



Food Assistance for Assets (FFA) in Southern Africa

What is FFA?

Food Assistance for Assets (FFA) are household- and community-based activities meant to create productive assets that have multiple benefits to the most food-insecure people living in degraded, fragile environments, with a low asset base and highly exposed to natural shocks and stressors.

The main objective of FFA is to enable recovery and enhance the long-term resilience of food-insecure households so that they can overcome, manage, and bounce back better from current and future shocks and stressors. Beneficiaries receive food or cash transfers to cover their immediate food needs, while they create or rehabilitate assets, which contribute to improving their long-term food security and resilience.

2018 achievements in the region

In 2018, more than **2 million people** directly benefited from FFA programmes in **7 countries**:

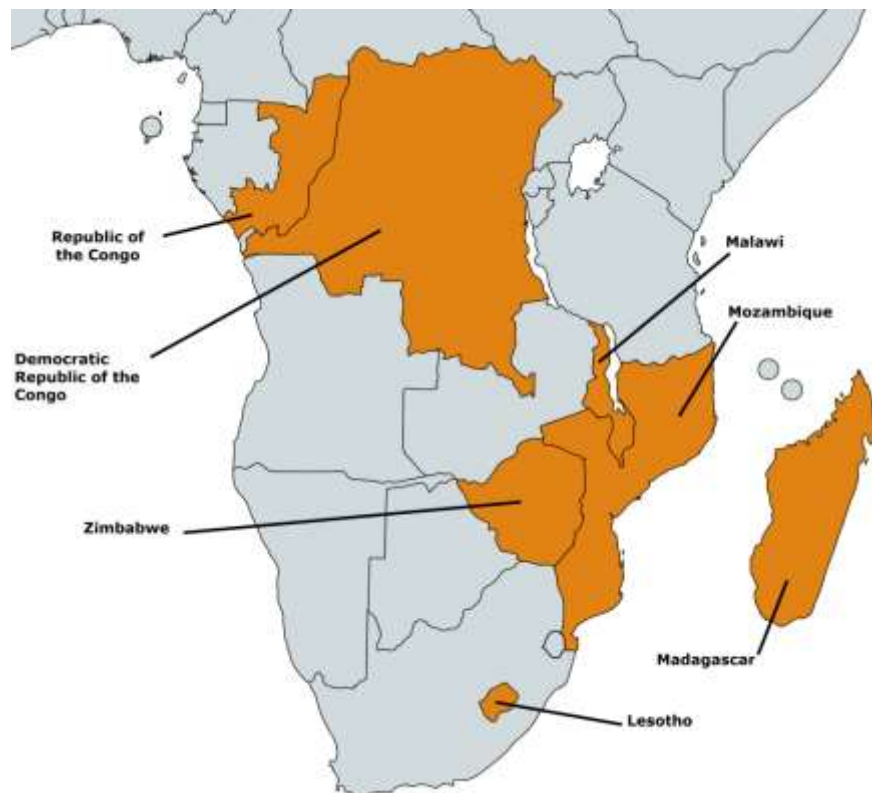
- **20,000 hectares** of degraded land rehabilitated
- **450 water ponds, shallow wells and fish ponds** were built
- **2,340 kilometres** of feeder roads constructed or repaired
- **245 hectares** of forest planted or restored
- **1,100 social or community infrastructure assets** constructed or rebuilt.

FFA Types of Activities

A Community-Based Participatory Planning process has informed the selection of 5 main categories of productive assets:

- Water source development (dams, weirs, and water points) for productive purposes;
- Natural resources development and management;
- Improving crop and livestock productivity;
- Improving market linkage and access to social services and infrastructure;
- Income generation (feedlots, market stalls).

In each community, WFP, together with the government, partners, and other UN agencies (FAO, IFAD and UNDP), promotes asset creation in an integrated manner.



FFA as an Entry Point for Integrated Resilience Programming

Certain WFP Country Offices, with support from the Southern Africa Regional Bureau, are working on a range of multi-year resilience activities, using FFA as an initial platform for integrated resilience programming. This approach enables the most vulnerable to meet their seasonal food needs through the provision of transfers, while at the same time they build assets that reduce the risk of disasters, strengthen livelihoods, and strengthen resilience by increasing smallholder farmers' productivity through better natural resource management.

Integrated resilience measures can reduce the need to spend on cyclical crisis response, while helping to overcome development gaps. Studies show that early response before a disaster, and building people's resilience afterwards, can save both lives and money. Benefit-to-cost ratio can be as high as 13.2 to 1, and rise to 31.5 to 1 when avoided losses are considered.

Building on FFA Initiatives, the Rural Resilience Initiative (R4) enables the poorest farmers to access crop insurance by participating in risk reduction activities. When a shock hits, compensation from the insurance prevents farmers from taking desperate measures such as selling productive assets. Combined with other measures, such as access to savings and credit and to reliable climate information, R4 allows farmers to manage climate-related risks and to invest in riskier but more remunerative enterprises.

In addition, WFP's Purchase for Progress (P4P) programme connects smallholder farmers to markets, giving them an opportunity to grow their businesses and improve their lives and those of their entire communities.

Madagascar

Southern Madagascar suffers from recurring droughts that affect the food security and livelihoods of local communities. The situation has worsened since 2014, following successive rainfall deficits and the El Niño phenomenon. The Integrated Food Security Framework exercise in November 2018 concluded that 80% of the population of southern Madagascar was food-insecure.

Since late 2018, WFP has begun planning and implementation of integrated resilience programming in the communes of Fotadrevo, Tameantsoa and Faux-Cap, with a total of more than 55,000 beneficiaries. These communes were selected because their high levels of vulnerability and their potential for strengthening their resilience against shocks and stressors.

WFP Madagascar has planned multi-year, multi-sectoral resilience interventions, including programmes on smallholder support, asset creation, environmental protection and soil restoration, nutrition, livelihoods support, and climate adaptation, for the targeted communes. Community-Based Participatory Planning exercises have been organized to enable local populations to prioritize activities that can help mitigate risks.



Malawi

FFA implementation in 2018 reached 10 of the 28 districts in Malawi and targeted 170,000 households, with 86% of target outputs met. Following the bad harvest from the 2017/2018 season, participating households experienced unprecedented food shortages. As a result, FFA implementation continued during the “lean” period from January to March, enabling access to food and/or cash transfers.

Through FFA activities, WFP Malawi supported the creation and rehabilitation of assets, including:

- Establishment of 10 irrigation schemes; Construction of 13 water troughs for livestock;
- Planting of 5.7 million trees along river banks, woodlots, around household dwellings and community structures (schools and health clinics);
- Construction of 225 hand dug wells for both irrigation and domestic use;
- Conservation of 15,500 hectares of land through soil conservation structures (e.g., contour ridges and soil stabilization); 1
- Establishment of 47,000 vegetable gardens to promote dietary diversification; Construction and maintenance of more than 8,000 meters of dykes; and
- Construction of nearly 2,000 kilometers of roads to improve accessibility to schools, markets, and health facilities.

Lesotho

FFA programmes are currently being implemented in two of the six districts recently identified as chronically food insecure in Lesotho. In the two districts, there are 11 FFA project sites that focus on the creation of water harvesting structures and tree plantations and on land rehabilitation. In response to continuing drought conditions, WFP will also expand FFA activities to reach an additional 3,000 households in these project sites.

Mozambique

Recent harvests in Mozambique have been negatively impacted by both drought and cyclone events across the country. Accordingly, WFP, working closely with the Government of Mozambique, put into place an FFA programme to help mitigate the impact of the shock and promote the food security of vulnerable households. To this end, FFA was rolled out and scaled up, starting in November 2018 with 33,000 people in 4 districts, and now scaling up to 8 districts reaching over 114,000 people.

In response to the devastation caused by cyclones Idai and Kenneth, WFP Mozambique has developed a 3-year recovery and resilience strategy that prominently includes FFA activities. A phased approach will be taken to FFA programmes, as communities engage in more labor-intensive and more complex asset creation activities over time. Emphasis will also be given to a nutrition-sensitive approach in FFA activities.



Community-Based Participatory Planning exercises in Tete Province, Mozambique. Photo: WFP/Daniela Cuellar

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Zimbabwe

Following the development of the Smallholder Resilience Strategy, WFP Zimbabwe continues to integrate programmes across FFA, the R4 Rural Resilience Programme (R4) and the Smallholder Agriculture Market Support (SAMS). Such integration creates more effective and sustainable activities, while providing support to food-insecure communities over a multi-year timespan, allowing for additional interventions in cases of crisis.

Since May 2019, around 2,000 households in four different wards within Masvingo District have been simultaneously targeted through FFA, R4, and SAMS programmes. The number of households targeted through this integrated approach is expected to reach 10,000 across Masvingo and Rushinga districts by 2021.

WFP Zimbabwe has also expanded its FFA programmes to include 11 different districts and reach 55,000 beneficiaries. To promote access to water, small dams and irrigation extensions have been developed, while newly established vegetable gardens contribute to enhance food and nutrition security. Some projects also include outreach and training on livelihoods such as fish farming and bee keeping.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

Tanganyika Province suffers from poor or non-existent infrastructure that limits access to markets and between neighboring communities. Widespread food and nutrition insecurity is both a cause and consequence to recurrent conflict between Pygmies and Bantu communities.

Recognizing that FFA can play an important role in peace-building, WFP, in partnership with FAO, has engaged more than 1,400 Pygmy and 15,000 Bantu households in FFA activities. Some achievements include the creation of feeder roads; rehabilitation of bridges; and reforestation of ten hectares of land. In addition, construction of five complexes for improved storage conditions and post-harvest handling (including warehouses, drying yards, and market buildings) started during the last quarter of 2018.

As Pygmies are a largely nomadic group, WFP and FAO have also included traditional, agriculture-related activities in the forests that are culturally sensitive and appropriate.



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