



WFP Lesotho Country Brief

Highlights

- January 2018 marked the commencement of the Transitional Interim Country Strategic Plan (T-ICSP).
- During January, WFP delivered food commodities for the first quarter of the year to 913 primary schools.
- Verification of children for the Blanket Supplementary Feeding Programme in Mokhotlong and Thaba-Tseka took place in January.
- Resilience building activities in Mohale's Hoek and Quthing continued; 1,613 people participated and will receive a cash incentive at the beginning of February.

WFP Country Strategy

	Total Requirements (in USD)	Total Received (in USD)	6 Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)*
Lesotho Transitional Interim Country Strategic Plan (18 months) January 2018-June 2019			
Overall	20.1 m	0	6.7 m
Strategic Outcome 1: Households in chronically food insecure areas can meet their basic food and nutrition requirements throughout the year, including in times of shock			
Strategic Result 1 Focus area: Access to food	3.9 m	0	1.3 m
Strategic Outcome 2: Children in food insecure areas have access to nutritious food throughout the year			
Strategic Result 1 Focus area: Access to food	13.3 m	0	4.4 m
Strategic Outcome 3: Targeted populations in prioritized districts have improved nutritional status in line with national targets by 2023			
Strategic Result 2 Focus area: End Malnutrition	2.9 m	0	1.0 m

*January 2018 – June 2018



Strategic Outcome 1: WFP's support aims to enhance the resilience of vulnerable communities facing climatic shocks, by developing and protecting key assets. WFP will work in partnership with government, funders and other stakeholders to empower communities to move out of dependency on food assistance, take control and lead in the creation or protection or rehabilitation of productive assets that increase their resilience to future food insecurity shocks. The selection of assets will be done through a community based participatory planning approach whereby communities will identify the appropriate types of assets that will address the root causes of the local food security challenges.

Strategic Outcome 2: During the Transitional-Interim Country Strategic Plan timeframe, WFP will operationally support a total of 190,000 learners in 900 primary schools in ten districts; and both operationally and financially, 50,000 preschool children in government registered Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) centers. WFP will also provide technical support to the Ministry of Education and Training (MoET) in the implementation and management of the national school feeding programme, in view of handing over the programme to MoET by 2020.

Strategic Outcome 3: In line with the 2016 national nutrition policy, WFP will support the Government to reduce stunting and to improve the nutritional status of acutely malnourished patients on antiretroviral treatment and directly observed treatment for tuberculosis. It will do so through food-based programmes and by strengthening the capacity of the Government to develop and implement effective nutrition programmes.

In Numbers

224,664 people in need of food assistance

22,250 people targeted for safety nets and the prevention of malnutrition

185,183 People Assisted
January 2018



Operational Updates

- Maize meal, beans, peas, vegetable oil, salt and sugar were delivered to 913 primary school in ten districts to feed 185,183 children during the first quarter of 2018.
- In preparation for the launch of activity three of the T-ICSP – blanket supplementary feeding for children aged 6-23 months – sensitisation and screening of eligible children was done in the districts of Mokhotlong and Thaba Tseka. A total of 5,222 children (2,696 boys, 2,526 girls) were registered. WFP worked with government counterparts and key community structures including village health workers, community councillors and chiefs.
- During the month of January, a total of 1,613 participants, representing 8,065 beneficiaries, in Mohale's Hoek and Quthing participated in resilience building activities that are aligned to the Ministry of Forestry, Range and Soil Conservation public works.
- WFP in collaboration with UNICEF, the EU and the World Bank supported the Government to host an awareness and consensus building workshop for stakeholders on shock responsive social protection.

Challenges

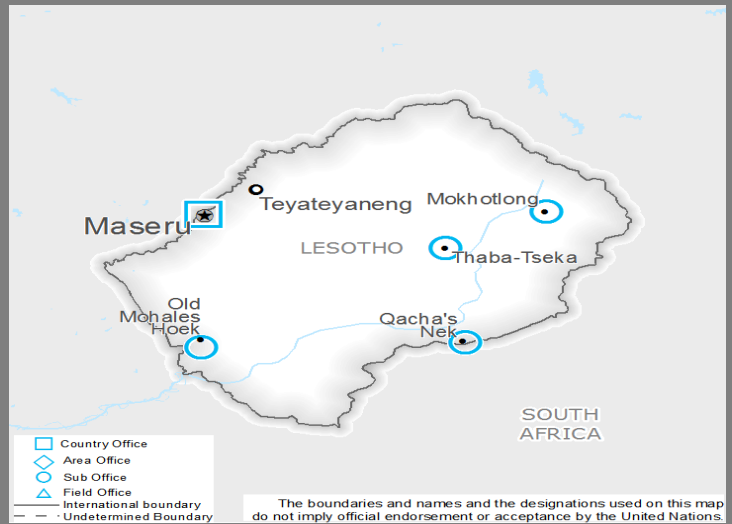
- WFP has not received any contributions for the T-ICSP). In January, WFP operated on the cut-off balances from last year's activities.
- Stunting and micronutrient deficiencies remain high in the country. Because of a declining trend in donor contributions, WFP is forced to reduce the number of targeted people and interventions are only prevention of stunting activities are only implemented Mokhotlong and Thaba-tseka.
- The Zero Hunger Strategic Review process encountered challenges and were delayed. These delays include the postponement of the launch of the report. This risks delaying the establishment of the Country Strategic Plan.

Vulnerability Assessment

The July 2017 Vulnerability Assessment and Analysis by the Lesotho Vulnerability Assessment Committee (LVAC) estimated the food insecure population at 224,664 people for the period of October 2017 to March 2018.

During the last quarter of 2017, Lesotho experienced poor temporal distribution of rainfall. The weather outlook for the first quarter of 2018 is for very hot and dry conditions to persist. There are growing concerns that the crop situation has been adversely affected by the late rainfall. One indicator is the volume of uncollected inputs still in stores showing that most farmers did not plant. The Ministry of Agriculture has also noted that most of the land is fallow but an assessment will confirm the situation.

Country Background



More than half (57 percent) of Lesotho's people live on less than one dollar per day. Lesotho's GDP stands at USD 2.3 billion while its national gross income per capita is USD 1,270 (World Bank). Revenue from the Southern African Customs Union (SACU) contributes a significant proportion to Lesotho's national budget. The Government allocates seven percent of its national budget to social protection programmes such as school feeding, pension for the elderly, child grants and public works.

The population's high vulnerability is exacerbated by recurring climatic hazards, including droughts, early frost and a low performing economy. Thus, 29 percent of people below the age of 35 years are unemployed. The country is also characterized by an extremely high HIV prevalence rate (24.6 percent) and should provide care for more than 250,000 orphaned children, most of whom lost their parents to AIDS. Life expectancy stands at 49 years.

Agriculture, which contributes seven percent to the GDP, is a major source of livelihood for 80 percent of the population living in rural areas.

WFP supports the Government's efforts to build the resilience of communities frequently affected by climatic hazards, with the view to stimulate agricultural production.

Population: **2.1 million**

2016 Human Development Index:
160 out of 188

Income Level: **Lower middle**

Chronic malnutrition: **33% of children between 6-59 months**

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