



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES

WFP Lesotho Country Brief October 2018



Operational Context

More than half (57%) of Lesotho population live on less than one dollar per day. Lesotho's GDP stands at USD 2.3 billion while its national GDI 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 7% of its national budget to social protection programmes such as school meals, 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% of people below the age of 35 years are unemployed. The country is also characterized by an extremely high HIV prevalence rate (24.6 %) 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 7% of GDP, is a major source of livelihood for 80% 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.

WFP has been present in Lesotho since 1962.



Population: **2.1 million**

2017 Human Development Index: **159 out of 189**

Income Level: **Lower middle**

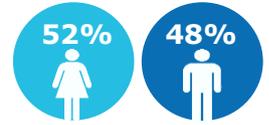
Chronic malnutrition: **33% of children between 6-59 months**

In Numbers

785mt of food assistance distributed

US\$ 5.4 m six months (November 2018 - April 2019) net funding requirements, representing 29% of total

276,250 people targeted in 2018



Operational Updates

- The World Food Programme and the Ministry of Education and Training attended the 20th Global Child Nutrition Forum in Tunisia which took place on 21- 25 October 2018. The forum was organized by the Global Child Nutrition Foundation (GCNF) and WFP's Centre of Excellence against Hunger in partnership with the Government of Tunisia. The theme of the forum was National School Meals Programs for Food and Nutrition Security and Multiple Social Benefits. This forum is a learning exchange and technical assistance conference held annually since 1997, to support countries in the development and implementation of sustainable school feeding programmes. The forum encourages open dialogue and the sharing of experiences, best practices, lessons, challenges, and options to sustainably support nutritious, home-grown school meal programmes.
- Lesotho hosted the high-level Nutrition Forum on 3 - 4 October 2018, which was attended by heads of state, UN Agencies, the Government as well as Nutrition Experts from the Southern African countries. The event was graced by His Majesty King Letsie III in his capacity as the African Union Nutrition Champion and the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) Special Ambassador for nutrition. The objective of the forum was to discuss Early childhood nutrition in Southern Africa and how it could be addressed as it affected the health and education of children. During this forum, governments and development partners were recommended to invest in nutrition programmes to ensure that issues of food and nutrition are promoted for a healthier living of all people, to combat stunting and services that will help improve the nutrition status of people in Southern Africa. This forum included a technical meeting of nutrition experts from Southern Africa countries, whilst the heads of state and government convened to share experiences and made commitments to promote nutrition challenges in their respective countries.

Interim Country Strategic Plan (Jan 2018- June 2019)

Total Requirement (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)	Six Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
19.9 m	8.4 m	5.4m

Strategic Result 1: Everyone has access to food

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.
Focus area: Resilience Building

- Activities:**
- Strengthen the resilience of communities in shock prone areas

Strategic Result 2: Everyone has access to food

Strategic Outcome 2: Children in food insecure areas have access to nutritious food throughout the year
Focus area: Root causes

- Activities:**
- Provide capacity strengthening and implementation support to governmental bodies responsible for the national school meals programme

Strategic Result 3: End Malnutrition

Strategic Outcome 3: Targeted populations in prioritized districts have improved nutritional status in line with national targets by 2023
Focus area: Root causes

- Activities:**
- Provide chronic malnutrition prevention services to at risk populations in targeted areas
 - Provide cash and/or food transfers to households of malnourished ART and TB DOT clients

- Thirty Early Childhood Care and Development Centres (ECCD) in Thaba-Tseka district received pamphlets on how to prepare Super Cereal Plus. These pamphlets were developed by WFP’s nutrition team in Lesotho and were distributed to help assist the caregivers to ensure that Super Cereal Plus is prepared appropriately for maximum benefit to ECCD learners.
- WFP in Lesotho is engaged in the targeting exercise for the lean season Food for Assets (FFA) intervention. Targeting of the beneficiaries is underway in Mohale’s Hoek and Quthing districts which are in phase 3 of the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC). The number of participants and beneficiaries for FFA lean season support will be shared after targeting has been completed on 9 November.

Monitoring

- In October, 35 schools, 7 Early Child Care and Development Centres and 28 primary schools were monitored jointly by the Ministry of Education and Training (MoET) and the World Food Programme in the districts of Thaba-Tseka, Berea, Leribe, Maseru and Qacha’s Nek. It was observed that the main challenge in the schools is theft of food commodities, seemingly by some community members and teachers. These cases have been handed over to the Ministry of Police and Public Safety (MoPP). WFP, MoET, MoPP and local councillors will conduct community sensitization to address this issue. Furthermore, WFP and MoET will steer the community school feeding committees to take up patrolling at schools in 2019.
- Public works, or *Fato-Fato*, is a shock responsive government programme for which WFP provides technical support, non-food items and agricultural hand tools, while the Ministry of Forestry, Range and Soil Conservation (MoFRSC) caters for the remuneration of participants. *Fato-Fato* is being piloted in three districts: Maseru at Lekhobanyane site, in Berea at Tsereoane site, and in Butha Buthe at Likhutlong site. The beneficiaries are engaged on a three-month rotational basis. WFP has prepared to conduct baseline assessment of incoming beneficiaries and Post Distribution Monitoring (PDM) for outgoing beneficiaries of this programme. The two surveys will run concurrently in November.

Challenges

- WFP in Lesotho continues to face funding challenges especially for SO1, SO3 and SO2 (component 2 of Activity 2 - pre-primary schools). Since May 2018, WFP has suspended cash transfers to a total of 8,000 beneficiaries targeted under resilience building due to a lack of funds. Operations under Activity 3 and 4 have been suspended since March this year for the same reasons. Activity 2 which comprises pre-primary and primary school children is only funded for the latter, whilst school meals for pre-primary still face funding constraints leaving 50,000 children under the programme without meals at school.

Donors

WFP’s main donor in Lesotho in 2018 is the Government of Lesotho for the primary school meals programme.