safety nets typically consist of cash and/or food assistance, school meals, and insurance in exchange for public works programmes that build resilience to shocks such as droughts that destroy harvests.

We use tools that can be integrated within social protection systems, including data-led platforms that improve the targeting, registry and intake of safety net beneficiaries. We also work with governments to build their capacities to manage systems that improve food security, nutrition and resilience.

CASH ASSISTANCE

Cash forms an increasing part of WFP's work, accounting for over one third of our assistance. Cash empowers families to buy food and other items that match their needs. Our cash programmes can also have multiplier effects – studies by WFP in Lebanon, and WFP and the University of California in **Rwanda** and Uganda, showed that US\$1 given in cash to a refugee or vulnerable person translated into about US\$2 for the local economy. During COVID-19, WFP has expanded its cash operations and increasingly supported governments in delivering their own cash schemes for people suffering from the socioeconomic fallout from the pandemic. According to the World Bank, almost 1.1 billion people have benefited from their government's increased use of cash during COVID-19.

CLIMATE ACTION

Climate shocks such as droughts and floods can wipe out crops, disrupt markets and destroy roads and bridges that allow the flow of trade. WFP is working with governments and humanitarian partners to address this global crisis, responding to an increasing number of climate-related disasters. We also take pre-emptive action to prepare communities and limit damage, which reduces the number of people requiring humanitarian assistance. We provide communities with food assistance in return for activities that restore land, such as tree-planting and irrigation. We protect people by providing climate-risk insurance to vulnerable communities, and we anticipate disasters through advanced weather forecasting and related actions. These actions help families prepare for emergencies through measures such as delayed planting of crops or stockpiling of food.

SMALLHOLDER FARMERS

In addition to home-grown school feeding, whereby ingredients for school meals are sourced locally, our smallholder programmes include the Farm to Market Alliance which connects farmers to markets and helps them diversify their crops, reduce post-harvest losses and increase their business potential. These programmes complement ongoing support including food assistance, training and projects aimed at restoring land and repairing roads in return for cash and training. Given the key role of rural women in sustainable development, WFP provides women smallholder farmers with training in climate-sensitive agricultural practices and post-harvest loss management. Farmers were taught about the inappropriate use of chemical fertilizers, and were encouraged to plant more trees and use less plastic.

INNOVATION AND DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

WFP has a track record of innovation and building practical, needs-based digital platforms to help end hunger. We partner with tech companies, entrepreneurs, NGOs and others to bring innovative approaches to field operations – including artificial intelligence and machine learning. In Jordan, WFP uses blockchain technology to transfer cash to over 100,000 Syrian refugees, enabling them to purchase groceries through iris-scan verification of their digital IDs. In drought-hit Chad, WFP scaled-up a hydroponic cultivation system that allows refugees to grow fresh fodder for their cattle with no soil and little water. Mobile technology helps us analyse data on household nutritional needs in remote and hard-to-reach regions from Yemen to Papua New Guinea. We can also deploy drones for rapid and detailed assessments within minutes of a disaster striking.



19,500-PLUS staff worldwide



5,600 TRUCKS, 30 SHIPS and 100 PLANES on the move each day



US\$8 BILLION raised in 2019 through 100% voluntary funding



97 MILLION BENEFICIARIES with operations in **88 COUNTRIES**



54 PERCENT of people assisted directly through food, cash and vouchers are **WOMEN and GIRLS**



17.3 MILLION CHILDREN receiving school meals in **59 COUNTRIES**

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