



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES  
CHANGING LIVES

# WFP Bhutan Country Brief September 2019



## Operational Context

Bhutan will transition to lower Middle-Income Level status by 2023 and considers WFP's support critical to this transition process.

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

Although people's overall nutritional status has improved, 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.

WFP has been present in Bhutan since 1974.



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**

## Highlights

WFP is continuing a project to link farmers to the national school meals programme in Trongsa District, as part of the School Nutrition Programme. One of the components of the project focuses on developing WFP's innovative menu optimizer tool ('PLUS').

**US\$ 0.32 m** six months (October 2019 - March 2020) net funding requirements

## Operational Updates

- WFP's menu optimizer tool ('PLUS') has been selected as one of the Global Best Practice projects to be showcased for the World Expo 2020 in Dubai. The Expo will highlight 'PLUS' in Bhutan as a simple yet effective project which is tangibly fulfilling the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- WFP and the Ministry of Education's School Health and Nutrition Division (SHND) are collaborating on a school menu optimizer tool, which provides nutritious meal options based on locally available foods and market prices. This tool will improve cost effectiveness of school meals. It will also meet the nutritional requirements for school-aged children, as identified by the Ministry of Health's Department of Public Health (DoPH).
- WFP discussed the design and implementation of the Trongsa School and Hospital Feeding Programme (SHFP) pilot in a meeting with the SHFP Task Team, the Ministry of Agriculture and other Government stakeholders. This meeting highlighted many ways in which the different agencies could complement one another to successfully complete the pilot.
- WFP facilitated the visit of a team of officials from the Royal Government of Bhutan to various rice fortification and blending operations in India. The learnings from the visit will guide the Government in choosing the best approach for Bhutan and boost the nutritious value of rice in school meals. The nine day visit also included meeting Fortified Rice Kernels (FRK) suppliers to ensure that they meet the quality standards required for school meals.

**Contact info:** [Dungkar Drukpa \(dungkar.drukpa@wfp.org\)](mailto:dungkar.drukpa@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)	Oct 2019-Mar 2020 Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
8.9 m	1.49 m	0.32 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.



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## Challenges

- While the cooperating partners for WFP’s nutrition programme are highly committed, their staff are limited in number and time have a high turnover rate. It is important to find a balance between developing staff capacity and enabling them to meet their other work obligations. The Department for Disaster Management also has limited capacity – both technically and financially – which may limit its response capacity in an emergency.

## Donors

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