



World Food Programme

SAVING
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WFP Tajikistan Country Brief February 2019

Operational Context

Tajikistan is a landlocked, low-income and food-deficit country. The mountainous landscape confines arable land to just 7 percent of the country's surface and poses enormous food security challenges during the winter period. The country is the poorest in the Commonwealth of Independent States, with 29.5 percent of the population living in poverty and 14 percent living in extreme poverty (TajStat, 2017).

Malnutrition rates remain the highest in Central Asia, and the number of undernourished people has remained stagnant. Tajikistan faces different environmental challenges, and is vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, which has further negatively affected food security and livelihoods of vulnerable communities.

The Government has identified food security and access to quality nutrition as one of its development priorities.

WFP has been present in Tajikistan since 1993. Moving away from crisis assistance, WFP is focusing its strategy on supporting national social protection and safety nets, nutrition, and resilience-building as well as disaster risk reduction. WFP has been operating under the Transitional Interim Country Strategic Plan (TICSP) since January 2018, and is in the process of preparing the Country Strategic Plan (CSP), which is expected to be approved by mid-2019.



Population: **8.8 million**

2018 Human Development Index:
127 out of 188

Income Level: **Low**

Chronic malnutrition: **18% of
children between 0-59 months**

In Numbers

416,823 people assisted
in February 2019



905 mt of food assistance distributed

US\$ 26,335 cash-based transfers made

Operational Updates

- In February, the new WFP Representative/Country Director in Tajikistan met the Minister of Education and Science of Tajikistan with the view of strengthening the partnerships in education sector, especially concerning School Feeding programmes. The partners updated each other on ongoing operational affairs of the School Meals Programme and discussed institutional capacity strengthening of the Ministry. It was agreed to establish a SF Unit under the Ministry.
- Under pilot initiatives of an improved School Feeding model, furniture was provided to canteens of 50 schools that are currently receiving food assistance from WFP.
- WFP expanded the Cash-based Transfer modality to Rasht Valley while initiating asset creation and livelihood activities. Through Food-Assistance-for-Assets (FFA) activities, WFP will support two communities in rehabilitating irrigation facilities. The 15 km long irrigation facilities will help to improve irrigation of above 1,000 ha of land belonging to poor farmers.
- The Annual Plan for joint activities of the Ministry of Health and Social Protection of Population of the Republic of Tajikistan and World Food Programme for 2019 was bilaterally approved in February. The plan covers activities on prevention and treatment of moderate acute malnutrition. Within the framework of this Plan, WFP will also conduct a Barrier Analysis Survey and expand the implementation of SCOPE (WFP's beneficiary identity and benefit management system) Conditional-On-Demand-Assistance (CODA) in the targeted districts of Khatlon and Sughd regions.

Contact info: WFP.Dushanbe@wfp.org
Country Director: Alberto Correia Mendes
Further information: www.wfp.org/countries/tajikistan

Photo Caption: The Members of the Inter-Ministerial Coordination Council on School Meals are monitoring School Feeding Programme in Rasht Valley /Photo by: Murodali Nurov

Transitional Interim Country Strategic Plan (Jan 2018 – June 2019)

| Total Requirements (in USD) | Allocated Contributions (in USD) |
|--------------------------------|---|
| 28.3 m | 19.3 m |
| 2019 Requirements (in USD)* | Six-Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD) (March -August)** |
| 18.4 m | 0 m *** |

*Includes requirements for 2019 under TJ01 and TJ02

** Though the TICSP ends in June 2019, the net funding requirements includes estimated needs for August as well.

*** The overall Net Funding Requirements shows the activities as fully funded. However, the funding is mainly allocated to school feeding Capacity Strengthening component. Additional resources are needed to preposition food for SMP in August 2019.

Strategic Result 1: Everyone has access to food

Strategic Outcome 1: Primary school children in targeted districts and people with special health needs meet their basic food requirements by 2021.

Focus area: Root causes of food insecurity

Activities:

- Implement the nutrition-sensitive school meals programme in food insecure areas and test novel approaches like home-grown school feeding. Meanwhile national authorities' capacity will be strengthened to take over and expand the current WFP-supported school meals programme into a sustainable, country-owned programme with educational, social protection and nutritional objectives.
- Provide food assistance to TB patients registered under the DOTS programme and their families in partnership with the Ministry of Health and Social Protection to build capacity.

Strategic Result 2: No one suffers from malnutrition

Strategic Outcome 2: Children, pregnant and lactating women and girls in districts with high malnutrition rates have improved nutritional status in line with national standards by 2019.

Focus area: Root Causes

Activities:

- Treat moderate acute malnutrition for children 6-59 months in pilot districts while building Government capacity to address nutrition gaps.
- Implement Social and Behavioural Change Communication (SBCC) activities related to nutrition.

Strategic Result 4: Food systems are sustainable

Strategic Outcome 3: Vulnerable communities in areas exposed to recurrent shocks increase their resilience by 2019.

Focus area: Resilience Building

Activities:

- Asset creation and livelihood activities to support resilience to natural and man-made shocks and stressors (in kind, cash-based transfers).
- Assessment, disaster risk reduction, emergency preparedness, and response activities to improve capacity and readiness of institutions and civil society.

Monitoring

- During February 2019, WFP carried out monitoring visits to 184 project sites out of 224 planned. WFP sub-offices in Sughd, Rasht and GBAO cancelled 40 visits to schools and FFA project sites, mainly due to difficult road conditions in remote districts.
- No beneficiary feedback was received for the month of February in any project areas. WFP has provided the relevant WFP office phone numbers to its beneficiaries as part of the feedback mechanism.

Challenges

- Since 2012, WFP has been forced to reduce the daily food entitlement to children under the School Feeding Programme due to funding constraints. For the 2018/19 school year, WFP has continued the distribution of 61 percent of planned ration.
- WFP has 40 mt of food commodities allocated for emergency response as a preparedness measure, which is sufficient to support 1,500 people over a period of two months. WFP requires more funding to better prepare for a larger emergency response.

Resourcing

- Despite the overall net funding requirement for the next six months showing that the TICSP is currently fully funded, WFP Tajikistan still requires USD 2.0 million to preposition food in August 2019 for the School Feeding Activity. The allocation of USD 2 million is urgently required to continue the School Feeding implementation after August 2019, considering that the food procurement process can require up to 90 days.

Key meetings of the month

- As part of WFP Tajikistan's efforts to expand the donor base and introduce WFP activities in-country, WFP Representative/Country Director Mr. Alberto Correia Mendes held meetings with the Russian and Japan Ambassadors in Tajikistan. The WFP plan in the CSP 2019-2024 framework was presented and joint efforts towards sustainability of activities were discussed.
- In February, a consultation was held with the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade on the publication of the 2018 Vulnerability and Resilience Atlas for Tajikistan. The Parties discussed the possibility for ownership of this product by the Ministry in the future.

Donors

Russian Federation, Private Donors (the Earth Group, Japan Association for WFP); USA; UN Peacebuilding Fund