

Highlights

The COVID-19 pandemic is making the poorest poorer, and the hungriest hungrier. **WFP is mobilising to meet the needs of up to 138 million people in 2020** — including by scaling up to assist over 750,000 people with multi-purpose cash, cash-for-food or e-card assistance in **Lebanon**; expanding to provide cash assistance for 279,000 people in Nairobi's informal settlements in **Kenya**; and providing food assistance for returnees and deportees in quarantine at border areas in **Ethiopia**.

As coronavirus cases soar, **Latin America has become the region most impacted by COVID-19 globally**, accounting for over a quarter of the world's cases. WFP Executive Director David Beasley, who visited **Ecuador** and **Panama** and spoke to other leaders in Latin America during the last week in July, said: *"The COVID-19 pandemic has just been devastating in Latin America, where the economic storm clouds were already gathering. Families are struggling to buy basics like food and medicine, as livelihoods are destroyed and the number of people out of work in the region hits 44 million. It's a deadly combination and we've got to act now, and we've got to be smart. You can't just deal with COVID-19 by itself or hunger by itself. They must be dealt with together. If we do it right, we can save lives. If we don't do it right, people will die."*

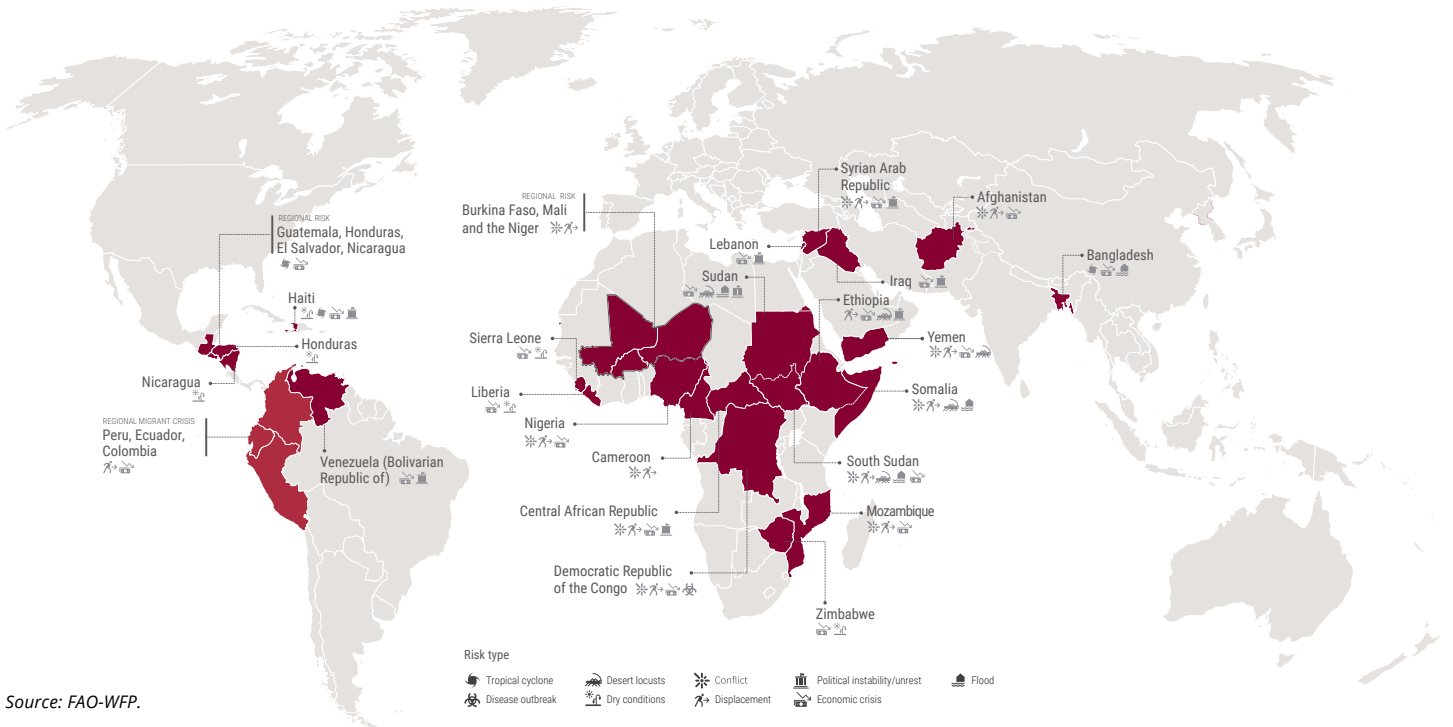


WFP Executive Director David Beasley delivering breakfasts in a canteen in Ecuador, where WFP supports 26 canteens, providing food assistance to vulnerable people temporarily accommodated in shelters managed by local partner organisations.

Tackling the rising tide of hunger requires the biggest humanitarian response in WFP's history. This unprecedented crisis requires an unprecedented response. WFP is appealing for US\$ 4.9 billion until the end of 2020 to carry out this life-saving work in 83 countries. As of 5 August, **WFP has received US\$ 440 million**, representing only nine percent of the total.

WFP's **Common Services** have provided over 1,300 passenger and cargo flights to destinations across Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Middle East since launching in May – with more than 16,500 humanitarian and health responders from over 288 organizations flown to destinations where their assistance is urgently needed. Cargo and passenger services have reached 159 countries so far, more than 80 percent of the world. However, **only 21 percent of WFP's US\$ 965 million requirement for Common Services in 2020 has been received**, meaning the services will grind to a halt if no additional funding is received.

HUNGER HOTSPOTS



Source: FAO-WFP.

27 countries are at risk of significant food security deterioration in the next six months according to [a recent joint FAO-WFP hotspots analysis](#), with COVID-19 compounding existing vulnerabilities by negatively impacting food access and availability, agricultural production, food supply chains, government capacities to protect vulnerable populations, political stability and conflict dynamics. These include:

In **Yemen**, escalating conflict, free-falling currency and COVID-19 are driving a rapid deterioration in the humanitarian situation, threatening to push many more people into acute hunger. The latest Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) in southern Yemen projects 3.2 million people to be highly food insecure between July and December 2020, representing a 60 percent increase since February.

In **South Sudan**, the deterioration of the security situation remains a significant concern. More displacement has been reported in the first five months of 2020 than in the entire year of 2019. Famine-like prospects are looming, with an additional 1.6 million people in urban areas requiring assistance as a result of COVID-19, when eroded livelihoods and constraints of funding, commodity availability and access are reducing WFP's ability to respond to these acute needs.

Around 40 percent of the estimated 57.6 million food insecure people in the West Africa region are in **Nigeria**. COVID-19 is putting additional strains on the economy while the deteriorating security situation is threatening further displacement.

Zimbabwe faces one of the worst economic crises in its history with inflation increasing by more than 800 percent in just over a year. Combined with poor performance during the last agricultural season and the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, WFP's analysis estimated 3.7 million people requiring assistance in July and that figure almost doubling by the beginning of 2021.

The **Democratic Republic of the Congo** has the second highest number of food-insecure people globally. As a result of COVID-19-induced price inflation and job losses, households in the most affected areas have lost almost 40 percent of their purchasing power. Displaced people — estimated at over 5 million — are highly vulnerable with limited coping capacity.

In **Burkina Faso** severe food insecurity is on the rise. Conflict has intensified, giving rise to increased displacement. WFP is prioritizing assistance to IDPs, host communities and vulnerable populations affected by the lean season and COVID-19. However, the funding situation remains critical, with shortfalls for emergency activities expected in September, and a complete halt likely by October.

Resource Mobilization and Partnerships

WFP's COVID-19 global plan requires US\$ 4.9 billion in funding across 83 operations until the end of 2020, and resources are urgently required as needs are peaking over the July to September period. As of 5 August, **WFP has received US\$ 440 million against the US\$ 4.9 billion net funding requirement**, representing only 9 percent of the total.

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 5 August, US\$ 201 million has been received. 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 adequate funding to sustain cargo and passenger services into August. However, as only 21 percent of overall requirements have been received to date, if significant new funding is not received urgently, these critical services will grind to a halt.

WFP Operations

Requirements in many country offices have increased significantly due to COVID-19. **Food requirements** for July to December have increased by over 795,000 mt (24 percent), and **cash-based transfer requirements** by US\$ 800 million (35 percent).

66 budget revisions have been submitted in 2020 so far, out of which 35 are fully or partially related to COVID-19. The biggest budgetary increase for COVID-19-related budget revisions are for crisis response, followed by resilience building and root causes. An additional 28 budget revisions are in the pipeline.

WFP'S GLOBAL RESPONSE TO COVID-19

Despite the challenging resourcing and operational environment, WFP has continued to meet existing and mitigate immediate new needs. WFP is starting a four-phase COVID-19 response in the northeast of **Nigeria** this month; in the first phase, an additional 80,000 people will receive assistance. As the economic and fiscal crises continue unabated in **Lebanon**, WFP increased its transfer value to US\$ 46 per person for Syrian refugees based on the average food basket price. Starting in July, WFP plans to assist over 750,000 people with multipurpose cash, cash-for-food or e-card assistance.

More than half of WFP's operations are now scaling up direct assistance in urban areas, some for the first time. Cities are bearing the brunt of the COVID-19 crisis, accounting for 90 percent of COVID-19 cases. UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres has launched a new [Policy Brief on COVID-19 in the Urban World](#), offering three key recommendations: tackling inequalities and development deficits, strengthening the capacity of local organisations, particularly at local government level, and pursuing a resilient, inclusive, gender-equal and green economic recovery.

In **Ethiopia**, WFP is supporting the government to scale up an urban productive safety net project, aiming to reach 17,500 people with cash assistance from July 2020. WFP is also providing **one-off emergency assistance** to ease the impact of lockdowns on vulnerable groups, including people in quarantine, providing food assistance for returnees and deportees in quarantine at border areas. In **Central African Republic**, additional funding was secured for the COVID-19 response, allowing the country office to assist a total of 225,000 beneficiaries in urban areas from August for five cycles.

WFP has started providing cash assistance for 279,000 people living in informal settlements in Nairobi, **Kenya** and for another 180,000 food-insecure and vulnerable people living in disadvantaged, high-density, and low-income urban and peri-urban areas across **Zambia**. In **Somalia**, WFP and UNHCR will provide 1,530 mt of lifesaving food commodities to 30,000 refugees and asylum seekers over three months.

WFP is supporting governments in 35 country offices to provide **cash-based transfers** to mitigate the socio-economic impacts of COVID-19.



[Cities are the epicentre of coronavirus and rising hunger](#)

A new UN report says that urban hubs are the new “epicentre” of the pandemic, accounting for an estimated 90 percent of COVID-19 cases, leaving millions at risk of starvation.

WFP is also collaborating to support the cash-based transfer operations of other humanitarian actors by allowing them to transfer funds to beneficiaries using WFP's financial systems, platforms and established contracts. Within the first half of 2020, WFP onboarded 20 partners in nine countries. WFP is now supporting 26 partners in 13 countries, transferring a cumulative total of over US\$ 190 million to over 3 million beneficiaries. For example, in **Nepal**, WFP is supporting UN Women to provide cash transfers to 600 female-headed households from vulnerable and marginalized groups in response to COVID-19.

WFP is **adjusting operations with a "Do No Harm" approach**, for example, by suspending biometric authentication in high-risk operations, which could expose beneficiaries to increased risk of transmission. In Iraq, WFP is working with food shops in camps for displaced and refugee families to accept new "cashless" payments through mobile phones. This new solution — like MPESA, Apple or Android Pay — reduces the need for handling banknotes and helps avoid the need for people to move around more than necessary.

WFP is leveraging **innovation and technology** to continue providing efficient, effective, and transparent assistance. **Dalili**, WFP's smartphone application providing up-to-date information on food prices and fostering competition among shops, increased its use by 28 percent over the last three months and is rolled out in **Kenya, Jordan** and **Lebanon**. The app is also being used to provide updates to beneficiaries and spread key messages on social distancing.

Under the Global Plan, WFP is scaling up its enabling role to support the COVID-19 response. In **Gambia**, WFP's co-led Logistics and Safety COVID-19 sub-cluster plans to support the government to improve airport operations during flight arrivals and departures, including the development of SOPs to prevent the spread of COVID-19 at the airport. In **Malawi**, WFP's Social Behaviour Change Communication is focusing on enhancing awareness of COVID-19 at every service delivery point.



[Call to Action - Child malnutrition and COVID-19](#)

WFP, UNICEF, FAO, and WHO have issued an urgent call to action to governments, donors, private sector and partners to prioritize nutrition in their COVID-19 responses.

WFP has assisted nearly 7 million schoolchildren in 45 countries affected by school closures with take-home rations. Out of the 53 countries where school closures impacted WFP-implemented **school feeding programmes**, two have now fully reopened (**Niger** and **Laos**) and 13 have partially reopened, resuming some classes or in some regions only. Countries that have reopened canteens have implemented prevention measures such as distributing masks in **Cote d'Ivoire** and **Guinea** and providing soap and raising awareness about social distancing in **Benin**.



[Taking school meals home](#)

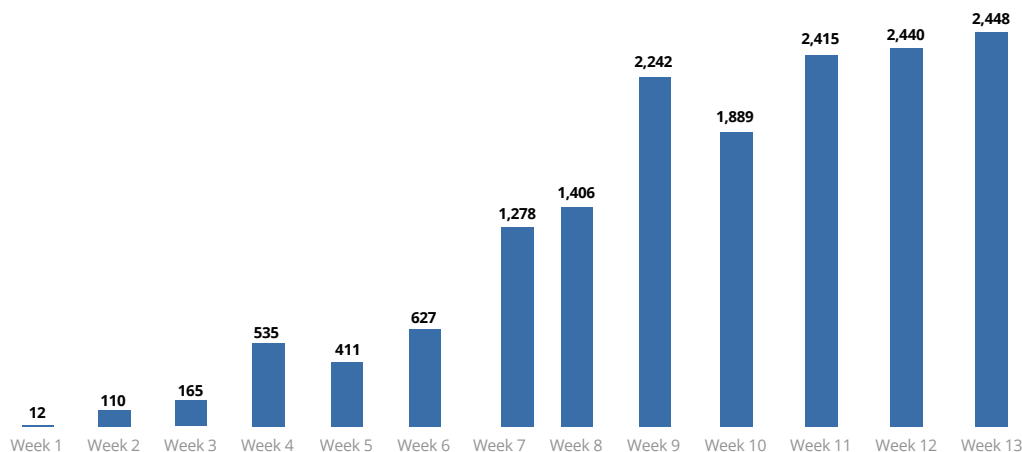
After coronavirus closed schools in the Republic of Congo, WFP and teachers got to work to ensure that children keep receiving their daily meal at home.

Common Services

Over **16,500 health and humanitarian personnel from 288 organizations** have now been transported to destinations throughout Africa, Asia, the Middle East and the Commonwealth of Independent States countries by WFP's air passenger service since its launch on 1 May. **53 destinations are now being served, with approximately 2,500 passengers using WFP's service per week.**

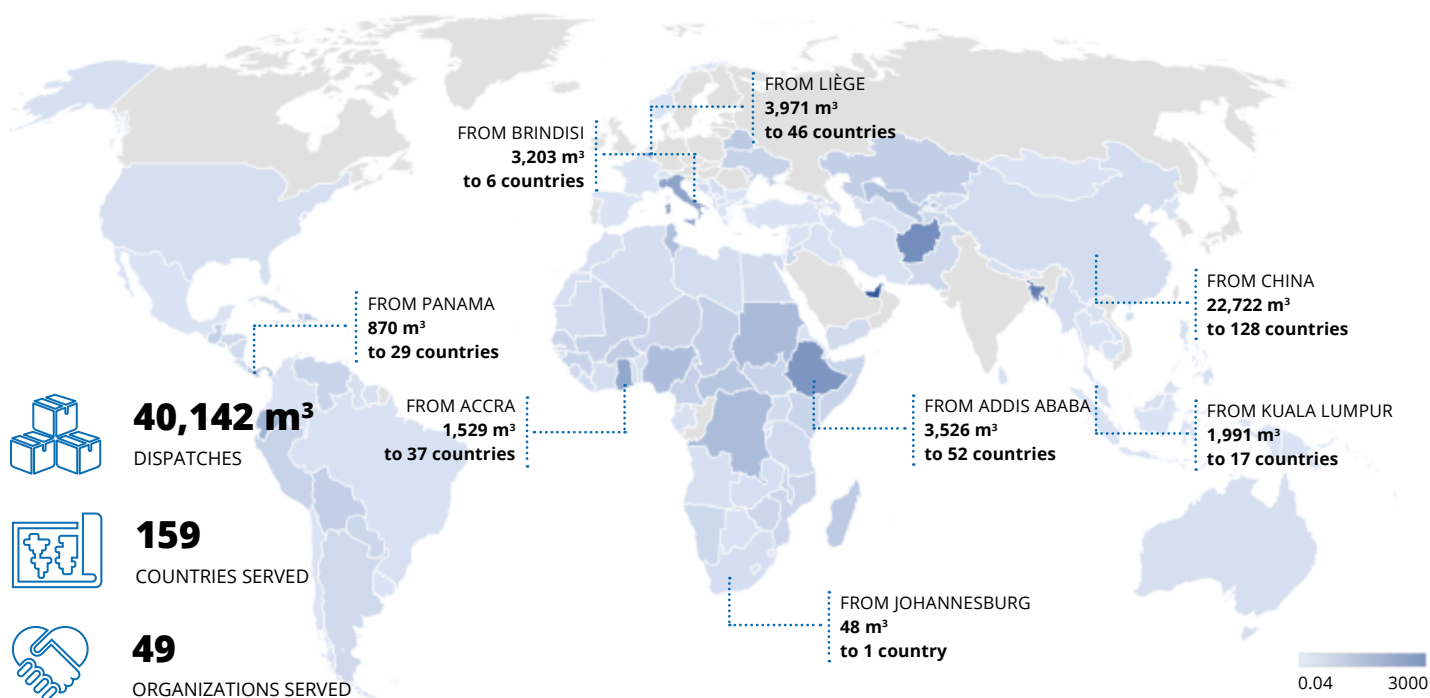
The first passenger flight in Latin America took place on 5 August between Bogota and Mexico City. Subject to passenger demand and further authorizations, routes are expected to expand soon to include **Peru, Cuba, Haiti, El Salvador, Honduras** and **Ecuador** among others. As WFP continues to open new routes based on need, it also monitors commercial activity and routes are discontinued as soon as safe and reliable commercial options become available.

Passengers transported per week by WFP's Common Services 1 May - 30 July 2020



WFP continues to ensure the flow of critical health and humanitarian cargo to affected areas through cargo transport services. Since late January, WFP has dispatched over **40,000 cubic metres of cargo to 159 countries** — 80 percent of the world — to support governments and health partners in their response to COVID-19, enough to fill more than 13 Olympic-sized swimming pools. Of this, **approximately 30,000 m³** was moved on a free-to-user basis to **136 countries** on behalf of **35 partners** via WFP's free-to-user cargo services as part of the Global Humanitarian Response Plan.

GLOBAL DISPATCHES THROUGH WFP HUBS (BILATERAL SERVICE PROVISION, UNHRD, FREE TO USER)



Demand for WFP's Common Services continues to grow week on week. June and July each saw twice as much cargo transported as in May, with enough cargo expected to require WFP transport over the coming weeks to fill 188 jumbo jets.



[Marking 100 days of the Addis Ababa Humanitarian Hub](#)

WFP's supply chain team is ensuring essential medical supplies are delivered throughout Africa, and the work is far from over.

WFP continues to play a key role as part of the UN Medevac Cell, **completing 35 medevacs** as of 5 August. **WFP has now embedded five aviation experts** dedicated to the COVID-19 related medevac cell which it co-leads with UNDOS in the Strategic Air Operations Centre in Brindisi.

WFP-led and co-led Clusters

Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC)

In the **Central African Republic**, the dedicated COVID-19 call centre set up by the ETC in Bangui was officially opened by the Ministry of Health on 15 July. Five operators started taking calls on the toll-free helpline on 16 July and are providing 24/7 support and advice as well as referring suspected cases to the Ministry of Health as part of the national response to the pandemic.

In **Libya**, between 18-25 July, 267 calls were answered by the ETS-managed call centre in Tripoli. Of these, 38 percent were related to humanitarian issues from refugees, IDPs and the non-displaced. Those calls were mostly related to cash (39 percent), food assistance (14 percent) and health (14 percent). Currently also being used as a national COVID-19 information helpline, the remaining 62 percent of calls were COVID-19-related, with callers asking for information on awareness messages, useful numbers, contacts and location of emergency centres.

In **Yemen**, the ETC is preparing to proceed with setting up two COVID-19 hotlines in Sana'a and Aden for the Ministry of Public Health and Population. The ETC has also extended connectivity services to a designated quarantine centre in Aden, while similar centres in Sana'a and Al Hudaydah are underway.

Global Food Security Cluster (gFSC)

In Cox's Bazar, **Bangladesh**, FSC coverage has been expanded to host community populations in all sub-districts. In June, through FSC partners, over 49,000 households received in-kind food rations, 4,575 received unconditional cash grants, and 21,500 children were given high energy biscuits as part of school feeding programmes. Cash support in these same sub-districts will scale up significantly in July and August.

In **Lebanon**, since mid-June FSC partners have resumed livelihoods and agricultural activities, adopting COVID-19 safety measures such as use of PPE (masks, gloves, disinfectant for equipment, transport, etc.) and hygiene facilities like hand washing stations. New ways of working include smaller scale projects with fewer participants and low-risk activities with social distancing.

FSC partners have completed distributions for the main planting season in **Nigeria**, despite chronic challenges of insecurity, restrictions in moving fertilizer especially in Borno and limited access to land. The FSC is also advocating for more awareness among communities by both government and non-government partners on unexploded ordinance to ensure safety while accessing gardens.

Logistics Cluster

The [Sudan operations webpage](#) is now live. Following a Gaps and Needs Analysis endorsed by partners, the Sudan Logistics Cluster team is now working on the Concept of Operations to support the response of its partners to COVID-19.

In **Nigeria**, the Logistics Sector is organising a dedicated humanitarian convoy to transport COVID-19 response and other life-saving commodities from Maiduguri to Damboa in the country's North-eastern Borno State.

A rapid Logistics Capacity Assessment has been published for [Dubai](#) to facilitate the global humanitarian response for COVID-19.

Regional Updates

Regional Bureau Bangkok

The number of COVID-19 cases in Asia-Pacific countries of WFP operations (including oversight countries) now exceeds 2.1 million, up from 954,000 one month ago. This makes the WFP **Regional Bureau for Asia-Pacific the region with the highest number of COVID-19 cases**. In response, **WFP is supporting governments to address the impacts of COVID-19** through three pillars: (i) national social protection systems; (ii) basic service delivery and food systems while continuing to provide food security and nutrition analysis, relief assistance; and (iii) humanitarian common services. COVID-19 is compounding the risks already faced in many parts of the region due to escalating conflict and climate concerns. Preparations for heavy rain and the upcoming winter are even more difficult than usual and funding is stretched for critical operations such as **Myanmar** and **Afghanistan**.

WFP activities in Asia-Pacific have been modified to continue lifesaving relief assistance while avoiding unnecessary exposure to risks of infection. WFP is also providing general food assistance to support governments' quarantine measures in **Myanmar, Laos** and **Nepal**. WFP has adjusted nutrition-specific and -sensitive interventions across the region to mitigate the impact of COVID-19.



[Mask making in Cox's Bazar leading a way to handle the pandemic](#)

WFP's Self-reliance Programme is training Rohingya women in Cox's Bazar to make reusable cloth masks for their community, providing an important source of income to help them survive the pandemic and keep food on the table each day.

In **Myanmar**, for instance, WFP is providing assistance to pregnant and nursing women who come to clinics in some peri-urban areas. In the **Philippines**, WFP supports the development of a social and behaviour change communication strategy on minimum dietary diversity and minimum acceptable diets in the context of COVID-19. In **Bangladesh**, as part of a broader inter-agency cooperation, WFP has engaged refugees in Cox's Bazar in mask production, with 131,000 masks produced so far. The masks are then distributed to the refugee population. While school closures across the region have meant a suspension of school feeding programmes, WFP has now reached over 700,000 children with adjusted modalities such as take-home rations and cash-based transfers in **Cambodia, Laos, Bangladesh, Afghanistan, Nepal, Myanmar** and **Sri Lanka**.

Significant scale-up is under way for Afghanistan and Bangladesh. 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. In **Bangladesh**, WFP will support 1.1 million more people through the development of urban safety nets in at-risk, low-income urban slums, and through the expansion of in-kind food and cash transfers to vulnerable host communities in Cox's Bazaar.

Regional Bureau Cairo

COVID-19 challenges and previous socio-economic shocks are **threatening food security** in all countries in the region, with particular concerns in **Lebanon, Sudan, Syria** and **Yemen**. [Over three million people in Southern Yemen will likely face worsening food insecurity levels](#) in the upcoming months as a result of a deteriorating economy, conflict and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In **Sudan** [over 9.6 million people will experience high food insecurity](#) through September 2020, driven by high inflation, a deteriorating economy and high food prices. Supply chains remain affected especially in countries affected by pre-existing crises, exacerbated by COVID-19. Issues such as fuel shortages in **Sudan, Lebanon, Yemen** and **Syria** pose further challenges to local economies and hamper humanitarian operations. WFP is therefore stepping up to support the humanitarian community through service provision to bridge gaps on the commercial market, where feasible and appropriate.

WFP continues to expand vital assistance through **cash-based transfers** to mitigate the effects of COVID-19. In Tunisia, cash assistance will be delivered over three months to 537 families whose children no longer benefit from school meals following the closure of schools. As part of the "Nutrition Awareness & Cash Based transfer" programme in **Palestine's** West Bank, vulnerable pregnant and nursing women and children under five years started receiving monthly cash-based transfer assistance.

**Regional Bureau
Cairo**

WFP continues its **Social Protection** support to vulnerable individuals affected by COVID-19. In Iran, WFP distributed 33,000 masks produced by refugees. In **Armenia**, following the recently established partnership with Caritas, over 360 children with disabilities and vulnerable children benefited from WFP's support.

Livelihoods and resilience-building activities continue to be affected by the pandemic, with several countries having suspended activities to limit contagion. With COVID-19-related restrictions starting to ease in the region, some activities have started to resume, often in different modality mechanisms. In Iraq, resilience activities have moved to a virtual classroom, which aims to reach over 3,000 students from refugee, IDP and host communities.

WFP continues to provide life-saving assistance through **nutrition programmes**. In **Egypt**, WFP is supporting the Ministry of Social Solidarity's COVID-19 response efforts in the form of unconditional cash assistance to about 40,000 households with children under two years of age. In **Palestine**, the "Nutrition Awareness & Cash based transfer" project has started through WhatsApp groups.

Remote monitoring continues in 11 countries in the region. In **Egypt**, for example, WFP is assessing COVID-19 impact through virtual focus group discussions with refugee community leaders to gather their feedback on the food assistance they receive.

**Regional Bureau
Dakar**

The COVID-19 pandemic and measures in place to contain the spread of COVID-19 continue to impact food security, nutrition and livelihoods across West and Central Africa. WFP continues to scale up its operations to reach 22.3 million people and respond to the increasing needs related to COVID-19, the approaching lean season and growing insecurity, through in-kind and cash-based transfers modalities. An analysis of the combined impact of food insecurity and COVID-19 on acute malnutrition in 19 countries of the region indicates that 15 million cases of acute malnutrition in children under five years of age are expected in 2020 in West and Central Africa. This represents a 20 percent increase from earlier estimates, in January 2020. UNICEF and WFP [warned about the deteriorating situation](#), calling for an urgent response.

The joint [Early warning analysis of acute food insecurity hotspots](#), from WFP and FAO shows that 8 of the 27 countries in which the population will face devastating levels of hunger in the coming months due to the fallout from the COVID-19 pandemic are in the RBD region: **Central African Republic (C.A.R.), Central Sahel (Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger), Cameroon, Liberia, Nigeria and Sierra Leone**.

As the COVID-19 crisis coincides with the peak of the lean season (June-August), when hunger and malnutrition are most severe, WFP strategy couples the responses in most countries. In **Burkina Faso**, WFP will ensure continued assistance for the upcoming lean season covering needs of over 1.13 million people. In **C.A.R.**, WFP's strategy includes strengthening food systems through the protection of livelihoods by scaling up Food Assistance for Assets and promoting Smallholder Agriculture Market Support. In **Mali**, the Government and WFP signed an agreement and WFP has started implementing its response.

Interventions in urban areas and directed to the most vulnerable population continue to be prioritized. In **C.A.R.**, WFP will provide cash-based transfers to more than 54,000 vulnerable people facing "crisis" levels of food insecurity (IPC Phase 3) affected by the pandemic in the suburbs of Bangui. In **Mauritania**, WFP continues to provide food assistance in Mbera camp to all refugees to prevent a deterioration of their food security and nutritional situation and to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

With the gradual easing of COVID-19 restrictions across the region, **primary schools have opened fully or partially in Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Mali, Niger, Senegal, Sierra Leone and C.A.R.**, enabling WFP to resume school feeding activities. For example in C.A.R., where the Country Office developed a strategy to strengthen lifesaving programmes and enhance social protection through school-based programmes.

Regional Bureau Johannesburg

With COVID-19 infections surging, **cash-strapped governments struggle to cope with growing hunger and the severe socioeconomic ramifications of the pandemic.** It is aggravating deep-rooted challenges underpinning protracted hunger in Southern Africa: high rates of population growth, poverty, inequality, malnutrition, HIV and environmental degradation.

Recent [analysis](#) by the Southern African Development Community (SADC) indicates that **44.8 million people in 13 of its 16 countries are food insecure**, but stresses that the number is likely to increase significantly as **COVID-19 progressively impacts the urban poor.** SADC's analysis confirms WFP's initial projections that as many as 52 million people in 12 operational countries will need food assistance in the next 12 months – nearly double a pre-COVID projection of 27.5 million. SADC echoed [warnings by humanitarian organisations](#) in the region about the potentially devastating effects of the pandemic on malnutrition rates and expects that acute malnutrition across the region could surge by 25 percent or more in 2020/21. This would mean that more than 8 million children will face acute malnutrition, 2.3 million of them requiring life-saving treatment for severe acute malnutrition.

WFP is scaling up and requires additional funding to respond and adjust to new complexities that the pandemic presents. In **Zimbabwe**, WFP projections indicate that by December 2020, the number of food insecure Zimbabweans will have surged by almost 50 percent to 8.6 million – a staggering 60 percent of the population – owing to the combined effects of drought, economic recession and the pandemic. WFP requires an additional 250 million is needed to support a rapidly expanding emergency operation for millions at-risk.

The situation is equally concerning for other major operations in Southern Africa. In the **Democratic Republic of Congo** WFP urgently needs more than US\$ 170 million to be able to support more than 8.5 million (up from an initially programmed 7.5 million) of its most vulnerable people. In **Mozambique**, WFP is providing take-home rations to school children and plans to assist up to 500,000 people in urban areas with up to three months of cash transfers (US\$ 46 a month per family), funds permitting. In **Zambia**, WFP has started providing cash assistance to an initial 180,000 food insecure people in poor areas of Lusaka and Kafue. Each household will receive Zambian Kwacha 400 (US\$ 22) monthly. Funds permitting, US\$ WFP will expand its response to Livingstone and Kitwe, reaching a total of 656,000 people.

In its capacity as global humanitarian logistics lead, WFP has set up a **regional staging centre in Johannesburg, South Africa, for aid cargo and personnel** – part of a worldwide network of dedicated COVID-19 air transport hubs. Traffic through the hub has increased substantially since it became operational in June. Passenger flights now serve Lilongwe, Maputo, Antananarivo and Addis Ababa, with Windhoek and Luanda to be added soon. More than 800 health and humanitarian workers have used the flights to reach places where they are needed.

Regional Bureau Nairobi

In East Africa, **the socio-economic impact of the pandemic, floods and locusts risk exacerbating prevailing food insecurity and undermine livelihoods and development gains made over the years.** Refugees, internally displaced persons and urban populations are of significant concern. **WFP estimates that 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 response, **WFP has adjusted existing programmes and worked closely with national governments to meet the increased food security needs of the vulnerable populations affected by the pandemic**, in particular newly food insecure urban populations in Nairobi, Addis Ababa, Juba, Mogadishu, Kampala and other cities across the region.

Further, WFP is also providing **food assistance to refugees in isolation and quarantine centres in Kenya, South Sudan, Djibouti and Ethiopia.** WFP has adjusted its distribution modalities and introduced additional measures to reduce the risk of COVID -19 transmission. These include double distributions of food in all countries in the region to minimize large gatherings, hand washing stations, prepacking of food and introduction of contactless verification mechanism.

In addition, WFP plans to assist an additional 3.9 million people in 2020 affected by the pandemic, bringing the total number of people assisted by WFP this year to 25 million. To meet their food and nutrition needs over the next six months, WFP requires over USD 1.1 billion.

Regional Bureau Nairobi

WFP has continued to sustain critical lifesaving assistance, scaling up to meet these new needs and supporting governments and partners in the national COVID-19 response plans. Leveraging on WFP's expertise in social protection, cash transfers, WFP has supported governments to expand existing and introduce new social protection and safety programs to meet the food and nutrition needs of the vulnerable populations. In the face of these unprecedented challenges, WFP has continued to support operations going across the region to continue to serve our beneficiaries. WFP launched the Addis Ababa Humanitarian Air Hub as one of the first global hubs for COVID-19 Response in close collaboration with the Government of **Ethiopia**.

Regional Bureau Panama

Latin America continues to be significantly affected by COVID-19 and the pandemic is expected to push more people into poverty and hunger, with estimates of up to 16 million people in Latin America and the Caribbean (a 269 percent increase compared to 2019) that could face severe food insecurity in 2020 due to the socioeconomic fallout of COVID-19 (in countries where WFP has operations).

WFP's Executive Director visited the region between 20 and 24 July, including Ecuador WFP operation and the Regional Bureau to support awareness raising efforts. During the visit to **Ecuador** and **Panama** the Executive Director was able to attend field visits, meetings with staff, and high-level officials, including Presidents and Ministers. The Executive Director also held virtual meetings with the Presidents and/or Ministers of **Colombia, Guatemala, Honduras, Peru** and **Cuba**, where WFP has operations. In Panama, the Executive Director inaugurated operations at the new UNHRD premises with the President and officials. The UN Humanitarian Response Depot with its 5,200 square meters will enable up to 20 humanitarian partners (NGOs and UN) and government agencies to store essentials items including medicines.

In addition to the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2020 hurricane season in the Atlantic is expected to be more active than usual, with a greater number of storms likely to hit the region. Responding to several emergencies at the same time may place an additional strain on governments and the already overburdened social protection systems. WFP is working with governments to strengthen their planning capacity, including through early warning systems and national social protection programmes. Discussions on preparedness are taking place to tackle additional challenges in the context of COVID-19.

In preparation for the hurricane season, WFP has emergency food stocks available in Cuba and Haiti. Operations continue to expand and adapt across the region. In **El Salvador**, assistance is ongoing for 57,000 people with partners and the Ministry of Government for particularly vulnerable people identified through the EFSA Assessment. The socioeconomic plan is under preparation, with five key pillars assigned to different agencies. WFP is leading pillar 2 (with UNICEF and UNESCO) on social protection. WFP is diversifying cash-based transfer payment instruments, including mobile money and PINs to be used at ATMs without opening bank accounts (cardless ATMs). Discussions with MasterCard on potential country activation are underway for **Colombia, Dominican Republic** and **Peru**. **Haiti** is a high concern country for WFP, being affected by economic shocks, socio-political unrest, and drought, the number of severely food insecure people could increase from 700,000 in 2019 to 1.6 million in 2020 due to the impact of COVID-19. WFP assisted 5,000 households last week.

In **Peru**, cash-based transfer implementation continues, and an agreement has been reached with UNHCR on data sharing. The country office is discussing an agreement for cash-based transfers with UNAIDS. In **Honduras**, the country office continues advocating on the importance of the School Feeding and a letter will be sent to government entities to reinforce the message. WFP continues working with 3,800 households in resilience and value chain, as small producers' production is connected to local markets, strengthening the capacity of rural credit banks to improve processes and expand access to savings, credit and productive investment services, as part of the chain. Moreover, WFP is supporting 12,000 children and 5,500 pregnant and nursing women with nutrition programmes. In Ecuador a COVID-19 impact assessment is ongoing, and WFP is coordinating with the government to assess the nutrition of school-aged children.

WFP **Colombia** continues implementing its two-track approach to ensure continuity of assistance and temporarily address new COVID-related needs. This consists in ensuring continuity of assistance to the most vulnerable, including migrants and identifying and prioritizing new COVID-19 related needs and temporarily addressing them.

**Regional Bureau
Panama**

Under its migration response, WFP plans to reach some 380,000 beneficiaries during the third quarter of 2020, including a significant scale-up of in-kind distributions. "[The social protection response to the COVID-19 pandemic in Latin America and the Caribbean](#)" report was produced by WFP in collaboration with Oxford Policy Management. It presents trends in the region using social protection systems, operational innovations to address the various challenges posed by the pandemic and lessons learned from this experience.