

Highlights

WFP is focused on mobilizing the assistance and resources needed to reach our 100 million beneficiaries we set out to reach in 2020. Even before COVID-19, hunger needs in 2020 were expected to rise with 135 million more people facing severe hunger this year. Ongoing political instability, macro-economic fragility, droughts, and other events such as locust swarms in East Africa, pointed to further deterioration of food security.

The Famine Early Warning System Network (FEWSNet) shows that Nigeria, South Sudan, and Yemen face the risk of famine as critical levels of food insecurity could hit as soon as June, during the crucial lean season in many countries, when harvests are dormant. WFP projects 130 million more people in low-to-middle income countries will likely be driven into severe hunger this year from the socio-economic fallout the COVID-19 pandemic will bring, including heavy job losses and a drastic reduction in remittances.

WFP will seek to augment its humanitarian response wherever needed and possible and is urgently working to adapt, prioritize and scale up operations. Comprehensive country level assessments are already underway in some 40 WFP country offices and will provide WFP with a comprehensive picture of new food and assistance needs by June, as the WFP global scale-up plan is finalized.

WFP is working to support governments with food systems, social protection, and basic services - even in complex crises where WFP has historically established experience. **WFP's Medium Term Programme Framework** is designed to augment this critical assistance. Consultations with all Regional Bureaux to prepare the operationalisation of the framework in country offices continues.



WFP's common logistics services will continue to provide the backbone for the global humanitarian COVID-19 response. In a discussion with the Atlantic Council on May 8, Executive Director, David Beasley pointed out WFP's critical role in enabling the global response, **"We don't deliver just food. We are the humanitarian logistics coordinator for the entire United Nations."** He added, "We're the biggest airline industry operating right now. If we weren't already where we are, we'd have famine in many countries."

Our network of Humanitarian Response Hubs located in strategic locations around the world, along with cargo and passenger flights connecting these hubs to individual destinations, are supporting the steady flow of humanitarian and health cargo and personnel into affected areas. **Sustaining this part of the operation through 2020 will cost an estimated US\$ 965 million** as part of the [updated Global Humanitarian Response Plan](#) (GHRP). Adequate funding will be crucial to enable the global COVID-19 response in the world's most fragile settings.



As part of its logistics support to the global COVID-19 response, WFP is providing passenger transport services for humanitarian and health workers where safe and reliable commercial options are not available. The service was launched on 1 May and flights are now operating from WFP's humanitarian response hubs in Accra and Addis Ababa to destinations across Eastern and Western Africa. Regular flights throughout Asia, the Middle East and Latin America are expected to commence shortly.

All information on WFP's COVID-19 passenger transport service, including provisional flight schedules, is available via the [Humanitarian Booking Hub](#).

**FLIGHTS
CONDUCTED**

35

**ORGANIZATIONS
REGISTERED**

198

**DESTINATIONS
REACHED**

16

Addis Ababa, Accra, Dar Es Salam, Entebbe, Abuja, Niamey, Yaounde, N'djamena, Bangui, Bamako, Juba, Khartoum*, Sana'a*, Aden*, Kabul*, and Yangon.

**Operated by UNHAS Sudan, UNHAS Yemen, UNHAS Afghanistan, respectively.*

Resource Mobilization and Partnerships

WFP is urgently appealing for resources to ensure the continued provision of common logistics services in support of the wider health and humanitarian community. Under the [revised Global Humanitarian Response Plan](#), **WFP requires US\$ 965 million to sustain these services until the end of 2020**. To date, the common service component is only 9 percent funded, with US\$ 85 million in confirmed contributions. In recent weeks, WFP has received a surge in requests from partners. This high demand requires a rapid increase in flights at a time when the cost of commercial air freight has increased dramatically. WFP urgently seeks additional funding to ensure that essential health and humanitarian workers have the access and supplies needed to deliver assistance.

As WFP continues its efforts to sustain and scale up operations, a key focus is to ensure the organization has the resources required to provide food assistance to the beneficiaries envisaged in the initial programme of work for 2020. **Country offices continue to safeguard and adapt existing programmes based on resources available** which vary largely from country to country. In parallel, field operations are in the process of assessing augmented needs brought about by the pandemic and other shocks to be reflected in revised implementation plans and budget revisions. As these needs emerge, WFP continues to seek support in line with the Executive Director's appeal on 23 March. To date, partners have advanced **US\$ 1.4 billion**

against the US\$ 1.9 billion requirement. To implement its current programme of work, WFP requires US\$ 4.1 billion over the next six months.

In 2020 so far, WFP has allocated a total of nearly US\$ 267 million in flexible multilateral contributions. Of this amount, **US\$ 207 million has been allocated this year to the priority operations under the global COVID-19 response.**

This stemmed from essential multilateral funds available at the beginning of the year which allowed WFP to cover the most urgent humanitarian needs, maintain critical food assistance in more than 55 countries and adjust the response and modalities to rapidly evolving COVID-19 circumstances, thereby contributing to the timely provision of assistance to the most vulnerable. US\$ 14 million was made available to the WFP COVID-19 response, providing common services to the humanitarian community, further sustaining and scaling-up WFP's operations where needed, and providing capacity and coordination mechanisms. These flexible funds have been critical in ensuring that WFP could stand up its response and surge funding to where it was most needed, when it was most needed.

To date, WFP has received multilateral support in 2020 from Belgium, Canada, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Kazakhstan, Liechtenstein, Malta, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Panama, private donors, Republic of Korea, Slovakia, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, and United Kingdom.

WFP Operations



Data from WFP's near real-time remote food security monitoring systems is now available through [weekly Hunger and COVID-19 Snapshots](#).

This week, we have recorded **substantial deteriorations in food security across the Sahel** – compared to three months ago. The number of people with insufficient food intake has risen by 1.45 million in Burkina Faso, 1.88 million in Mali and 1.40 million in Niger. Additionally, COVID-19-related barriers have affected market access in ten out of the 11 country snapshots; the main barriers include: people concerned to go out due to the outbreak, travel restrictions or closed markets.

In five out of the seven countries it was reported that large populations are adopting crisis or emergency livelihood coping strategies: 86% in Niger, 83% in Cameroon, 71% in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, 47% in Burkina Faso and 43% in Mali. The main livelihood coping strategies include: borrowing money or food (239.8 million people), spending savings (235.5 million), or reducing non-food expenses (104.4 million) across seven countries. Access data through the [Hunger Map LIVE](#).

A new report by WFP's Analysis & Early Warning (AEW) team, in collaboration with the Security division (SEC), highlights the **growing risks of the pandemic in terms of political stability, civil unrest, armed violence, and conflict** across regions – in both the short and long term. Combined, this could give rise to new crises and/or exacerbate existing ones. It could lead to new displacements, higher levels of insecurity, and disruptions to aid delivery. Areas of concern include Afghanistan, Central Sahel, Central African Republic, Colombia, Iraq, Lebanon, Libya, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nigeria, South Sudan and Yemen.

WFP continues to closely monitor all facets of its supply chain and create contingency plans in case of any potential disruptions. To date, WFP's supply chain continues to function, albeit with some delays due to measures implemented to limit the spread of COVID-19. No significant operational impacts have been observed so far.

Cash-Based Transfers programmes continue without significant interruptions. Where impacts from COVID-19 have led to a shortage of cash, WFP is working with local providers to resume distributions and finding alternative ways to reach beneficiaries. Several WFP operations are scaling up – or planning to – urban programmes: in the Republic of Congo urban cash assistance has been distributed to 20,000 individuals in the capital Brazzaville. While schools are closed, WFP is providing cash-based take home rations in some countries to assist pupils and their families, for example in Malawi and Tunisia.

Effective social protection systems are an important tool for safeguarding the poor and vulnerable when crisis hits.

As part of the response to COVID-19, **WFP is in the process of assisting governments with social protection measures by providing technical assistance and services**, or augmenting government programmes to address or mitigate the socio-economic impact of COVID-19 on vulnerable people.

In the Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) Regional Bureau, **WFP joined forces with Oxford Policy Management (OPM) to conduct a Study on Shock-Responsive Social Protection**. The study analyses emergency preparedness and response in LAC, linked to more flexible national social protection systems with the hope of strengthening these vital programmes. The study researched: 'What factors enable social protection systems to be more responsive to shocks?'. It includes a literature review of experiences in the region (Beazley et al., 2016), seven country case studies (Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Peru, Dominican Republic, and Dominica) and a synthesized report which sets out the main findings of the study and recommendations to strengthen the role of social protection in shock response in LAC. The full report can be found [here](#).

[Guidance for adaptations of food and nutrition assistance to PLHIV and TB and their families in context of the COVID-19 pandemic](#)

As COVID-19 continues to spread, it presents a growing risk to WFP personnel, Cooperating Partners (CP) and beneficiaries, including people living with HIV (PLHIV) and tuberculosis (TB). Restrictive measures countries take to contain the outbreak could negatively impact household income, access to food and health care services and supplies, and people's mental health and well-being.

The existing vulnerability experienced by PLHIV and TB populations and their families may be further aggravated. Health care services may be overwhelmed, movements restricted or PLHIV and TB clients may avoid seeking access to health care facilities out of fear. This guidance provides recommendations for preventing COVID-19 cross

infection among beneficiaries and staff involved in the implementation of food and nutrition assistance for PLHIV and TB beneficiaries, while ensuring the continuity of food and nutrition assistance, introducing adaptations where appropriate. The WFP HIV Team has also produced a [Q&A On COVID-19, HIV and WFP Programming](#).



Why gender and protection matter in response to COVID-19

During crises, women and girls are often at greater risk of food insecurity and malnutrition due to social and cultural norms. In addition, women and girls face greater risk of mental stress and gender-based violence (GBV) during lockdown, due to restricted movements, loss of income and other frustrations which lead to increased domestic workload and abusive behaviour by household members. Women and men are both at risk of losing livelihoods and incomes. Women and girls' reproductive health and hygiene needs may not be met. Women and girls have poorer access to water, sanitation and hygiene compared to men. Factors such as disability, ethnicity, gender identity, being a female head of household, and poverty can exacerbate economic vulnerability and food insecurity during the crisis. Persons with disabilities are more likely to lose their job during lockdown and experience greater difficulties returning to work post-crisis.



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Service Provision

WFP's first free-to-user cargo flights from its recently established Global Humanitarian Response Hub in Guangzhou, China departed Friday 15 May, transporting **134 m³ of COVID-19 health cargo** to Addis Ababa for onward transport to Accra and Dakar. Five subsequent flights have since departed from the China hub with cargo totaling **223 m³ intended for six destinations**, on behalf of two organizations. Given the large scale of production of health-related items in China, the **Guangzhou Hub is expected to play a pivotal role in ensuring the movement of COVID-19 supplies** to affected countries throughout the pandemic response.

WFP also continues to transport COVID-19-related cargo from its Liège Humanitarian Response Hub to destinations throughout Western Africa. To date, **a total of 9 flights have taken place from Belgium with 260 m³ of cargo destined for 13 countries** throughout West Africa on behalf of three organizations.

In addition, the Dubai Humanitarian Hub has dispatched **105 m³ of cargo to Iraq, Iran, Greece and Panama** for a total of three organizations. More flights are planned out of all hubs in the coming days as a growing number of requests are received from partners.

Governmental authorisation has been received for the establishment of a **Humanitarian Response Hub in Johannesburg**, finalizing WFP's network of **eight humanitarian response hubs for the COVID-19 response**, with global support provided by UNHRD Brindisi.

Since January 2020, the network of WFP-managed **UNHRD** hubs has supported the global COVID-19 response through the dispatch of a total of **190 consignments with a value of US\$ 7.8 million to 100 countries** on behalf of 19 partners.

Inter-Agency Coordination

WFP continues to contribute to system-wide humanitarian [guidance](#) and decision-making via the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) mechanisms, including at the Principals level, the Emergency Directors Group (EDG) and the Operational Policy and Advocacy Group (OPAG). Through these, WFP is working with UN and NGO partners to collectively develop operational and policy solutions in order to address the food, nutrition and humanitarian consequences of the pandemic. In particular, WFP has contributed to guidance on different operational issues, such as [food distribution standards](#) and [protection from sexual exploitation and abuse](#).

WFP is collaborating with other UN agencies to provide cash and digital assistance to the needy by allowing inter-operability of their respective beneficiary information management systems (with UNHCR in Bangladesh), delivering joint assistance through a single channel (with UNICEF and

UNFPA in Syria) or piggy-backing on contracts with service providers (with UNHCR in Uganda), among other examples.

Concern over the increased vulnerabilities faced by refugees and other displaced populations in terms of health, food security and economic impacts of COVID-19 has prompted WFP and UNHCR to step up engagement at multiple levels with a view to **facilitate increased support to food insecure refugees, including new at-risk populations such as urban refugees**. A key area under discussion is the inclusion of refugees into national social protection systems and potential opportunities deriving from both agencies' engagement with International Financial Institutions (IFI) and governments in this regard. Work on various tools to bring together critical information from both WFP and UNHCR on refugee situations and greater funding visibility in these contexts is also progressing.

Global Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC)

The team continues to collaborate closely with its partners and has completed the mapping exercise of partners' personnel and equipment capacity worldwide in the event the ETC needs to respond in a new country. The ETC has secured US\$ 450,000 funding from WFP Critical Corporate Initiative to assist in the implementation of a common feedback mechanism (CFM) to support government responses to COVID-19 in Central African Republic and Libya. The funding will also be used to roll out a chatbot service which can be sustained beyond the pandemic response. CFMs support the interaction and exchange of reliable information between affected populations and governments, and the humanitarian community.

Global Food Security Cluster (gFSC)

The Global Food Security Cluster organized its global partners' meeting online on 19 and 20 May with over 140 participants. It covers three main topics and then focus on the Technical Working Group with workplan and products. The three sessions are: 1) COVID-19 Pandemic Impact on Food Security and Coordination; 2) Desert Locust Impact on Food Security and Coordination Efforts; 3) Global Network Against Food Crisis.

Global Logistics Cluster (GLC)

The Logistics Cluster has been formally activated in Sudan for an initial period of one year. The Global Logistics Cluster continues to support partners through information sharing via regular global calls (on 13 May over 200 humanitarians participated in the call from 73 organizations), its dedicated [COVID-19 webpage](#) and via its mailing list, keeping partners informed of the latest information on cargo movement opportunities to support their COVID-19 responses.

UNHAS

UNHAS operations continue to be subject to movement restrictions put in place to stop the spread of COVID-19, challenging the ability of humanitarian and health workers to reach deep field locations. Operations remain unaffected in some countries, with flights continuing following strict COVID-19 mitigation measures, however passenger operations in Ethiopia, Libya, Mauritania, Niger and Somalia are currently suspended. WFP continues to work with governments of countries where UNHAS is active to ensure that it meets all requirements to safely continue its operations.

Regional Updates

Regional Bureau Bangkok

Significantly larger scale-up plans for the second half of 2020, especially for Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Myanmar and Pakistan, are under discussion. **Targeted COVID-19 response activities through service provision and/or relief food assistance are ongoing** in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Myanmar, the Pacific, Pakistan, Nepal and the Philippines.

WFP continues to deliver lifesaving food and nutrition support for countries including Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Pakistan. Assistance is provided with various modifications, such as providing one- or two-months' worth of distributions, or through revised operational procedures. Nutrition activities are currently suspended in DPR Korea, Sri Lanka and Lao DPR.

While school closures across the region have meant a suspension of school feeding programmes in almost all country offices (hindering plans to reach 1.8 million beneficiaries in May), **a number of country offices have modified their programmes directly, such as take home rations** including Cambodia, Laos and Sri Lanka or through assistance to the Government (i.e. India).

Similarly, asset creation activities for 1.4 million beneficiaries in May have been modified for 827,000 beneficiaries and suspended for 850,000 beneficiaries. Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Myanmar continue to implement these, with several adjustments and Pakistan has recently resumed some of those activities.

Regional Bureau Cairo

Lebanon, Syria and Yemen have been highlighted as being at particular risk of increased food insecurity in the second edition of the "Impact of COVID-19 in the Middle East, North Africa, Central Asia, and Eastern Europe" report in light of COVID-19 related socio-economic challenges.

WFP continues to adjust its programmes to ensure activities are COVID-19 sensitive. Urgent efforts are needed to support communities and alleviate the impacts of the outbreak.

Social protection has been identified as a key area of WFP's intervention for the COVID-19 response. WFP continues to receive requests to support the planning and/or implementation of governmental and non-governmental social protection responses. The situation is rapidly evolving and putting pressure on national systems, especially those with limited resources. In Tunisia, WFP is working closely with UNICEF and partners to provide comprehensive and timely support to the Government's social protection response. Likewise, in Egypt, WFP is reaching out to the private sector to support the government social protection response plan. WFP also supported the development of an inter-agency policy brief with UNDP, ILO, UNICEF and WHO on policy options for using social protection systems in COVID-19 responses in the Eastern Europe and Central Asia region.



School closures across the region have significantly impacted almost 4 million children who were previously receiving school meals from WFP. Most of the WFP country offices (Egypt, Tunisia, Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, Libya, Kyrgyzstan, Sudan, Syria, and Yemen) have quickly adapted their operations, shifting to alternative modalities such as take-home rations or unconditional cash transfers.

Livelihood programmes continue to be suspended or are ongoing with risk mitigation measures. In Tajikistan, WFP started preparations to launch its cash-for-work projects to support vulnerable households in the Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Region in response to COVID-19 related social and economic shocks. In Iran, participants of tailoring workshops continue to produce masks.

Regional Bureau Cairo **Cash-Based Transfers (CBT) have continued without significant interruption.** In Iran, in consultation and coordination with government authorities, WFP doubled cash transfers in April to mitigate the negative effects of jobs losses and reduced incomes among refugee households. In Egypt, WFP is providing 8,000 pregnant and lactating refugees and their infants under 2 years of age (from nine nationalities) with monthly unconditional cash entitlements.

Regional Bureau Dakar In 2020, prioritized countries include: Central African Republic, Cameroon and the Central Sahel (Burkina Faso, Niger, Mali). Coastal countries may also require increasing attention.

Data from the March 2020 Regional Cadre Harmonise outlook suggests that **21.2 million people, 70 percent more than last year, are projected to be food insecure this lean season** (June – August 2020), without accounting for the impact of COVID-19. This is due to climate shocks such as droughts and floods, ongoing insecurity and resultant displacements, disruption of livelihoods and destabilization of markets. The impact of COVID-19 and associated mitigation measures may reduce economic activity and people's ability to engage in livelihoods.

Challenges stemming from supply chain disruptions, border closures and commercial transport restrictions will continue to affect WFP in the region. Most countries, such as Central African Republic, Cameroon, Chad, Guinea, Mali, and Mauritania, do not have enough stocks in-country due to lack of resources. WFP is currently prepositioning adequate stocks to overcome further disruptions, acknowledging that CBT solutions may become unfeasible in settings with reduced market access, shortage of retailer inventory and reduced overall operational capacity due to restrictions in place. It may result in doubling the number of food insecure people in the region, to an estimated 43 million as per regional VAM analysis.

In all countries of the region **WFP is working within inter-agency teams and with governments** to finalize COVID-19 specific contingency plans.

Regional Bureau Johannesburg With COVID-19 set to aggravate already widespread food insecurity across Southern Africa, **WFP is ramping up operations** to try to ensure the needs of the most at-risk can be met.

WFP has initiated or plans sizeable **cash transfer programmes for poor people in urban areas** in Zimbabwe, Zambia, Madagascar, Mozambique, Malawi, the Republic of Congo, Lesotho and Eswatini.

Pandemic-induced school closures have forced the suspension of daily WFP meals for 2.8 million primary and pre-primary school children. **Take-home rations are being provided instead, maintaining a vital safety net for hard-pressed families** in some countries.

The movement of humanitarian cargo and personnel into and around southern Africa has been slowed by measures implemented to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

WFP continues to be able to receive and dispatch food and other essentials relatively freely thanks to the support of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and its governments. This is critical as most countries in the region are heavily dependent on food imports, many are landlocked (Zimbabwe, Zambia, Malawi, Lesotho and Eswatini), and there are very limited in-country stocks to sustain key WFP operations – notably those in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Zimbabwe and Mozambique.

Regional Bureau Nairobi In the region, **economies have been negatively impacted by measures imposed to curb the spread of the virus**, adversely affecting urban settlement communities reliant on casual labour, low-income earners, and the refugee population. Food security and livelihoods were already under severe threat in eastern Africa before the outbreak, including the arrival of locust swarms and floods impacting communities. Currently, most countries are experiencing flooding, and new swarms of locusts are expected to spread in Kenya, Somalia, Ethiopia, South Sudan, and Djibouti through June, further worsening the food security situation.

WFP is ensuring preventive measures are incorporated in its activities to protect beneficiaries, staff, and partners against COVID-19. WFP is adjusting the frequency of distributions to provide two months' of assistance and is expanding the use of cash-based transfers where markets allow.

**Regional Bureau
Nairobi**

WFP is working closely with governments to complement national COVID-19 response plans by strengthening and scaling up existing national social protection systems and enhancing safety net coverage, and, designing new programmes to address increasing humanitarian needs in the region, particularly in the urban areas. In Uganda, WFP together with UNHCR is planning to provide unrestricted cash assistance to urban refugees in Kampala through mobile money to support food and other basic needs. In Djibouti, WFP will expand its operations over the next three months by providing cash assistance to 23,000 vulnerable households in Djibouti city. In-kind food assistance will also be provided for an additional 12,500 households in the regions and to 1500 migrants in government quarantine centres. In Rwanda, WFP plans to provide emergency food assistance to over 16,000 people living with HIV/AIDS to support the uptake of their antiretroviral therapy.

**Regional Bureau
Panama**

Civil unrest remains a significant threat in the region. Episodes of armed and gang violence particularly in El Salvador are expected to increase in the next few months. There has been a rise in civil unrest in Colombia, Bolivia, Haiti and Panama. Governments are trying to curb population despair through different programmes and measures, but there is a growing perception inadequate support. Governments continue to request WFP's support to assist quarantined populations in El Salvador, Bolivia and Ecuador and WFP is increasingly supporting urban population in Bolivia, Colombia and Haiti.

WFP support is often channelled through government social protection programmes. Regional requests continue to increase. WFP's work in Latin America and the Caribbean is marked by its work to strengthen social protection systems and to leverage their impact in response to shocks. Since the start of the COVID-19 emergency, country offices in the region have worked closely with governments to help maintain and even scale-up social protection systems during the crisis.

Leveraging its ongoing technical assistance to render national social protection programmes more shock-responsive, **WFP has helped authorities ensure vertical and horizontal expansion of assistance to address COVID-19 needs.** To the extent possible, WFP has also sought to channel its own assistance through these programmes to expand their reach, while in parallel working with partners to fill the gap and expand its assistance to vulnerable migrants to cover their essential needs.

WFP is responding to information management and logistics coordination requests, including helping to re-design or improve national supply chain systems for this emergency.

The **UN Humanitarian Response Depot (UNHRD) in Panama has provided timely and efficient emergency deliveries to the humanitarian community** since the start of the crisis. With the support of WFP's Regional Bureau in Panama and in close coordination with PAHO/WHO, UNICEF, and health partners, UNHRD has successfully delivered a total of 42 mt of medical items to 26 countries in the region since the start of the COVID-19 emergency.