



Strengthening immediate and long-term support in an emergency context:

The case of Haiti

Side event on the margins of the second regular session of the Executive Board
High-level panel discussion
Tuesday, 19 November 2024

Event

The WFP Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean and the Permanent Representations of Brazil, Canada, Haiti, and the United States of America, invite Executive Board delegates to a side event that aims to shed a light on the food security situation in Haiti and its broader regional implications.

The event will consist of a high-level panel discussion that will aim to explore strategies and key examples of initiatives that address the immediate humanitarian needs and promote long-term development in the country.

Background

Haiti is in the grip of a severe humanitarian crisis, stemming from a combination of long-standing complex factors that have intensified in recent years. Widespread violence by non-state armed groups has aggravated insecurity and severely disrupted the distribution of essential goods and aid, with civilians caught in the crossfire. The number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) is alarmingly high, affecting at least 700,000 people as of September 2024, approximately triple the amount of IDPs last year.

The ongoing violence has caused widespread job and income losses, affecting two thirds of Haitian families. Soaring fuel and food prices have further compounded the crisis, making basic necessities unaffordable for millions, driving inflation to 40.5 percent and forcing 4 out of 5 households to adopt negative coping strategies, such as skipping meals and limiting adult consumption to prioritize children's food needs.

The latest Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) analysis (September 2024) underscores the gravity of the situation, revealing that 5.4 million people – nearly half of the population – are experiencing acute food insecurity, with 2 million at emergency levels (IPC phase 4). Alarmingly, 6,000 people are enduring catastrophic food insecurity (IPC phase 5), marking the second time this has occurred in the region's history. Haiti is now facing one of the most severe food security crises in the world. The analysis also indicates that those 6,000 facing catastrophic conditions are concentrated in IDP sites in the Port-au-Prince metropolitan area.

In response, WFP is scaling up its emergency assistance, providing hot meals and cash transfers, especially for the growing number of displaced people. In March 2024, WFP reached over 68,000 individuals with hot meals across 46 sites in Port-au-Prince and is now targeting

130,000 individuals. WFP's transitional support offers a temporary safety net for six months, helping households meet their basic needs as they relocate to safer areas and work to rebuild their livelihoods. This response is aligned with the Government's voluntary relocation and recovery plans.

While immediate humanitarian aid is critical to addressing urgent needs, long-term investments are equally necessary to build resilience and tackle the root causes of Haiti's crisis. In recent years, WFP has ramped up efforts to localize its support, implementing initiatives that promote long-term resilience and align with the Government's national development objectives.

These efforts include the significant scale up of interventions contributing to human capital development and its safeguard, such as school feeding programmes delivering nutritious meals to support better learning outcomes, better nutrition and increased incomes for local smallholder farmers or strengthening national social protection systems from the development of a social registry to targeted transfers supporting early childhood development and vulnerable pregnant and breastfeeding women, among others. School feeding programmes and the strengthening of social protection systems are examples of initiatives that can be expanded with greater support from donor community, development partners and the Government of Haiti. The side event aims to consider opportunities and specific measures that can contribute to the expansion of such initiatives.

Objective

The objective of the side event is to hear from the Government of Haiti on their needs and response in addressing the ongoing humanitarian crisis, particularly the rise in IDPs. WFP will present its response and initiatives, while key partners will have the opportunity to discuss how we can collaborate to meet both immediate humanitarian needs and support long-term sustainable development. The panel discussion will explore how to scale up these efforts and strengthen resilience, building on successful interventions despite the challenging emergency context.

Panel composition

Opening Remarks

- Ms Cindy McCain, Executive Director, WFP
- H.E. Ms Elissa Golberg, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Canada

Moderator

- H.E. Ms Elissa Golberg, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Canada

Panellists

- H.E. Mr Nesmy Manigat, Chief of Staff of the Prime Minister of Haiti
- H.E. Ms Carla Barroso Carneiro, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Brazil
- H.E. Mr Jeffrey Prescott, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the United States of America
- Ms Wanja Kaaria, Country Director, Haiti, WFP

Closing remarks

- Ms Lola Castro, Regional Director, Latin America and the Caribbean, WFP