



WFP DPR Korea Country Brief March 2019

World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES



Operational Context

DPR Korea continues to face a wide range of food security and nutrition challenges despite the fact that for several years, the country's food supply has been remarkably stable when compared with the famine years of the 1990s and early 2000s.

Food insecurity and malnutrition are widespread. An estimated 11 million people – more than 40 percent of the population – are undernourished. Low mechanization, limited arable land, lack of quality inputs and fertilizers hamper agriculture productivity. Recurrent natural disasters also have a major impact on agricultural production and food security. The heat wave and flooding of 2018 have resulted in a poor harvest and significant reduction in grain balance, according to the Government.

Although the 2017 Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) shows improvements in national rates of chronic malnutrition, there are clear and marked disparities between rural and urban areas, with five provinces having above-average stunting rates, some as high as 40 percent. WFP has been present in DPR Korea since 1995.



Population: **25 million**

Life expectancy: **71.6 years**

Income Level: **Low**

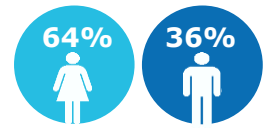
Chronic malnutrition: **19 % of children between 6-59 months (MICS 2017)**

In Numbers

US\$ 7.79 million April – September
Net Funding Requirements

1,042 mt of food distributed in February 2019

448,797 people assisted
in March 2019



Operational Updates

- In March 2019, WFP assisted 449,000 people across DPR Korea, distributing 1,042 mt of fortified foods. That includes nutrition assistance for 6,300 children in boarding schools, 325,000 in nurseries, 3,000 people in paediatric wards/hospitals, and 114,500 pregnant and breastfeeding women. WFP's nutritional support is focused on areas of the country where food and nutrition security are fragile, and reaches 60 counties across nine provinces every month.
- A joint WFP-FAO Rapid Food Security Assessment is underway in March/April in DPR Korea. The assessment will provide an independent analysis of the food security situation in the country. It follows concerns about harvests reportedly affected by floods and drought in 2018, and a subsequent appeal for support by the Government. Results are expected in late April/early May and will assist in determining the way forward.
- WFP is strengthening its collaboration with the Ministry of Public Health through its work with the Tuberculosis (TB) Department. Under its Interim Country Strategic Plan, WFP is planning to provide nutrition assistance to women and men, boys and girls, diagnosed with TB during their treatment in and outside hospitals. WFP coordinates its nutrition/health-related activities with WHO.
- A gender mission from WFP's Regional Bureau for Asia & the Pacific visited DPR Korea in March 2019. The mission included meeting with WFP national and international staff, field visits, meeting with the Government, meeting with the international community including the Resident Coordinator, UN agencies, NGOs and donors. Mission results will support WFP programming in DPR Korea.

Contact info: James Belgrave James.Belgrave@wfp.org
Country Director: Praveen Agrawal
Further information:
www.wfp.org/countries/korea-democratic-peoples-republic

Photo Caption: WFP assessment team visiting cooperative farm in South Hwanghae Province. WFP/James Belgrave

WFP Country Strategy

Interim Country Strategic Plan (2019-2021)		
Total ICSP Requirements (in US\$)	Confirmed funding (in US\$) including carry-over from 2018	Apr-Sep Net Funding Requirements (in US\$)
161.07 m	21.4 m	7.79 m

Strategic Result 1: Everyone has access to food

Strategic Outcome 1: Children under 7, pregnant and breastfeeding women and girls, and tuberculosis patients in targeted counties have stabilized or improved nutrition, particularly micronutrient status, by 2025.
Focus area: *Nutrition*

Activities: Provide nutrition assistance to children under 7, pregnant and breastfeeding women and girls (PLWG) and TB patients, and strengthen the capacity of local food processors

Strategic Result 1: Everyone has access to food

Strategic Outcome 2: People vulnerable to disasters and food insecurity in targeted counties are able to meet their food and nutrition needs during and after shocks and stresses by 2021.
Focus area: *Resilience Building*

Activities: Provide conditional gender-responsive resilience-building support for disaster-prone communities in WFP-targeted areas.

Strategic Result 1: Everyone has access to food

Strategic Outcome 3: Crisis-affected people have access to food all year.
Focus area: *Crisis Response*

Activities: Provide emergency in-kind food assistance to crisis-affected people in the event of humanitarian crises.

Operational Overview

WFP's humanitarian operations in DPR Korea target food- and nutrition-insecure communities every month with nutritional assistance and livelihood support across nine provinces. WFP's work focuses on some of the most vulnerable children under 5, as well as pregnant and breastfeeding women in areas outside the capital where food and nutrition security is fragile.

WFP's nutrition programme assists vulnerable women and children with fortified cereal and biscuits with micronutrients, fats and proteins crucial for healthy growth. This assistance is channelled through public institutions such as nurseries, hospitals, paediatric wards and boarding schools. Fortified food is produced at 11 WFP-supported factories.

DPR Korea is vulnerable to natural disasters, such as drought, heatwaves and flooding, which affect agricultural production and livelihoods. WFP's food-assistance-for-assets (FFA) strategy works to mitigate the impact of natural disasters, rehabilitate productive rural assets and strengthen food security for rural vulnerable communities.

Donors

WFP's resource partners in DPR Korea include Canada, France, Liechtenstein, the Russian Federation, Sweden, Switzerland, and the UN's Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF).

Challenges

- Disruption to banking channels limit access to cash for operations. To mitigate its impact, WFP minimizes the amount of in-country expenditure and procures all required food/non-food commodities internationally.
- Unintended impacts of sanctions include the breakdown of supply chains, causing delays in the transportation of vital goods into country and hampering the production and distribution of fortified foods. Lead times for international procurement and shipping can last up to six months, with ship owners reluctant to send vessels to DPR Korea because of lengthy cargo inspections and fines.
- The operating environment makes the collection of data on vulnerability and humanitarian needs extremely challenging. WFP works closely with the UN Resident Coordinator, the Humanitarian Country Team, Sector Working Groups, and UN agencies to share information and collect data from the most valid and reliable sources.

Monitoring

- Monitoring missions continued throughout March. WFP carried out three monitoring missions for the nutrition programme that included households and nursery visits, and meetings with county officials and institutions' staff. Eight FFA sites were visited as part of the pre-assessment monitoring for new projects to start in April 2019. Field visits were held also by the gender mission and WFP programme officers.

Partnerships

- On 17 March 2019, WFP facilitated a Swiss donor field mission to South Pyongan province, including Assistant State Secretary, Swiss Ambassador designate and officials from SDC. The mission visited a nursery and two households during their field visit and witnessed the nutrition assistance provided by WFP to the pregnant and breastfeeding women and children under 5.
- The [2019 Humanitarian Needs and Priorities](#), identified by the DPR Korea UN Country Team, were launched in March, seeking US\$120 million, of which WFP's needs of US\$53 million represent 45 percent.
- WFP co-chairs the Food Security and Agriculture Sector Working Group with FAO and the Nutrition Sector Working Group with UNICEF. The Sectors include humanitarian actors such as UN, resident and non-resident NGOs, OCHA representative and donors.
- A Nutrition Sector Working Group meeting was held on 7 March 2019 which was co-lead by WFP and UNICEF. Partners discussed the crop production shortfall (and linkages with the Food Security Sector), nutrition assistance for TB patients, and nutrition strategy.