



# WFP India Country Brief

June 2018

## Operational Context

With 17.3 percent of the world's population and 23.4 percent of world's undernourished population, India bears a huge burden of food insecurity (more than 190 million people). Despite recent improvements in the nutritional status of children, the rates are well below acceptable levels. Micronutrient deficiencies are very high and India ranks 100 (out of 119 countries) on the 2017 Global Hunger Index. Recent economic growth, grain production, and existing food safety nets enable WFP to play a catalytic role.

WFP's work providing technical assistance for improved efficiency and nutritional effectiveness of the Government's food-based safety nets is aligned with the priorities of the National Food Security Act (NFSA 2013) and Sustainable Development Goals 2 & 17.

WFP has been present in India since 1963.



Population: **1.32 billion**

2016 Human Development Index: **131 out of 188**

Income Level: **Lower middle**

Chronic malnutrition: **38.7% of children between 6-59 months**

## Highlights

WFP provides technical assistance to Government of India (GoI) safety-nets reaching **800 million** people.

Through WFP advocacy for rice fortification the GoI declared its intention to fortify rice in all food based safety nets, starting with 115 districts.

WFP India Trust and Ericsson signed a two-year partnership agreement to develop ICT solutions that will bring efficiencies across the Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) in Odisha.

WFP India's operations are fully-funded for the next six months thanks to a strong partnership with the Government of India.

## Operational Updates

- In June, WFP's Regional Director visited India and had high-level strategic meetings with the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Food, the Vice-Chair of the NITI Aayog and Senior GOI officials.
- As part of reforms under the National Food Security Act 2013, the WFP-supported Central Programme Management Unit (CPMU) has developed training modules on best practices for District Supply Officers across India. Training has been completed for 19 states until June 2018.
- The Concept Note of the Country Strategic Plan was approved in April 2018 and the full CSP is posted for presentation at the November 2018 Executive Board.
- With a series of policy level meetings with senior Government officials, micronutrient fortification is now a key element under National Nutrition Mission (NNM). WFP drafted a plan for roll out of mandatory fortification in all food based safety nets. WFP has prepared a report on 'mainstreaming fortified rice in India, a costing analysis', widely circulated at national and sub-national levels. This resulted in the announcement by the Ministry of Food for roll out of fortified rice through NFSA schemes in the 115 "Aspirational districts" – these are backward districts identified by the NITI Aayog for special interventions.
- In Dhenkanal district of Odisha, WFP reached 129,485 school children aged 6-14 years by fortifying the school meals provided by the government with minerals and vitamins. WFP conducted 310 street plays, and other communication activities. The end line evaluation is scheduled for August-September 2018. Model kitchens in two schools in Dhenkanal were inaugurated on 03 July.
- WFP's support to Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) transformation in Odisha state will augment with Ericsson funding. WFP will develop customised ICT solutions for Data Analytics and Supply Chain management helping the Government to ensure food security of nearly 30 million beneficiaries.

Main Photo

Credit: WFP  
Caption: WFP supports the Government in its school feeding programme in Gajapati, Odisha

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- On 03 June, the Minister of Food launched the Direct Benefits Transfer (DBT) handbook prepared with support from WFP. The handbook is a guide/tool for the State Governments wishing to implement cash based transfers.
- WFP ceased all support to TPDS in Kerala. End-to-end computerization is covering the entire state and the Government of Kerala (GoK) will drive further reforms on its own.
- In Kerala, WFP is piloting the reduction of micronutrient malnutrition among children below three years of age by fortifying Take-Home Rations (THR) provided through the Integrated Child Development Services. Under WFP's pilot project in Wayanad, a women's group has been trained to produce fortified THR reaching 3,516 children each month. The endline evaluation for the project starts in July. Beginning in August, the GoK will completely take-over and scale-up the project in the entire district of Wayanad and later in all districts of Kerala using state resources.
- As part of WFP's partnership with the Government of Uttar Pradesh (GoUP), the government process to acquire and deploy electronic point of sale devices for rural fair price shops is supported.
- WFP supports the Department of Basic Education, Government of Uttar Pradesh in piloting mid-day meal fortification in Varanasi district. The micronutrient composition and project evaluation methodology are approved by the Technical Advisory Group Committee. Hiring of partners is currently in process. A children's design competition was successfully conducted in May.
- Work towards development of a National Food Security Atlas is progressing well with the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation. Odisha's Food Security Atlas draft is being reviewed by experts and is likely to be released in August.

## Challenges

- Capacity Development related initiatives require stability in government postings to WFP's partnership projects. Frequent transfers among government officials linked to WFP's projects have posed challenges to the project timelines.
- The challenging funding environment also poses difficulties for the achievement of WFP's objectives. Thus, with limited funding from traditional donors, funding has to be sourced from the Government and the Indian private sector.

## Donors

Government of India, Yum! TECK and Sodexo, General Mills



## WFP India Activities

The efficiency of food based national safety-nets is improved to support the efforts of the Government of India to deliver Zero Hunger and National Food Security Act targets.

- Improvement of TPDS programme through technological solutions and improved service delivery systems.
- Piloting Best Practice Model of the TPDS Food Basket.
- Piloting the use of ePOS (Biometric enabled authentication) for Public Distribution System in urban areas

### SO 1

WFP collaborates with the states of Odisha, Kerala and Uttar Pradesh to scale up reforms, building on the experiences of an earlier pilot and a nationwide study undertaken to develop "best practice solutions" for improved efficiency. Through these initiatives, WFP is indirectly reaching 215.8 million people assisted by the NFSA in the states of Kerala, Odisha and Uttar Pradesh.

The food baskets of National Safety-nets are improved to enhance their nutritional impact

- Support to improve the Food Supply Chain of the Integrated Child Development Services
- Study of ICDS Take Home Ration for First 1,000 days Initiative and Advocate for Models for Piloting Advocate for Scaling-up Fortification Initiatives and diet diversification to reduce anaemia among children
- Advocating for the linkages between health and nutrition

### SO 2

WFP supports various pilot initiatives to demonstrate operational models that can deliver impact at scale in the government feeding programme. These projects are being implemented in both Kerala and Odisha with potential for state-wide scale-up while policy advocacy is conducted at the national level with relevant government stakeholders.

The Government's system for food security analysis, monitoring performance against agreed targets and undertaking needs-based research is made more effective.

- Partnering with governments to improve systems for food security analysis and monitoring through Food Security Atlases at National and state level
- Strengthening M&E systems for Zero Hunger
- Support to SDG roll-out

### SO 3

Collaboration with the Ministry of Statistics and programme implementation at the national level and with the Department of Planning and Convergence in Odisha will facilitate the institutionalization of such analysis and its use for decision-making.

The Contribution of the Government of India to global food and nutrition security is enhanced through increased knowledge sharing and South-South Cooperation.

- Contribute to knowledge sharing within and outside India through establishing a Centre of Excellence (CENEX)

### SO 4

Following the signing of a letter of intent to establish a Centre of Excellence in India, and a subsequent visit to the Brazil Centre of Excellence by a high level government delegation, a proposal for establishing such a centre in India was drawn up and submitted. However, this may not be pursued by the government at this point in time.