

SAVING
LIVES
CHANGING
LIVES



20 Years of WFP Operations in Timor-Leste



September 2019

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Foreword

Dr. José Ramos-Horta

Timor-Leste is committed to the elimination of hunger and malnutrition in all its form. This is an imperative for ethical, political economic and social reasons.

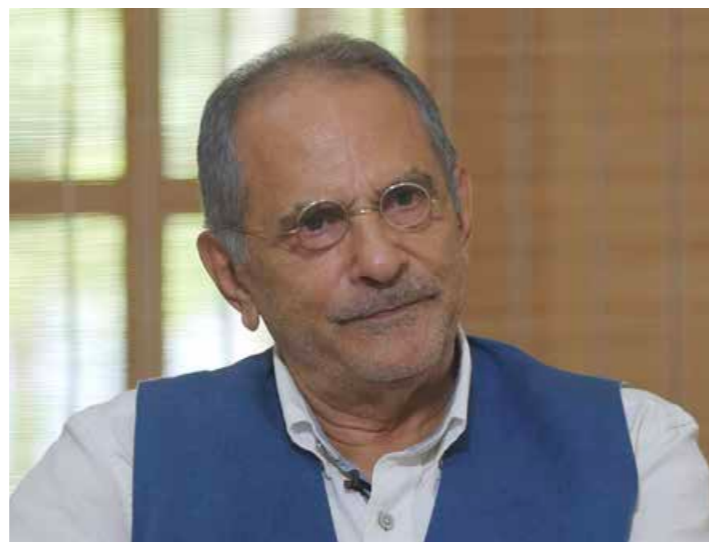
Investing in nutrition will improve the lives of all Timorese citizens and the economy of the country through improved productivity and economic growth, reduced health care costs and better achievement of educational outcomes, intellectual capacity and social development.

Personally, I do not see anything more important than optimal food and nutrition security for every Timorese citizen. Despite much political rhetoric on these topics and some progress made, Timor-Leste still has some of the highest prevalence of malnutrition in the world. Most of our children under five remain malnourished and a substantial proportion of households cannot ensure regular access to nutritious food that meets their dietary needs around the year for a healthy and productive life.

In Timor-Leste's 20-year history, we have made significant development progress across a range of sectors, yet we have not seen gains in food and nutrition security consistent with this growth. This means finding solutions towards strategic development goal 2 to eradicating hunger remains of utmost importance.

UN agencies including WFP played a critical role in delivering emergency food aid to hundreds of displaced people during critical moments in our nation's history; however, we have reached a stage of political stability that necessitates a shift from food aid to locally owned and sustainable hunger solutions. WFP's strategic support to the government now includes support to developing strategies and programmes to improve food security in the country. This is much valued as it is aligned with Timor-Leste Government's vision to create a prosperous and strong nation.

Dr. José Ramos-Horta
Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, 1996
Former President & Prime Minister of Timor-Leste



“UN agencies including WFP played a critical role in delivering emergency food aid to hundreds of displaced people during critical moments in our nation's history.”

Foreword

David Kaatrud

For Manulete, a remote mountain town 70 km southwest of the capital city, Dili, the busiest place is always its health post. Every day, in the shadows of Mt Ramelau, Timor-Leste's highest peak, a steady stream of mothers, fathers with their children passes through. Pregnant and nursing mothers get regular health check-ups, and children have their weight, height, and upper-arm circumference measured for signs of malnutrition.

Despite its modest appearance, this little health post, along with many others, is vitally important for the families and communities of Timor-Leste. It is through facilities like this, the Government, with the support of WFP and partners, is able to reach them with essential health and nutrition services, including treatment of malnutrition for children. Seventeen years since its independence, the young nation has made great progress in providing adequate, equitable and quality services to its people, and along the way, alleviating poverty and hunger. WFP is privileged to be here, witnessing many milestones since the organization first set up its operations in 1999.

In 2008, the ministries of health and tourism and WFP signed an MoU on food fortification. In 2011, the Government began taking over the responsibility for the school feeding programme from WFP. By the end of 2019, the Ministry of Health will take over the Targeted Supplementary Feeding Programme for the management of malnutrition – a testament to the Government's unwavering commitment to realizing food security and providing good nutrition to its citizens.

In the coming years, WFP will continue its support to Timor-Leste's quest towards zero hunger. I am optimistic that children in Manulete, and across the country, will all have a future that is brighter than ever.

David Kaatrud
Regional Director
United Nations World Food Programme
Asia and the Pacific: 2014 - 2019



“In the coming years, WFP will continue its support to Timor-Leste's quest towards zero hunger.”

Timeline

History of Partnership between World Food Programme (WFP) and Government of Timor-Leste (GoTL)

1999 - 2002 Emergency Food Assistance <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Operation started• Provided emergency food assistance for Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)• WFP closed its operation in 2002 after an external analysis concluded there was little evidence of food insecurity in the country	2003 Food Assistance to Drought and Flood Affected Populations & Re-establishing WFP presence in TL <ul style="list-style-type: none">• GoTL appealed to international community for urgent food supplies for people affected by drought and floods• WFP re-established its presence in TL in September 2003.	2004 - 2007 Investing in People's Future & Emergency Food Assistance to IDPs <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Launched Project of Investing in Peoples Future, focusing on three main activities: (1) School Feeding, (2) Mother and Child Health, (3) Emergency Preparedness and Response (EPR)• Provided food assistance to IDPs	2008 - 2011 Assistance to Vulnerable Population in Timor-Leste & Logistic Augmentation and Capacity Development for the GoTL <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Signed MoU with MoH and Ministry of Tourism on fortifying locally produced food• Signed LoU with GoTL to assist vulnerable people facing food insecurity and malnutrition• GoTL requested to take over the School Feeding Programme	2012 - 2014 Country Programme Timor-Leste <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Completed the full hand over of the School Feeding Programme to GoTL• Shifted focus from in-kind food assistance to capacity development• Supported initial establishment of Timor Vita production• Provided technical assistance on supply chain	2015 - 2017 Capacity Development for Health and Nutrition & MAM Intervention in drought affected areas <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rolled out Targeted Supplementary Feeding Programme in six municipalities• Provided supplementary food to population affected by 2016 El Nino in three eastern municipalities• Launched National Zero Hunger Strategic Review	2018 - 2019 Country Strategic Plan 2018 -2020 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Started CSP implementation prioritising four main activities• Supporting GoTL in achieving national targets on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), specifically SDG 2: Ending Hunger and Malnutrition
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Budget and Beneficiaries

WFP Timor-Leste Operations Project List

Project Title	Approval Year to Project End Date	Planned Budget USD	Actual Budget USD	Planned Beneficiary	Actual Beneficiary
Food Assistance to Internally Displaced Persons in East Timor	Sept 1999 – Nov 1999	8,945,438	5,175,785	550,000	150,000
Food Assistance to Victims of Civil Strife	Oct 1999 – June 2002	26,476,939	22,387,95	594,000	354,297
Emergency Food Assistance to IDPs and Urban Poor	Oct 1999 – Dec 2000	17,063,705	13,368,853		
Assistance to Drought and Flood Affected Population	Sept 2003 – Aug 2004	2,719,531	1,131,098	110,000	6,391
Investing in People's Future	Dec 2004 – Aug 2008	24,974,185	18,210,569	400,550	304,461
Assistance to vulnerable population in Timor-Leste	Jul 2008 – Aug 2011	50,937,484	22,539,452	377,400	307,556
Logistic Augmentation and Capacity Building for the GoTL	Dec 2009 – Aug 2011	1,986,322	1,125,485	N/A	N/A
Country Programme Timor Leste	Jun 2011 – Dec 2011	25,707,726	15,616,210	75,000	48,542
	Jan 2012 – Dec 2012			87,000	55,860
	Jan 2013 – Dec 2013			100,000	38,788
	Jan 2014 – Dec 2014			12,508	15,548
Capacity Development for Health and Nutrition	Jan 2015 – Dec 2017	13,783,739	8,387,079	27,790	28,213
Moderate Acute Malnutrition Intervention in Drought Effectuated Areas	Aug 2016 – Mar 2017	847,040	494,147	20,681	29,580
Country Strategic Plan	Feb 2018 – Dec 2020	16,972,701	1,616,508	72,000	13,673
Total Budget USD		190,414,810	110,053,136		

Key Achievements

Celebrating 20 years of the WFP's Assistance and Partnership in Timor-Leste

- Since 1999 WFP has been supporting local, national, and international efforts to implement various food assistance interventions to fight food insecurity and combat malnutrition in Timor-Leste. Initial support provided to respond to post-civil unrest included emergency food aid as many Timorese were in danger of severe food insecurity. Food assistance provided by WFP played a vital role in saving lives, supporting and improving health and nutrition (with special attention paid to women and other high-risk groups), and was attributed to preventing mass migration. WFP's assistance contributed to ongoing efforts aimed at consolidating stability, social cohesion and peace.
- Short term food aid offered by WFP gradually transitioned into supporting the government's establishment of national programmes and a system promoting food produced locally as sustainable solutions to combat hunger.
- WFP supported the government's development policy through support for the establishment of a national **School Feeding Programme** that was handed over in 2012. The initiative contributed to increasing access to education through increased net enrolment, increased student attendance, improved student performance in primary schools, reduced short-term hunger and improved diets of children, including the most vulnerable.
- WFP has nurtured a solid collaboration with UNICEF to strengthen the government's efforts to **prevent and treat moderate acute malnutrition** among pregnant and lactating women and children under 5. In 2011, assistance was provided to the government to set up a facility to fortify food produced locally in partnership with the private sector and relevant line ministries. A multi-agency food security monitoring system was established to evaluate the national and sub-national food security situation and offer recommendations for action to mitigate or respond to food insecurity.
- WFP supported the strengthening of national public-sector capacity in supply chain management and emergency preparedness by establishing warehouses for medical and food storage in municipalities and providing capacity development opportunities to staff.
- In October 2016, WFP supported the National Parliament's approval of resolution 17/2016 recognizing malnutrition as a major issue hindering Timor-Leste development. The resolution included an action plan that promised to reduce wasting, stunting, and anaemia through increased funding for programmes aimed to strengthen food security and nutrition.

- WFP supported the National Strategic Review of SDG 2 by John Hopkins University and Centre of Studies for Peace and Development (CEPAD) through the leadership of Nobel Peace Prize Laureate and Former President and Prime Minister H.E. Dr José Ramos-Horta and H.E. Bishop Dom Virgílio do Carmo da Silva. The review proposed a set of priority actions and recommendations paving the way for Timor-Leste's roadmap for achieving SDG 2.
- WFP together with other UN agencies has provided strategic and policy support and technical assistance to the National Council on Food Security, Sovereignty and Nutrition (KONSSANTIL) to leverage its efforts to coordinate the implementation of Timor-Leste SDG Roadmap for Zero Hunger by 2030.

- Since 2018, WFP's role has been shifting from directly implementing food assistance programming to an enabling role focusing on policy and strategic engagement, technical assistance and capacity strengthening on four main activities, namely:
 - improving nutrition of children under the age of five, adolescents, and pregnant and nursing women through the provision of supplementary nutritious foods;
 - gradual handover of that component to the Government and Social Behaviour Change Communications (SBCC) to promote healthy diets;
 - rice fortification and evidence generation;
 - strengthening targeting, monitoring and evaluation and programme analyses of national school feeding programmes and social protection, as well as, strengthening national institutions capacity in supply chain management.



A UN helicopter carrying food supplies.

1999 - 2002:

Emergency Food Assistance

After the Portuguese left the former colony in 1975, civil war broke out, which prompted Indonesia's military annexation of East Timor. From the beginning of this "annexation", however, there was consistent armed opposition to Indonesian rule.

In June 1999, the United Nations Security Council, by resolution 1246, established the United Nations Mission in East Timor (UNAMET) to organise and conduct a popular consultation. The decision to establish a mission in the country was made when an agreement between Indonesia and Portugal reached an agreement in May 1999 requesting the United Nations to play a substantive role in the post ballot period. The security situation in Timor-Leste remained precarious leading up to the popular consultation in August that year. On election day, however, more than 98 percent of the eligible voters (about 450,000 people) exercised their right to vote. The results were announced by the UN Secretary-General, simultaneously in Jakarta and New York, that 78.5 percent of the voting populace opted for independence from Indonesia.

Following the election, widespread civil strife and rioting (mainly instigated by anti-independence militias) broke out, forcing many Timorese to flee their homes, exposing them to acute food insecurity. Most of the country's public and private infrastructure, particularly in the western part of the country, was severely damaged. Economic activity and agricultural production were also critically disrupted.



WFP launched its operations in Timor-Leste on October 27, 1999, with a budget of USD 26.4 million as an emergency operation to distribute food aid to IDPs and post-conflict returnees. The initial operation was designed to provide 25,804 metric tons of food aid to more than 400,000 beneficiaries over a six-month period.

Initially, full rations were provided to approximately 225,000 individuals who were unable to either produce or purchase food. In addition, half rations were offered to approximately 188,000 individuals who had some access to alternative



Civil Unrest in Dili. 2006.



WFP food supplies are being unloaded. 2000.

sources to meet their food requirements. The number of beneficiaries gradually rose with the return of refugees from West Timor. Humanitarian organizations observed malnutrition to be primarily disease-related and originating in refugee camps in West Timor. Consequently, WFP and other health and nutrition NGOs established supplementary feeding programmes in these areas.

In early 2000, WFP began transitioning from general food to targeted food distributions, which provided monthly rations of rice or maize, and beans and vegetable oil to vulnerable populations. The Vulnerable Group Feeding (VGF) was launched in early 2000, where WFP distributed more than 15,000 metric tons of food country-wide, including to the Ambeno Enclave (in West Timor).

WFP worked together with other agencies such as the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and CARE International to support communities in need in Timor-Leste and assumed the overall food and logistics co-ordination role. This project facilitated the return and settlement of displaced people with special attention to female-head of households.

Food was shipped, and air freighted to Dili and Baucau, where it was transported overland and distributed by WFP and/or its implementing partners (which included CARE, CARITAS, World Vision and Catholic Relief Services). Cooperation and coordination with local civil society organizations were essential. Additionally, in 1999 the International Force East Timor (INTERFET), a United Nations-mandated multinational force, was established to address the humanitarian and security situation in Timor-Leste.

In April 2001, an external analysis of Timor-Leste's food security situation indicated that there was no evidence of food insecurity in the country, except at very localised levels.



WFP food aid being loaded into a plane for airdrops.

Government officials, WFP and partners agreed that food aid was no longer an appropriate modality response for the development of Timor-Leste and that WFP should gradually withdraw from operations, completing its mandate by the end of June 2002.

This decision was conditional, however, on the political and social stability of the country and the absence of overall food insecurity. Over the following year, WFP would refine its targeting strategy, both individual and geographic, to focus its activities on the most vulnerable and reduce its presence in the field by closing five field offices and keeping only a central office in Dili.

WFP's operations and activities were completely phased out by 2002; food and logistics assets were gradually reduced and transferred to the Government of Timor Leste and to WFP's regional warehouses; government staff were trained in emergency food aid management, and WFP's office in Dili was closed.

“We worked hard during the Emergency Relief Project. We would wait at the docks for the ships to bring the food supplies, and after cataloguing the goods in the warehouse we would send them off with trucks to the communities in need.”

Rita de Fatima Leite

WFP Emergency Relief Staff and Supply Chain Officer: 1999 – 2018



A WFP staff with Timorese children standing on top of WFP food supplies in the background. 2000.



A WFP truck stuck in the mud while trying to deliver aid to communities.

2003:

Food Assistance to Drought and Flood Affected Populations & Re-Establishment of WFP's Presence in Timor-Leste

In August 2003, Timor-Leste was severely distressed by drought and flooding and the government formally appealed to the international community for urgent food supplies to assist the populations affected. They did so recognising the strain placed on local municipalities, which lacked the capacity and resources to respond to the needs of its most vulnerable citizens in a timely manner. WFP, together with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), carried out an emergency needs assessment in the same month.

Based on the findings of that assessment, WFP and FAO provided emergency food assistance for seven months (from October 2003 to the end of April 2004) targeting those affected. Following government approval, WFP re-established its presence in Timor-Leste in September 2003. In November, WFP and the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste (RDTL) signed a Letter of Understanding (LoU) where a dedicated Food Aid Management Unit, comprising key government ministries, WFP, UN agencies and NGO counterparts, was established for the coordination and implementation of the programme.

“Investing in nutrition will improve the lives of all Timorese citizens and the economy of the country through improved productivity and economic growth, reduced health care costs and better achievement of educational outcomes, intellectual capacity and social development.”

Dr. José Ramos-Horta

Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, 1996

Former President & Prime Minister of Timor-Leste

“We didn’t have enough NGO partners to do the food distributions, so we approached local NGO Timor Aid. They distributed food to the island just north of Dili. We airlifted it there with the help of the peacekeepers. The Timor Aid youth were thrilled to be doing their work and getting transported by helicopter.”

David Bulman

WFP Timor-Leste Programme Officer: 1999





2004 - 2007:

“Investing in People’s Future” & Emergency Food Assistance to Internally Displaced Peoples

In November 2004, the programme “Investing in People’s Future” was initiated with an expected duration of two years (from 2004 to 2006). The project comprised three activities: school feeding, mother and child health, and emergency preparedness and response. The overall goal was to contribute to the reduction of malnutrition among vulnerable groups, to universalise primary education, and to strengthen the capacity of the Timorese government on emergency preparedness and response.

The implementation of the project began in November 2005 and included safety-net activities for mother and child health implemented by the Ministry of Health; school feeding

programmes implemented by the Ministry of Education and Culture; and an Emergency Preparedness and Response programme coordinated by the Ministry of Interior. The government recognised the importance of these activities for the country’s development and adopted them as fundamental components of its National Development Plan.

In 2005, the “Investing in People’s Future” project led to a LoU between WFP and the Ministry of Interior which specified WFP support to the government in strengthening their capacity on emergency preparedness and emergency food assistance focusing on people most affected by natural disasters.



“Our school was far away from our house and every morning we would walk. Receiving a meal at the school ensured that we could attend the classes and didn’t skip because we were hungry.”

Graziela Augusta Freitas

Former Beneficiary of WFP School Feeding Programme

2006: PROVIDING FOOD TO INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS (IDPS)

WFP provided food assistance to IDPs following resurgence of civil and political unrest in 2006 when protest and petition against the military turned into violence and armed clashes. The speed with which the social and economic fabric of Díli crumbled was unforeseen and came with devastating and long-term consequences. Hours after the initial crisis, scores of people fled their homes to seek refuge around Díli or with family members living in neighbouring districts; mass migration ballooned from 100,000 to 150,000 almost overnight.

The Government of Timor-Leste anticipated food shortages due to the closure of markets, increased transport costs, road blockages and homes being lost to fire and vandalism; subsequently, they requested urgent food assistance from WFP. Days after unrest broke out, WFP could take advantage of its in-country stocks, located in strategic warehouses around the country, and distribute high-energy biscuits followed by a more complete food basket. The strategic reserves and pre-positioning of food commodities helped to prevent the political and civil crisis from degenerating into a considerable humanitarian one. Amid the strife in the capital, WFP continued the implementation of the School Feeding Programme and the Maternal and Child Health programmes. In the same year, WFP and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs signed a basic agreement on the WFP's operational scope in Timor-Leste.

Continuing into 2007, WFP assisted political crisis migrants in camps mainly around Díli, introducing the Food-for-Work programme to ease the “economic burden” and tension between IDPs and the host population. However, the findings of a report conducted in the area at the time were grim: not only would 50% of the camps' population experience food insecurity in the absence of food assistance, but 50% of Díli's non-IDP population would also become food-insecure without assistance. As in the previous year, WFP was able to continue the Mother and Child Health programme and the School Feeding Programme, as well as the provision of capacity development to the Ministry of Health. By the end of 2007, WFP and UN Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for the rehabilitation and construction of health centre storage facilities in the districts of Covalima, Ainaro, and Bobonaro.



Military troops during the 2006 civil unrest.

“During the crisis in Timor-Leste we were facing tough negotiations providing the food rations. Flying over the IDP camps and counting tents when we couldn't do registrations, dealing with riots at the two warehouses and docks. It was a part of my job to defend the warehouse from looters.”

Mark Warne Smith
WFP Security Officer: 2006-2008

2008 - 2011:

Assistance to Vulnerable Populations in Timor-Leste & Logistic Augmentation and Capacity Development for the Government of Timor-Leste

In 2008, WFP signed an MoU with the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Tourism, Trade, and Industry. The agreement specified a coordinated effort to process and fortify locally produced food, with the intention of increasing the long-term availability of nutritious foods within Timor-Leste. To facilitate these efforts, a facility to produce locally fortified foods was built through a coordinated effort by the government, private sector, and donors.

In the same year, ‘return packages’ continued to be supplied to IDPs resettling from the conflict two years earlier. WFP also initiated the establishment of a multi-agency routine food security assessment system, aimed at developing the capacity of government institutions to effectively prepare for, and respond, to natural disasters.

Unfortunately, due to budgetary constraints in late 2008, the government was unable to procure rice for all schools participating in the School Feeding Programme and requested WFP's assistance to provide basic food commodities to 231 schools in three additional districts.

A new LoU between WFP and the Government was signed in March 2009. It reiterated WFP and the Government's commitment to improving the food security and nutrition situation of vulnerable people - through food assistance in the short term, and a national system to strengthen food security in the long term. Efforts to fulfil specific programmatic goals to meet these objectives were in operation from September 2008 to August 2010.

In June 2010, the Deputy Prime Minister, José Luis Guterres, sent a letter to WFP Deputy Regional Director, Peter French, requesting the handover of the School Feeding Programme run by WFP to the Timorese government. While the process of nationalising, the School Feeding Programme was taking place, WFP continued to address undernutrition and improve the nutritional status of targeted women and children through Mother and Child Health and Nutrition Programmes and the distribution of specialized nutritious food.



With a continued focus on maternal and child health, by December 2010 WFP secured a contract with Irish Aid for the National Nutrition Augmentation project, also known as the Maternal and Child Health Nutrition (MCHN) project. The project was slated for a 9-month roll-out and a budget of EUR 295,000.

From 2008 to 2011, WFP provided training to government staff to improve the implementation of food and non-food activities; assisted in logistics planning and management aimed at improving the government's capacity for service delivery; initiated and led a multi-agency food security monitoring system; supported the set-up of a local fortified food development and processing facility in partnership with the private sector and relevant government line ministries; and enhanced school cooking facilities including the installation of fuel-efficient and biogas stoves.

WFP worked closely with other UN agencies to implement its programming within the United Nations Development Assistant Framework 2009- 2013 (UNDAF) in support of health, education, poverty eradication, climate change adaptation and mitigation. The organization took on a (co)-leading role in food security, logistics and emergency telecommunication clusters in programmes and activities in coordination with the government, UN agencies and NGOs.



“We were supportive of the Timor Vita programme as part of our corporate social responsibility to combat malnutrition in nursing, lactating mothers and young children.”

Bobby Lay
Director, Timor Global



WFP staff. 2010.

“Working with WFP, we reach very remote locations, areas with extremely limited access. We are able to cover almost every school in Timor-Leste.”

Madalena Hanjam
WFP Programme Assistant for Mother and Child Health and Nutrition Programme: 2007
Former Vice Minister of Health: 2007-2012

2012 - 2014:

Country Programme Timor-Leste

In 2012, WFP completed the handover of the School Feeding Programme to the government of Timor-Leste. By 2013, WFP shifted its focus from providing food assistance to capacity development. In agreement with the Ministry of Health, WFP reprioritised feeding initiatives to five priority districts, comprising 93 health facilities, down from 13 districts covering 193 health facilities. By focusing programming efforts, WFP provided training and capacity building to government staff to improve the implementation of food and non-food activities.

WFP continued to support the food fortification facility producing Timor Vita, a locally produced super cereal to supplement the diet of pregnant and lactating women and specifically used to treat moderate acute malnutrition. In addition, WFP provided learning opportunities including

training to Ministry of Health staff to strengthen institutional and staff capacity to deliver key nutritional messages, cooking demonstrations highlighting good hygiene practices, balanced and diversified diets, and proper utilization of Timor Vita to beneficiary groups.

Further to the request to handover the MCHN programme to the government, for the second half of 2013 WFP focused on providing technical assistance and capacity augmentation of the Ministry of Health, in key areas such as nutrition, monitoring and evaluation, and supply chain management. However, in March 2014, the government decided to allow the WFP to continue MCHN programming and the provision of technical assistance and capacity development to the target ministries in Timor-Leste.



“I feel proud to be part of WFP, because we were able to contribute a lot for our people through supporting our government and community to prevent hunger and minimize malnutrition in Timor-Leste.”

Olga Theresia Corbafo
WFP Administrative Assistant: 2012-2013



2015 - 2017:

Capacity Development for Health and Nutrition & Moderate Acute Malnutrition Intervention in Drought Affected Areas

In 2015, WFP rolled out a Targeted Supplementary Feeding Programme (TSFP) in six of the 13 municipalities of Timor-Leste: Ainaro, Bobonaro, Covalima, Díli, Ermera, and Oecusse. The TSFP provided specialized nutritious food to children under 5 and pregnant and lactating women with MAM. The principal areas of support involved strengthening the capacity of the government's Nutrition Department to design and implement nutrition programmes, whilst also developing the wider capacity of the Ministry of Health's monitoring and evaluation systems and supply chain management. Part of the project included an agreement with a local company, Timor Global, to produce fortified blended foods, thereby reducing the dependency on imports, and supporting local markets and farmers.

El Niño conditions exacerbated food insecurity and negatively impacted the livelihoods and access to water of approximately 400,000 people. 120,000 people in total were placed at severe risk of food insecurity, mostly in the coastal areas of Covalima, Lautem, Viqueque, Baucau and Oecusse. From October 2016 to March 2017 WFP provided specialised nutritious foods for children under five and pregnant and lactating women in the three eastern municipalities most affected by El Niño. Concurrently, the capacity development project with relevant line ministries continued.



In October 2016, WFP successfully engaged a strategic partnership with the National Parliament and the Ministry of Health to advocate for increased national budget allocations for nutrition programming.

Parliament unanimously approved a resolution recognizing the crucial importance of nutrition and food security for the country and endorsed an action plan, which promised to reduce wasting, stunting and anaemia through increased funding for programmes which strengthened food security and nutrition.

In 2017, at the request of the Ministry of Health, WFP offered technical assistance on supply chain management provided by Timor-Leste's Medical and Pharmaceutical Supply Agency (SAMES), and an MoU was signed to support the roll-out of mSupply. This inventory management software, specifically designed for medical suppliers, was piloted in 2016 before successfully being installed in all health posts in 2016, specifically designed for medical suppliers was piloted in 2016 and successfully installed in all health posts located in the municipality of Díli.

Also in 2017, WFP launched a National Zero Hunger Strategic Review under the leadership of H.E. Dr José Ramos-Horta, and H.E. Bishop Dom Virgílio do Carmo da Silva. The review conducted by John Hopkins University and the Centre of Studies for Peace and Development (CEPAD) proposed a set of priority actions and recommendations to help Timor-Leste to achieve progress in line with SDG 2, Zero Hunger.



“In my time as country director, we were able to facilitate the SDG 2 Strategic Review – in collaboration with a vast array of stakeholders and bringing together the advisory group to endorse the initiative.”

Stephen Kearney

WFP Timor-Leste Representative and Country Director: 2016 – 2018



2018 - 2019: Country Strategic Plan (CSP 2018 -2020)

In February 2018, WFP Executive Board approved a three-year Country Strategic Plan (CSP) 2018 - 2020, presented by Dr José Ramos-Horta and WFP Country Director and Representative in Timor-Leste, Stephen Kearney. The CSP focuses on four main activities:

1. Improving the nutrition of children under 5, adolescents, and pregnant and nursing women through provision of specialized nutritious food, and a Social and Behaviour Change Communications strategy;
2. Providing government and partners with technical assistance and evidence for enhancing the efficacy of national programmes and safety-nets;
3. Providing government and partners with technical assistance to improve monitoring and evaluation and programme analysis; and
4. Supporting government supply chain management efforts and solutions including warehousing and logistics.

WFP is a committed partner to the Government of Timor-Leste in working to end all forms of malnutrition and supporting national efforts to ensure people in all circumstances have ample and secure access to nutritious food all year long. Working towards food security and nutrition in Timor-Leste is paramount to increasing the standard of living of all and achieving the SDGs.

“In 20 years of operation in Timor-Leste, WFP has shifted its focus from humanitarian assistance to governmental capacity strengthening, with the view of achieving food security and adequate nutrition for all.”

Dageng Liu
WFP Timor-Leste Representative and Country Director:
2018 - Present

“With the presence of WFP in Ermera, we are able to combat and reduce the rate of malnutrition and do our part to provide the children here with a better future.”

Angelo Martins
WFP Field Staff: 2015 – present



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