



World Food Programme

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# WFP Bhutan Country Brief January 2019



## Operational Context

Bhutan is classified as a lower middle-income country and ranks 132 out of 188 countries in the 2014 Human Development Index with an HDI index of 0.607.

National poverty rate has been reduced from 23 percent in 2007 to 8.2 percent in 2017, as measured by the international poverty line of USD 1.90 per person per day (PPP).

Although people's overall nutritional status has improved in general, health problems related to a lack of nutritional and balanced diets remain a challenge, including micronutrient deficiencies.

Bhutan remains highly vulnerable to earthquakes but lacks the necessary data information systems, response plans and coordination systems to adequately prepare for emergencies.



Population: **0.73 million**

2015 Human Development Index: **132 out of 188**

Income Level: **Lower middle**

Chronic malnutrition: **21.2% of children between 6-59 months**

## In Numbers

WFP began implementing its new Country Strategic Plan in January, focusing on work to strengthen the capacity of the Royal Government of Bhutan to improve food security and nutrition.

WFP Bhutan's operations are fully funded for the first 6 months of 2019, thanks to the generous contributions of our partners.

## Operational Updates

- Starting from January 2019, WFP is no more providing direct food assistance to Bhutan. Instead WFP support is geared more towards enabling environment and capacity development rather than service delivery.
- The first draft of a joint RGoB / UN Roadmap for Disaster Risk Management in Bhutan has been prepared. This will form the basis of a coordinated and effective response to potential disasters by detailing priority actions, responsibilities and budget.
- Together with the Ministry of Education, WFP rolled out the school based online digital monitoring and reporting system at the district level.
- Together with other UN agencies, WFP finalized the 2019 Annual UN Work Plan, agreed with the Government.
- There were two missions on Rice fortification – 1) to carry out desk analysis of micronutrient deficiency situation among the school children to inform development of standards for fortified rice; 2) WFP regional advisor to assess the rice fortification plan and help in prioritization of activities to be implemented in 2019.
- As a part of an integrated approach pilot, kitchen equipment were procured to be delivered to the 6 integrated approach pilot schools as part of the initiative to upgrade kitchen standards for better functionality ensuring safe cooking environment and meals.
- For the first time, the School Health and Nutrition Division of the Ministry of Education organized the training by themselves incorporating integrated approach training methodology into the regular trainings to the school principals, school feeding focal points and school health coordinators.

**Contact info:** Svante Helms ([Svante.helms@wfp.org](mailto:Svante.helms@wfp.org))

**Country Director:** Svante Helms

Further information: [www.wfp.org/countries/Bhutan](http://www.wfp.org/countries/Bhutan)

## WFP Bhutan Strategy

### Country Strategic Plan 2019 – 2023

Total Requirement (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)	Feb-Jul Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
8.9 m	1.3 m	0.0 m

#### Strategic Result 1: Everyone has access to food

**Strategic Outcome 1:** School-age children, women and vulnerable groups in Bhutan have improved nutrition in line with national targets by 2023

**Focus area:** Root Causes

**Activities:**

- Assist the Government in its transition to a national school nutrition programme based on an integrated approach to school feeding that connects school feeding with nutrition education, school health and school agriculture and embeds gender across all activities, strengthened supply chains and school nutrition infrastructure optimization.
- Provide technical assistance to the Government and the national food production and trade sectors to ensure that sound policies are in place and ensure quality and safety of fortified foods, especially rice, throughout their supply chains.

#### Strategic Result 5: Countries have strengthened capacities to implement the SDGs

**Strategic Outcome 2:** Government has strengthened capability to address food security and nutrition challenges and prepare for and respond to crises, including those resulting from climate change, by 2023.

**Focus area:** Root Causes

**Activities:**

- Provide the Government with gender-informed and vulnerability-focused capacity strengthening relevant to its management of national emergency resources, development, enhancement and testing of national emergency response plans and coordination systems, through WFP's leadership of the emergency logistics and communications sectoral working group.

## Donors

Australia, Canada, Private Sector (River Star Foundation, JAWFP)

## Monitoring

- Regular field monitoring of school feeding is carried out by staff in the School Health and Nutrition Division for both WFP as well as government-supported feeding schools.
- Training has started for national roll-out of a real-time, integrated school-based nutrition, health and education monitoring and reporting system, using the Mobile Data Collection and Analytics (MDCA) platform.

## Challenges

- Lack of technical capacity within the country has led to a delay in implementing some of the capacity development activities. Identifying qualified local consultants continues to be a bottleneck for programme execution.