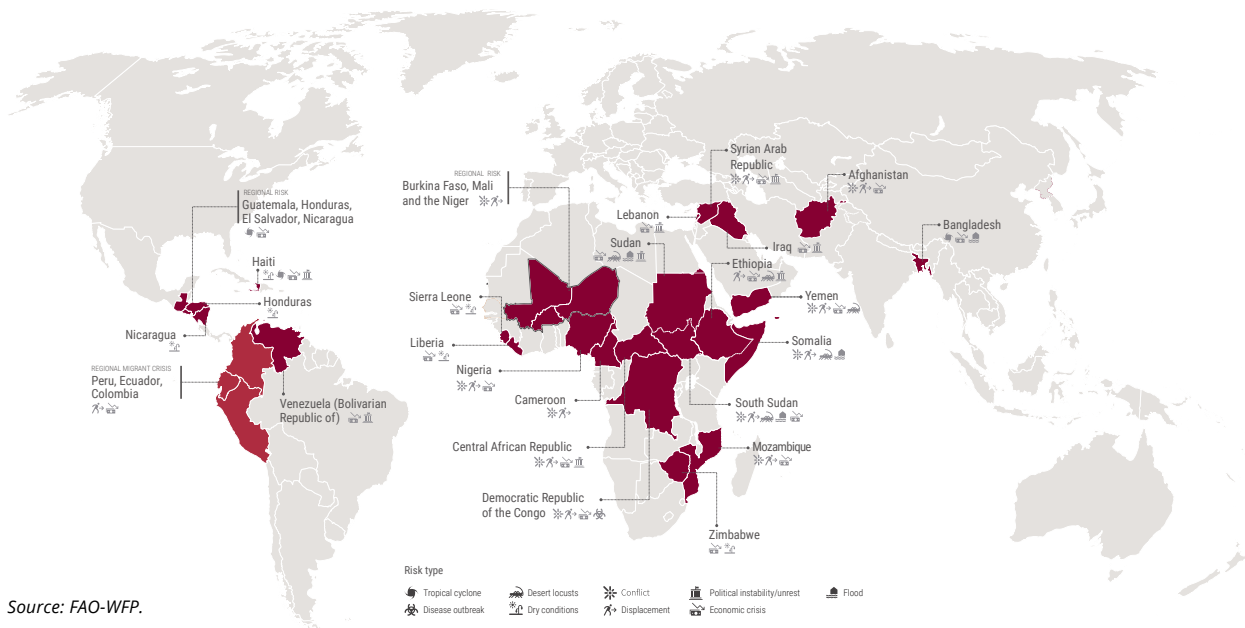


Highlights

As the spread of COVID-19 accelerates from rich to poor countries, the first ever joint [FAO-WFP early warning analysis of acute food insecurity hotspots](#) highlights 25 countries at risk of significant food security deterioration, and particularly acute hunger and associated malnutrition. The analysis accounts for all major drivers of food insecurity, with a focus on the secondary socioeconomic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In **Lebanon**, the fallout of COVID-19 is wreaking havoc, with recent reports indicating that up to 70 percent of the population may not have the means to feed themselves. In **Yemen**, escalating conflict, free-falling currency and the coronavirus are driving a rapid deterioration in the humanitarian situation, threatening to push many more people into acute hunger. In **South Sudan**, COVID-19 is compounding numerous existing problems – conflict, macroeconomic challenges, localized flooding and a desert locust invasion while at the same time overlapping with the peak of the May-July lean season.



Source: FAO-WFP.

WFP is sustaining critical assistance, scaling up to meet new needs and supporting governments and partners as COVID-19 accelerates in WFP's main countries of operation and needs peak between July and September. Globally, Needs-Based Plans have increased by US\$ 1.7 billion (27 percent) for July to December, with the biggest relative increases seen in Latin America and the Caribbean, Southern Africa, in the focus area of crisis response and utilizing the cash-based transfer modality.

The [July Update to the COVID-19 Global Humanitarian Response Plan \(GHRP\)](#) now stands at US\$ 10.3 billion for life-saving aid — the largest appeal in UN history — and reflects much of WFP requirements to deliver food assistance to the millions around the world facing severe hunger this year, as well as US\$ 965 million for WFP global Common Services. The GHRP combines COVID-19 appeals and inputs from UN agencies, other international organizations and NGOs with humanitarian mandates.

KEY FIGURES (AS OF 23 JULY)

690 M

Hungry (undernourished) people in world in 2019 (SOFI)

30

Medical evacuations completed by the UN MEDEVAC Cell

60 M

Increase over the past five years (SOFI)

52

Destinations served by WFP's air passenger service

149 M

Number of acutely food insecure people in countries where WFP works in 2019 (WFP)

OVER 12,500

Health and humanitarian workers transported by WFP Common Services

270 M

Unless urgent action is taken, projected number of acutely food insecure people in countries where WFP operates by end 2020 (post COVID-19) (WFP)

OVER 35,000 m³

Critical health and humanitarian cargo transported to affected areas through WFP's cargo transport services

UP TO 138 M

Number of people WFP aims to assist in 2020 (WFP)



Photo: WFP/WFP-Melki Rahaman

Critical funding needs for WFP Common Services remain, as the health and humanitarian staff strive to stay and deliver. While lower costs and efficiencies have allowed the services to be stretched further, funding remains vital. As only 20 percent of overall requirements have been funded to date, if significant new funding is not received urgently, these critical services will grind to a halt.

WFP Executive Director David Beasley is travelling in Latin America this week, where WFP assessments project an alarming 269 percent increase in severe hunger due to COVID-19 unless immediate action is taken. The Executive Director will visit WFP operations in Ecuador. While in Panama, he will meet with government leaders, partners and staff to get the latest first-hand information from the front lines of the battle against COVID-19.

Resource Mobilization and Partnerships

To mitigate and respond to the immediate consequences of COVID-19, WFP issued the Global Response to COVID-19 on 29 June. In addition to supporting the planned 100 million beneficiaries for 2020, the plan calls for an increase in assistance to reach up to an additional 38 million people in 2020 to respond to the socioeconomic consequences of COVID-19 on the most vulnerable. The response is structured around three pillars:

- **Sustaining assistance to 100 million pre-COVID-19 targeted beneficiaries;**
- **Scale-up to support additional 38 million impacted by COVID-19,** and
- **Support to governments and partners in their response to COVID-19** through technical assistance, assets and services, and complementary support.

The plan requires US\$ 4.9 billion in funding across 83 operations until the end of 2020, and resources are urgently required as needs are expected to peak over the next three months from July to September. As of 23 July, **WFP has received nearly US\$ 292 million against the US\$ 4.9 billion** net funding requirement.

Funding constraints continue to impact WFP's ability to sustain its core critical operations, scale-up to mitigate additional needs as a result of COVID-19, or enable the broader response. In East Africa for example, refugee and internally displaced persons assistance programmes are directly impacted, such as in Ethiopia where WFP will be forced to reduce rations by 40 percent for refugees from July and in Uganda where refugees have already been receiving 70 percent rations for months.

WFP Global Common Services for the global health and humanitarian response to COVID-19 are in urgent need of support against the US\$ 965 million requirement for 2020. As of 20 July, US\$ 194 million has been received, with most recent contributions from Germany and Finland. WFP continues to ensure that all services are as efficient as possible and that we maximize the use of all resources available to us. At the current pace of operations, WFP has enough funding to sustain the cargo and passenger services well into August. However, as only 20 percent of overall requirements have been funded to date, if significant new funding is not received urgently, these critical services will grind to a halt.

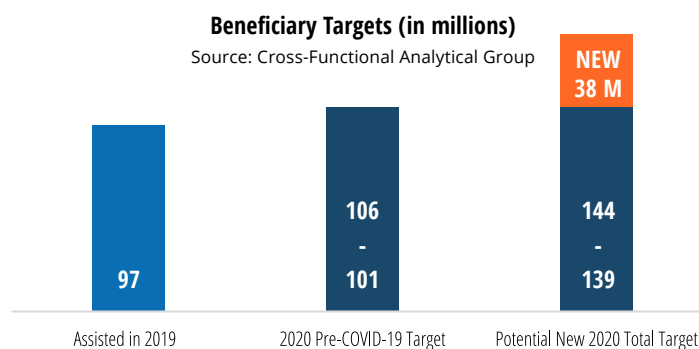


WFP Operations

NEEDS AND SHORTFALLS

Requirements in many WFP country offices have increased significantly since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. As of 9 July, food requirements for July to December have increased by over 715,000 mt (21 percent), and cash-based transfer requirements by US\$ 800 million (34 percent).

Regional bureaux and country offices have indicated that overall, up to 38 million additional beneficiaries are targeted to receive assistance by WFP by the end of 2020.



Globally, Needs-Based Plans have increased by US\$ 1.7 billion (27 percent) for July to December, with the biggest relative increases seen in Latin America and the Caribbean, Southern Africa, the crisis response focus area, and the cash-based transfer modality. **18 country offices have doubled (or more) their Needs-Based Plans, with the largest absolute increases in Somalia, Nigeria, Guatemala, South Sudan, and Afghanistan**, making up 43 percent of the total increase.

Among the countries highlighted in the joint WFP-FAO Food Security Hotspot Analysis, there are 8 that are of very high concern when looking at operational indicators (funding, scale-up, buffer stocks, security): **Zimbabwe, Bangladesh, Yemen, Nigeria, Honduras, Haiti, South Sudan, and Colombia**, and 7 more of high concern: **Afghanistan, Somalia, Iraq, Liberia, Guatemala, Lebanon, and Syria**.

WFP has finalized **58 budget revisions** so far in 2020 to its Country or multi-Country Strategic Plans, out of which almost half are fully or partially related to COVID-19, and 34 additional planned/expected budget revisions are in the pipeline.

Data is more critical than ever to understand COVID-19's impacts and adapt programmes. WFP's Research, Assessment, and Monitoring division has released the Needs analysis informing WFP's Global Response Plan to COVID-19 which indicates that in countries where WFP operates, COVID-19 could push an additional 121 million people into acute food insecurity by the end of 2020. Considering that 149 million people were already acutely food insecure pre-COVID (including 12 million refugees), this would lead to a total of 270 million people facing acute food insecurity by the end of the year.

WFP is particularly concerned for **populations already in acute food insecurity in rural and urban areas who were not receiving assistance** due to access or resource constraints, as well as refugee and migrant populations who largely rely on the informal sector for income. In **Sudan**, WFP is planning to provide emergency food assistance to 1.6 million people mainly in rural areas showing high prevalence of food insecurity pre-COVID-19; in June, 260,000 were reached in Central Darfur. In **Colombia**, WFP extended support to migrants in urban areas of Colombia for the first time in June; in **Peru** WFP kickstarted cash-based assistance to 14,000 migrants for the first time and provided humanitarian kits to 1,000 migrant households; in Ecuador, an additional 127,500 migrants have received mobile assistance to cover food needs. In **Iraq, Lebanon and Palestine** WFP is expanding to cover vulnerable internally displaced persons, refugees and host communities not yet captured under existing programmes.

The particular impact of COVID-19 on livelihoods and access to food for vulnerable populations has required WFP to expand into **urban areas** at an unprecedented scale in more than half of its countries of operation. In **Kenya**, WFP has started a three-month cash assistance to support 279,000 people living in informal settlements within Nairobi, complementing ongoing government assistance. The first disbursements of cash assistance were successfully conducted on 30 June for an initial 1,114 households across 13 informal settlements and scale-up is ongoing. In **Zambia**, WFP is more than doubling its crisis response requirements to assist urban populations experiencing food insecurity due to COVID-19-induced loss of income: this month, WFP is initiating its three-month urban cash transfer programme for poor people in four cities – Lusaka, Kitwe, Kafue and Livingstone – starting with 37,000 households (184,000 people) in the capital.

More than half of WFP's additional requirements for direct food assistance are in the form of **cash-based transfers**, linked in part to the higher urban nature of the COVID-19 response. In **Egypt**, WFP is supporting the government in providing registered casual workers with EGP 500 (US\$ 31.27) in monthly cash assistance, and completed the second cycle on 9 June, targeting 65,000 vulnerable people. In **Iraq**, WFP is complementing the government's food rations in internally displaced persons (IDP) camps with an additional IQD 11,000 (US\$ 9.23) per person, with distributions confirmed in four governorates and planning underway for other locations.



[Cash assistance in Lebanon is a lifeline as coronavirus adds to economic woes](#)

WFP e-cards worth US\$ 40 per month are helping vulnerable families put food on the table.

To mitigate increased needs during peak periods access to food is most constrained as a result of the global crisis, WFP is providing **one-off emergency assistance**, such as in **Liberia**, where following the request by the government and with support of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, WFP has begun providing one-time food assistance to ease the impact of lockdowns on vulnerable groups.

In approximately one-quarter of its operations WFP has been asked to provide **short-term assistance to people in isolation and quarantine** – such as in **South Sudan** where WFP is supporting isolation centres in Rumbek. This type of support is also underway in many countries in Asia where WFP is supporting populations, including returning migrant workers. In **Myanmar**, 50,200 people have already been assisted with three meals a day during their 21-day quarantine period, while in **Laos** WFP with World Vision has provided nearly 100,000 meals to 1,000 returning migrants in Savannakhet province.

In all countries WFP continues to **leverage its outreach** to deliver health messages on behalf of the government and partners. In **Afghanistan** and **Bangladesh**, WFP is expanding its vocational skills training in sewing and tailoring and partnering with local communities to produce face masks ensuring vital access to this protective gear for the most vulnerable: in Afghanistan, more than 23,000 masks have been produced, and in Cox's Bazar refugee camps more than 92,000 masks have been produced and distributed.

WFP adapted assistance to ensure children are supported even while schools are closed due to COVID-19. Since March, WFP has reached 6.3 million children with **alternatives to school feeding**, including take-home rations or cash transfers. Moving forward, country offices are revising their estimates of how many children need support due to the socioeconomic effects of the crisis. WFP plans to reach 18.7 million children this year – 1.3 million more than planned – and is requesting an additional 8 percent increase in funding to do so.



[WFP delivers school meals in Nepal despite coronavirus closures](#)

To ensure children and their families do not miss out on meals interrupted by the pandemic, WFP is working with the government to distribute around 1,500 mt of rice, lentils and vegetable oil to 150,000 households under strict safety and hygiene protocols.

Through technical assistance, service delivery, and complementary interventions, WFP is supporting some 50 governments as they extend the coverage, comprehensiveness, adequacy and quality of their **social protection systems**, ranging from helping governments set up new cash programmes to adapting existing food-based safety nets to accommodate for increased needs. In **Bangladesh**, WFP will support 1.1 million more people through the development of urban safety nets in at-risk, low-income urban slums in Dhaka and Chittagong Hill Tracts, and through expansion of in-kind food and cash transfers to vulnerable host communities in Cox's Bazaar.

WFP is leveraging innovation, technology and digital transformation to enable a rapid and efficient response to COVID-19. In **Somalia**, WFP developed an E-Shop app for families to redeem their cash assistance by ordering groceries online from local stores that is now being scaled up across the country. In **Iraq**, WFP is working with food shops in camps for displaced and refugee families to accept new "cashless" payments through mobile phones, reducing the need for handling banknotes and helping avoid the need for people to move around more than necessary. In **Palestine**, H2Grow, WFP's hydroponics project is empowering vulnerable families under lockdown to grow more fresh vegetables than ever before, helping them to stay home, diversify diets and provide a source of income.

WFP is actively engaged in assessments and analysis to track the impact of the pandemic on food security and markets and inform programming. WFP has scaled up its remote monitoring and analysis through the use of Mobile Vulnerability Assessment and Mapping (mVAM) based on near-real time monitoring in **Uganda, Somalia, Ethiopia, and South Sudan**, and remote monitoring and analysis is also being set up in **Kenya**.

SUPPLY CHAIN

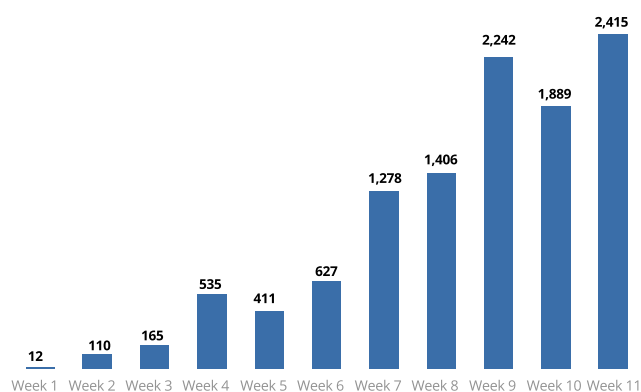
WFP continues its efforts to prevail over the different supply chain challenges posed by the pandemic and minimize risks to beneficiaries. Approximately 75 percent of all WFP food travels by sea, so WFP's in-house shipping service is monitoring how COVID-19 is affecting the global shipping industry to ensure that large volumes of food continue to get to where they are most needed - safely and efficiently. In 2020 so far, 1.4 million mt of food and other humanitarian cargo have been shipped, of which approximately 200,000 mt are en route to 16 of 21 COVID-19 priority countries, and ever-increasing volumes are expected over the coming months.

In **Djibouti**, following a breakthrough with authorities, long-overdue crew changes will be possible again on the MV Vos Theia and the MV Vos Apollo supply ships, which provide a vital humanitarian shuttle service and stand-by evacuation or surge capacity for aid workers and critical cargo between Djibouti and **Yemen**. Through the Humanitarian Logistics Base in Djibouti, which can store 65,000 mt of food and other supplies, WFP and the government are providing COVID-19-related storage and transport services to UN and NGO partners. So far, 4,000 m² of additional contingency space has been provided at the Djibouti Free Zone, with negotiations to provide more space ongoing, while temperature-controlled warehousing facilities are in the process of being expanded to better serve medical organizations involved in the pandemic response.

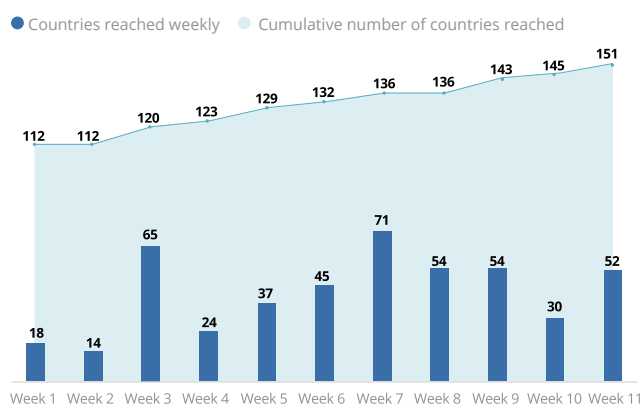
Common Services

WFP's **air passenger services** continue to grow as further authorizations are received. A long-haul flight from Fiumicino, Rome to Accra, Ghana began on 17 July, establishing an essential connection into Africa in line with partner requirements, while flights serving the Latin American region are expected to come online in the next few days. In the past month, WFP has transported three times more passengers than in the first six weeks of the operation, with roughly 12,500 passengers now transported since 1 May for 229 organizations to 52 destinations. WFP Aviation is working tirelessly to open networks, laying the groundwork for governments, regions and commercial airlines to re-establish connections in line with all health and safety requirements. Routes are discontinued as soon as a safe and reliable commercial option is re-established.

Weekly Passenger Trend, 1 May - 10 July 2020



Number of Countries Reached Each Week with Cargo 1 May - 10 July 2020



WFP AVIATION – STAFF ON THE FRONT LINE

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, Addis Alemayehu's work has been crucial in setting up the Addis Ababa humanitarian air hub in Ethiopia, where he provides operational and customer service support.

These tasks are paramount in aviation, particularly with the pressure of transporting frontline professionals such as doctors and humanitarian personnel who depend on the service to reach the destinations where they are most needed.

He explains that offering passengers impeccable service is crucial considering the mental strain and physical hardship they experience due to complicated travel arrangements, long connections, mandatory quarantine, unanticipated delays, and cancellations.

Photo credit: WFP/Girum Bisrat | On the job: Addis Alemayehu, WFP Aviation.



"The expression of joy on passengers' faces, finally landing home says more than words and keeps the team motivated to do more and even better."

WFP continues to ensure the flow of critical health and humanitarian cargo to affected areas through cargo transport services from its network of humanitarian response hubs. Over **35,000 m³ of cargo has been dispatched to date on behalf of 47 organizations to 159 countries – over 80 percent of the world**. 23,200 m³ of this has been transported via WFP's free-to-user cargo services on behalf of 32 partners under the Global Humanitarian Response Plan.

Demand for WFP's **cargo movement services** continues to grow week over week, with three times more cargo dispatched in the past 30 days compared to the first six weeks of the operation. Meanwhile, an increasing number of requests are being processed. While a reduction in market rates is enabling WFP to extend its cargo and passenger services for a few additional weeks, at the current pace of operations, if no further funding is received these services will grind to a halt.

UN MEDEVAC CELL

WFP continues to play a key role as part of the UN Medevac Cell, completing **30 medevacs to date**. In Accra, WFP has constructed one 68-bed COVID-19 field hospital. WHO is taking over the facility and is currently contracting two private companies to equip and manage the medical facility. A staggered opening of hospital beds is expected. WFP has also constructed a field hospital in Addis Ababa and discussions are ongoing between WHO, the Ministry of Health and WFP about its future use. A third field hospital has now been prepositioned in UNHRD Ghana to be available for use in Africa should there be a need.

To learn more about WFP's common services in support of the health and humanitarian response to COVID-19, read the latest publications [here](#).

WFP-led and co-led Clusters

Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC)

In **Libya**, to date, more than 8,500 COVID-related calls have been answered by the Emergency Telecommunications Sector-managed call centre, which is being used as a national COVID-19 information helpline. The vast majority are from callers seeking information, while callers reporting potential symptoms are immediately referred to the National Centre of Disease Control.

For **Pacific Island Countries**, interim guidance on the use of digital health tools and systems for the COVID-19 health sector response is [now available](#). The document is the outcome of the ETC's continued work with the Joint Pacific COVID-19 Incident Management Team, established by humanitarian and development partners to support COVID-19 preparedness and response efforts in the Pacific.

In **Yemen**, as part of the COVID-19 response, the ETC installed video conferencing equipment in isolation units in the United Nations Common Accommodation Facility in Sana'a. The ETC continues to provide connectivity in a UN quarantine facility in Aden and has been requested to extend the service to an isolation centre in another part of the building.

Responding to requests from WHO, the ETC is upgrading a dedicated COVID-19 hotline at the Ministry of Public Health and Population in Sana'a, establishing a new hotline in Aden, and upgrading the existing communications infrastructure in 26 Emergency Operations Centres that had previously been used for the cholera response to now support the COVID-19 response.

Global Food Security Cluster (gFSC)

The **Joint Monitoring Framework** on food security risks and response trends developed by the gFSC Working Group on COVID-19 is being piloted in Haiti, Bangladesh, and northeast Syria and will be rolled out more broadly next month.

In **Somalia**, anticipatory action initially planned for slow-onset crises is now being used to mitigate rising humanitarian needs due to the "triple shocks" of drought, desert locust and COVID-19. In May, FSC partners assisted 2.3 million out of 2.7 million people targeted (84 percent) for improved access to food security response. In addition, about 154,000 beneficiaries have received seasonal inputs and livestock asset protection since the beginning of the season. FSC partners have secured funds to reach 2.3 million people between July and September 2020.

In **Ethiopia**, ongoing food and cash response is being provided to cover needs up to August 2020, with food distributions carried out in adherence to COVID-19 protective measures. FSC partners are reaching desert locust-affected households with livelihood support and food interventions, and agriculture cluster partners are engaged in data collection.

In **Mozambique**, Food Security Sector partners WFP and UNICEF are planning a cash transfer using mobile money targeting about 500,000 poor urban households in response to COVID-19. Another 350,000 beneficiaries will be provided with food assistance from July onwards through various modalities.

In **Colombia**, rapid emergency response for vulnerable indigenous communities in urban or peri-urban settlements in the Amazonas has started. However, resources are urgently required to maintain and scale up the response to address food needs targeted communities who depend largely on informal and seasonal jobs, such as tourism, domestic work and agriculture, and have been heavily affected by isolation measures.

Logistics Cluster

The Logistics Cluster training team has adapted to respond to the constraints of COVID-19 and has been organising live online discussion sessions to enhance the Online Logistics Cluster Induction Training, with 347 registered participants from 68 countries and 135 organisations for seven sessions across May, June and July.

The Logistics Cluster will facilitate storage and transport services for the humanitarian community from the hubs in the **Democratic Republic of the Congo** in Goma and Kinshasa starting July. The updated Concept of Operations can be found [here](#).

In June, the Global Logistics Cluster Support Team supported the **Burundi, Ecuador, Honduras, Libya and Sudan** WFP country offices to conduct Gaps and Needs Analysis exercises. These are key to determining the appropriate humanitarian coordination structures for logistics in countries. The analyses will shortly be published on the [Logistics Cluster website](#).



[WFP supports Somalia's coronavirus response](#)

The WFP-led Logistics Cluster and UNHAS has provided vital support to reach remote areas across Somalia with essential supplies to support the government's COVID-19 response, such as such syringes, hand sanitizers, and tents for clinics.

Regional Updates

Regional Bureau Bangkok

The number of COVID-19 cases in Asia-Pacific countries of WFP operations (including oversight countries) now exceeds 1.5 million, up from 600,000 one month ago. This makes RBB the **WFP region with the highest number of cases**. In response, **WFP is supporting governments to address the impacts of COVID-19** through three pillars: national social protection systems; basic service delivery and food systems while continuing to provide food security and nutrition analysis, relief assistance, as well as humanitarian common services. COVID-19 is compounding the risks already faced in many parts of the region due to escalating conflict and climate. Preparations for heavy rain and the upcoming winter are even more difficult than usual and funding for critical operations such as Myanmar and Afghanistan is stretched.

WFP activities in Asia-Pacific have been modified to continue lifesaving relief assistance while avoiding unnecessary exposure to risks of infection. While school closures across the region have meant a suspension of school feeding programmes, WFP has now reached over half a million children with adjusted modalities such as take-home rations and cash-based transfers in Cambodia, Laos, Bangladesh, Afghanistan, Nepal and Myanmar. General food assistance is also being provided to support government quarantine measures, e.g. in Myanmar and Nepal. Nutrition-specific and -sensitive interventions across the region have been adjusted to mitigate the impact of COVID-19.



[In the Philippines, WFP amps up Government's response as coronavirus bites](#)

WFP is lending its technical expertise in cash distribution and food security monitoring to protect communities.

In **Myanmar**, for instance, WFP has started providing cooked fortified blended food to pregnant and nursing women, and children aged 6-59 months in quarantine centres in Myawaddy, Kayin State. Participants in vocational skills training in **Afghanistan** used their newly acquired skills in tailoring and sewing to produce face masks that help prevent the spread of COVID-19. To date, they have produced more than 23,000 masks. Similarly, in **Bangladesh**, as part of a broader inter-agency cooperation, WFP has engaged refugees in Cox's Bazar in mask production through its self-reliance programme, with 92,000 masks produced so far, which are being distributed to the refugee population.

Significant scale-up is under way for Afghanistan and Bangladesh. In Bangladesh, WFP will support 1.1 million more people through the development of urban safety nets in at-risk, low-income urban slums in Dhaka and Chittagong Hill Tracts, and through expansion of in-kind food and cash transfers to vulnerable host communities in Cox's Bazaar. In Afghanistan, WFP plans to assist an additional 3 million people impacted by COVID-19 with food and cash transfers during the second half of 2020. The COVID-response focuses on urban poor households to complement WFP's regular programming which primarily targets households in rural areas.

Regional Bureau Cairo

In the Regional Bureau Cairo region, which covers the Middle East, North Africa, Central Asia and Eastern Europe, an **additional 12 million people are estimated to become food insecure** since the onset of COVID-19. This is a 29 percent increase from 41 million to 53 million food insecure people in the region in 2020. Countries of particular concern in the region include Iraq, Lebanon, Libya, Yemen and Syria.

WFP's continuous monitoring of **commodity price developments** shows a substantial increase for average food basket prices in several countries in the region between January and May 2020. Prices for food baskets have notably increased in **Kyrgyzstan** (10 percent), **Lebanon** (18 percent), **Libya** (28 percent) and **Syria** (42 percent). The increase in prices has negatively impacted peoples' consumption patterns to adapt to the situation. A major concern during COVID-19 is that 38 percent of displaced households have reduced their health expenditures to cover their basic food needs.

WFP and the governments of several countries in the region continue to provide **assistance for vulnerable individuals impacted by COVID-19**. WFP Tunisia has been requested by the Government to duplicate the National School Feeding Policy at the country's universities. This ground-breaking initiative represents a first in the region. Meanwhile, in **Turkey**, the top-up distribution of 15,000 hygiene kits took place in camps from 14 to 23 June.

Regional Bureau Cairo

Feedback received from beneficiaries during post distribution monitoring exercises highlighted a strong appreciation for this timely support.

Livelihoods and resilience-building activities continue to be impacted by the pandemic. In **Tajikistan**, WFP launched resilience-building projects to support vulnerable households that are particularly affected by the socio-economic shocks induced by COVID-19. WFP will assist some 15,000 people through three months' cash assistance to meet their immediate nutritional needs and build long-term community assets in four districts of the Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Region .

In countries where **nutrition activities** are ongoing, WFP delivers its life-saving assistance with COVID-19 precautionary measures in place. In **Algeria**, high anaemia prevalence and malnutrition rates mean that many refugees are less resistant to the virus.



[How WFP is responding to the COVID-19 crisis in Gaza](#)

WFP is stepping up its assistance in Palestine in response to the COVID-19 crisis and its damaging impact on an already constrained economy

Therefore, for the treatment of moderate acute malnutrition (MAM) and anaemia in pregnant and nursing women (PLWGs), WFP distributed daily rations of fortified food to more than 600 women. In addition, around 8,000 PLWGs received fresh food vouchers to prevent MAM and anaemia. For the treatment of MAM in children, about 450 children received daily rations of specialized nutritious food, while for prevention, about 13,300 boys and girls received specialized nutritious food in health centres.

Country offices in the region are adjusting their distribution strategies to **safely reach beneficiaries** and accommodate their needs. In June, WFP **Lebanon** increased the food transfer value for Syrian refugees. Furthermore, in Lebanon, from July 2020, 17,620 beneficiaries who previously received food e-cards will now receive cash for food assistance. In **Egypt**, at the request of the Ministry of Social Solidarity, starting June 2020, WFP is extending monthly cash assistance to 76,000 people. The assistance mainly targets vulnerable female headed households and widows. Additionally, in June 2020, WFP Egypt launched its COVID-19 emergency support to the government in the form of unconditional cash assistance to about 37,000 households with children under two years of age.

Regional Bureau Dakar

The **socio-economic challenges** induced by measures to contain the spread of COVID-19 are heavily impacting food security and livelihoods in West and Central Africa. Spikes in food insecurity are already evident in West and Central Africa with a 135 percent increase. Some 40 percent of the estimated 57.6 million food insecure people in the region are in Africa's most populous nation **Nigeria**, a further 10 percent in **Niger**, and around 5 percent each in **Burkina Faso, Chad, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Mali, and Senegal**. Several countries are approaching their annual lean season when access to food is severely constrained and malnutrition rates peak.

Humanitarian needs have reached an [unprecedented level](#) across the region - resulting from escalating conflict and rising food insecurity - exacerbated by the spread of COVID-19. Refugees are among the extremely vulnerable groups that face hunger and malnutrition as COVID-19 worsens food shortages and that need to be sustained with humanitarian assistance. There are 1.2 million refugees in the Sahel region.

To address the increasing needs related to COVID-19, the approaching lean season and growing insecurity, **WFP plans to reach 22.3 million people** (up from 13.4 people), an increase of 67 percent on the 2020 plan. Distribution of school meals in school canteens has resumed in countries where schools have reopened – **Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire and Guinea**. Provision of take-home rations or cash as an alternative to school meals continues in **The Gambia, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger and Senegal** and ended in June in **Chad and Cameroon**.

WFP continues to provide critical **relief food assistance** to COVID-19 affected populations and food insecure communities through in-kind and **cash-based transfers (CBTs)**. CBTs are particularly used due to the partially urban nature of the COVID-19 response, such as in **Cameroon**, where WFP plans to provide emergency food assistance, mainly in urban and peri-urban areas through CBTs in the Far North region. In **Nigeria**, the COVID-19 scale up plan in the North-East targets 1.9 million people through in-kind and CBTs assistance.

**Regional Bureau
Dakar**

Collaboration with and support to governments is ongoing; for example in **Burkina Faso**, WFP is developing an integrated social protection programme to complement the Government's COVID-19 response. In **Liberia**, following the request by the Government and with support of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), WFP is providing one-month food assistance to ease the impact of lockdown on vulnerable groups. In **Mali**, WFP launched a large-scale food and nutrition intervention to assist nearly one million people in the northern and central regions. The assistance provided in support of the Government National Response Plan targets internally displaced persons, refugees, returnees, and vulnerable families from July to September, the lean season period. Families will receive vouchers to procure their preferred food items from local markets.

Moreover, **joint country-level food security assessments** led by host governments are ongoing. In **Burkina Faso**, WFP will use results from the joint government/partner COVID-19 assessment to determine its additional assistance.

**Regional Bureau
Johannesburg**

WFP continues working to ensure help reaches the most at-risk in an environment where COVID-19 infections are surging, cash-strapped governments are struggling to cope with growing hunger, and the pandemic's socioeconomic consequences are set to outweigh its health impact. **COVID-19 has intensified conflict – and hunger – in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and northern Mozambique.** Elsewhere, it risks fuelling political tension and instability.

Beyond assistance to the traditionally vulnerable – subsistence farming families, refugees and IDPs, among others – **WFP's scale-up includes support to millions of now destitute people in urban areas.** This is in line with the push to capitalise on decades of experience globally to strengthen national social protection systems in a region where the food insecure have had limited coverage. It is also consistent with WFP's accelerating transition to preventive, anticipatory action: building resilience to shocks before they strike.

The pandemic is aggravating **deep-rooted problems underpinning protracted hunger in Southern Africa:** high rates of population growth, poverty, inequality, malnutrition, HIV and environmental degradation. It is also compounding the widespread devastation now routinely inflicted by climate change: recurring drought and frequent flooding. Key sources of income for families, communities and governments have disappeared or diminished significantly.

As joblessness has soared, remittances from migrant breadwinners in South Africa and elsewhere, vital for millions in **Zimbabwe, Malawi, Mozambique and Lesotho**, have slumped. So, too, have the prices of exports some countries heavily depend on including in the **Republic of Congo and Angola** and copper in **Zambia**. The region's crucial tourism industry has all but ground to a halt.

Anticipating COVID-related **supply chain disruptions**, WFP has worked since the outset of the crisis to procure and pre-position up to three months of food to meet the increased needs of especially vulnerable communities. Thanks in part to the better harvests in some countries, much of the planned 70,000 tonnes of commodities has been sourced and delivered.

The pandemic and its socioeconomic impacts are set to inflict a significant surge in WFP funding needs. The unmet requirement for the next six months (July-December) for all operations amounts to US\$ 881 million. Half of that is to meet anticipated needs arising directly from COVID-19. Three-quarters is accounted for by our three biggest operations: **Democratic Republic of the Congo, Zimbabwe and Mozambique.** Yet, because of COVID-19, needs in smaller countries – **Namibia, Lesotho and Eswatini** among them – are accelerating even more rapidly.

Regional Bureau Nairobi

In East Africa, the triple threat of COVID-19, floods and locust outbreak continue to exacerbate the humanitarian needs, subsequently, food security and developments gains made in previous years run the risk of being eroded as the pandemic continues. WFP estimates the number of acutely **food insecure people in East Africa could increase by 73 percent** – from 24 million pre-COVID-19, to 41.5 million before the end of 2020. In South Sudan, COVID-19 is compounding numerous existing shocks including conflict, macroeconomic challenges, localized flooding, and a desert locust invasion, simultaneously overlapping with the peak of the May-July lean season. This is likely to increase the already high levels of food insecurity, where more than [5.2 million](#) people are projected to be food insecure (IPC 3). WFP continues to work closely with regional Governments and key stakeholders in the region and supporting Governments in their response to the COVID-19 pandemic, locust, floods response and other existing shocks.

Further, WFP has continued to prioritise **food and nutrition assistance to refugees and vulnerable food insecure host populations**. WFP has supported governments in their response plans, expanding the government safety nets programme to reach vulnerable urban populations with relief assistance and livelihood interventions. In **Kenya**, WFP has started a three-month cash assistance response to 63,300 families living in 13 informal settlements within Nairobi – faced with food and nutrition shortages as a result of loss of livelihoods and income loss. WFP is also planning to expand the treatment of malnutrition program to Nairobi settlements. In **South Sudan**, WFP has prioritized assistance to approximately 4 million people during this period including populations in areas of IPC Phases 3, 4, and 5, and displaced populations. WFP will extend shock-responsive assistance to an additional 1.6 million of the most vulnerable, market-dependent populations – including 1.1 million people in urban and peri-urban areas and 500,000 people in rural areas.

In addition, WFP is actively engaged in **assessments and analysis for evidence-based programming** and to track the impacts of the pandemic on Food Security and Markets and to inform on targeting approaches. WFP has scaled up its remote monitoring and analysis through use of Mobile Vulnerability Assessment and Mapping (mVAM) based near-real time monitoring in **Uganda, Somalia, Ethiopia, and South Sudan**. Remote monitoring and analysis is also being set up in **Kenya**. WFP is working with a number of stakeholders in making use of mobile phone-based surveys for desert locust assessment (with FAO), IPC analysis including in urban areas (with FAO, UNICEF and Governments), and joint analysis with UN Habitat on urban vulnerable populations. WFP is also supporting the regional leadership of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development to analyse and define the overall food security and nutrition needs in the region.

Regional Bureau Panama

Latin America is significantly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, marking the **highest relative increase in food insecurity (269 percent) of any region**. WFP projects that 16 million people could face severe food insecurity this year in countries where WFP has a presence. This includes Venezuelan migrants in Colombia, Ecuador and Peru. [The Secretary-General's Policy Brief on the Impact of COVID-19 on Latin America and the Caribbean](#), noted that the pandemic will result in the worst recession in the region in a century, and an increase in number of poor by 45 million (to a total of 230 million).

WFP is particularly concerned about vulnerable people in **Haiti, the Central American Dry Corridor and Venezuelan migrants in Colombia, Ecuador and Peru**. The plight of workers employed in the informal sector is particularly worrying, especially as many of them are not covered by any social protection programmes.

Prices of basic commodities are increasing in various countries, and Oxfam has warned that without international intervention in Central America and Venezuela, the pandemic could [significantly impact food security](#) in the Dry Corridor. IPC analysis for the Tri-national Border of Rio Lempa, a region between **Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras**, indicate that from June to August 2020 [29 percent of the analysed population is facing acute food insecurity](#). COVID-19 is a key driver of food insecurity in that area through movement restrictions, loss of employment, and decreased remittances. In addition, **Honduras**, as well as **Guatemala and El Salvador**, are on alert for locust plague.

WFP continues to scale up its operations across the region, notably through cash transfer interventions in urban, rural, and new areas such as in **Colombia**, where WFP is mobilized to support migrants for the first time in Valle del Cauca, including Cali.

**Regional Bureau
Panama**

Cash interventions are being implemented or scaling up, depending on the context. In **Haiti**, over 1 million US\$ was distributed during the week of 06 July in cash.



[Coronavirus in Honduras: 'This pandemic is going to starve us'](#)

WFP is providing cash transfers, in-kind food baskets and hygiene kits as 250,000 are pushed into hunger.

In Honduras, WFP has finalized the distribution of food kits to 380,000 schoolchildren. WFP is reaching 3,200 families in the resilience program and has completed its first round of assistance to 29,000 families in isolation centres, urban areas and remote communities. In **Colombia**, although biometric registration has been suspended amidst COVID-19, registration via SCOPE, WFP corporate beneficiary management system, continues to support the management of CBT assistance.

At interagency level, WFP and UNICEF are working on a joint paper to support and integrate **Venezuelan migrants** into the social protection systems within the COVID-19 context. Migrants are increasingly part of WFP's response. In terms of alternate modalities solutions and sustainability, in **Guatemala**, WFP is working with the Ministry of Education to include food from smallholder farmers for take-home rations for next distributions in August.