



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES

WFP Lesotho

Country Brief

September 2019

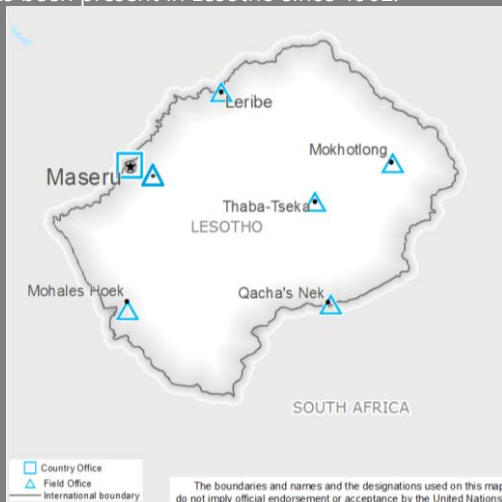


Operational Context

More than half, 57 percent, of Lesotho's population live on less than one dollar per day. 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 percent 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. Twenty-nine percent of people below the age of 35 are unemployed. The country is also characterized by an extremely high HIV prevalence rate, 25 percent, 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 percent of GDP, is a major source of livelihood for 80 percent 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.



Income Level: **Lower middle**

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

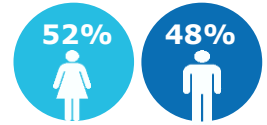
Population: **2.2 million**

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

In Numbers

USD 11 million six months (October 2019 – March 2020) net funding requirements, representing 58% of total six months requirements

428,250 people assisted



Operational Updates

- It is projected that during the October 2019 to March 2020 period, the food security situation is likely to deteriorate across all districts and is expected to be in IPC Phase 3 (Crisis). An estimated 430,000 people, or 30 percent of the rural population, are expected to be experiencing severe acute food insecurity.
- October usually marks the start of the lean season. However, this year's lean season is expected to start earlier than usual due to low crop production. Staple prices are also expected to be higher than usual. The planting season is expected to start late in the 2019/20 agricultural year, and this may again compromise crop production and income from agricultural labour opportunities.
- Given the deteriorating situation WFP is due to commence a second phase emergency response in October using cash-based transfers through mobile money and a voucher system. Given funding shortfalls, WFP will only be able to reach 37,000 food insecure people in three of the worst affected districts.

WFP will use a three-pronged approach to respond:

- Targeting drought-affected households that host orphans and vulnerable children (OVCs) enrolled in pre-primary and primary schools not receiving any assistance will be supported. Through community-based targeting, WFP will support other vulnerable groups, such as the elderly and disabled, who cannot be engaged in labour activities.
- Food Assistance for Asset (FFA) activities will be expanded horizontally in chronically food insecure areas to ensure that households are able to meet their essential needs and build their resilience against future shocks through creation of productive assets. Horizontal expansion is preferred as a greater number of affected people can be assisted.
- Vulnerable pregnant and lactating mothers, and HIV and AIDS and TB patients will be targeted through health centres, community ART groups, networks of people living with HIV and AIDS.

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Further information: www.wfp.org/countries/Lesotho

Country Strategic Plan (July 2019 - June 2024)

| Total Requirement (in USD) | Allocated Contributions (in USD) | Six Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD) |
|----------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| 23 m | 1 m | 11 m |

Strategic Result 1: Everyone has access to food

Strategic Outcome 1: Shock-affected people in Lesotho are able to meet their basic food and nutrition needs during times of crisis

Focus area: *Crisis Response*

Activities:

- **Activity 1:** Provide cash and/or food transfers to populations affected by shocks [Category 1; Modality: food/CBT, CS, SD]

Strategic Result 2: Everyone has access to food

Strategic Outcome 2: Vulnerable populations in Lesotho benefit from strengthened social protection systems that ensure access to adequate, safe and nutritious food all year round

Focus area: *Root causes*

Activities:

- **Activity 2:** Support the Government in evidence-based planning, design, management and implementation of gender responsive social protection programmes, including by handing over the home-grown school meals programme [Category 9; Modality: CS, food, SD]
- **Activity 3:** Strengthen technical capacity of the Government in early warning, food and nutrition security monitoring and vulnerability assessment and analysis through forecast-based financing approaches [Category: 9; Modality: CS]

Strategic Result 3: End Malnutrition

Strategic Outcome 3: Vulnerable populations in Lesotho have improved nutritional status, at each stage of the lifecycle, in line with national targets by 2024

Focus area: *Root causes*

Activities:

- **Activity 4:** Provide capacity strengthening to the Government and other actors with regard to multi-sectoral coordination, planning, evidence-building and implementation of equitable nutrition policies and programmes.

Strategic Result 4: Sustainable Food Systems

Strategic Outcome 4: Communities in targeted areas, especially women and youth, have resilient, efficient and inclusive food systems by 2024

Focus area: *Resilience Building*

Activities:

- **Activity 5:** Support the design and implementation of assets that are nutritionally relevant to improve and diversify the livelihoods of vulnerable communities and households affected by climate change and land degradation [Category 2; Modality: food/CBT, CS]
- **Activity 6:** Provide technical support to smallholder farmers and other value chain actors, particularly women, in climate-smart agriculture, food quality and safety, marketing of nutritious foods and financial services [Category 7; Modality: CS, SD]

**Monitoring****Climate outlook for October 2019 to March 2020:**

- According to the Lesotho Meteorological Services seasonal outlook for October–December 2019, the country is expected to receive average to below average rains with above average temperatures.
- The projected weather conditions are expected to worsen the deteriorating food, nutrition and water situation. Livelihoods are at risk as a result of the water scarcity. In particular, livestock and crop production and nutrition are expected to be highly compromised due to low food production and limited access to portable water.
- Staple price shows a slight increasing trend and stable compared to previous year, but lower than five years average price in most parts of the country. However, the price is slightly higher compared to 2018/19 in other areas. International (RSA) staple prices are increasing and are likely to influence local staple prices.

Challenges

- Political instability in the country has led to the reshuffling of key ministers in ministries that WFP works very closely with. Such a political climate tends to complicate WFP operations.

Donors

China, Japan, Strategic Reserve Allocation Committee (SRAC)

Photo credits

Cover: Locally purchased pinto and sugar beans.

Back: Children enjoy WFP school meals.

WFP/C. Robar