

WFP Algeria Country Brief January 2020

In Numbers

133,672 people assisted
In January 2020



1,159 mt of food assistance distributed under GFA

1,146 kcal/person/day provided through the general food basket

US\$ 5.7 m six months (March – August 2020) net funding requirements

Operational Context

Algeria has been hosting refugees from Western Sahara since 1975. These refugees are in camps in the harsh and isolated desert environment of western Algeria, where opportunities for self-reliance are limited, forcing them to depend on humanitarian assistance for their survival.

The 2018 Decentralised Evaluation of the nutrition activity recommended that WFP clarify its role in nutrition and improve intersectoral coordination. The 2018 Food Security Assessment confirmed the dependence of the Sahrawi camp population on food assistance; 30 percent of the population is food insecure, while 58 percent is vulnerable to food insecurity. Only 12 percent of the Sahrawi population is food secure.

The 2019 nutrition survey indicated a deterioration of women's and children's nutritional status. The global acute malnutrition (GAM) among children of 6-59 months increased from 4.7 percent in 2016 to 7.6 percent. The anaemia prevalence among children 6-59 months is 50.1 percent, and 52.2 percent among women of reproductive age.

WFP currently represents the main regular and reliable source of food for the Sahrawi refugees in Algeria. Upon the request of the Algerian Government, WFP has been present in the country since 1986.



Anaemia prevalence: **50%**
among children 6-59 months

Anaemia prevalence: **52%** for
women 15-49 years

Global acute malnutrition: **> 7%**
of children between 06-59
months

Chronic malnutrition:
19% of children between 6-59

Operational Updates

- In January 2020, WFP distributed a reduced food ration to 133,672 Sahrawi refugees. The food basket consisted of 1.4 kg rice, 750g barley, 2 kg of lentils, 750 g sugar, and 1 l of vegetable oil. The rations were missing 8 kg of wheat flour and 1 kg of corn soy blend. However, the food basket was complemented with 1 kg of gofio, roasted maize funded by the Spanish region of Gran Canaria, which enabled WFP to increase the average kilocalorie value of the reduced ration, reaching 1,146 kcal/day, 55 percent of the planned value.
- Other humanitarian actors such as the Spanish Red Cross and OXFAM distributed fresh food, including two eggs, 500g of onions and 500g of potatoes. Further, 800 celiac patients received a double ration of fresh foods and gluten free wheat flour.
- For the prevention of Moderate Acute Malnutrition (MAM) and anaemia in pregnant and lactating women (PLWGs), WFP maintains the distribution of fresh food vouchers through the new cash-based transfer modality.
- For the treatment of MAM and anaemia in PLWGs, WFP distributed daily rations of super cereal, sugar and vegetable oil to 732 women.
- For the treatment of MAM in children, 477 children aged between 6-59 months received a total of 1.49 MT of specialised nutritious food.
- WFP distributed mid-morning snacks in schools and kindergartens to over 39,000 boys and girls. WFP distributed 62.5 tons of dried skimmed milk and 39.3 tons of high-energy biscuits.

Interim Country Strategic Plan (mid-2019-mid-2022)

Total Requirements (in US\$)	Allocated Contributions (in US\$)
59 m	19 m
2020 Requirements (in US\$)	Six-Month Net Funding Requirements (in US\$) (March – August 2020)
20 m	5.7 m

Strategic Result 1: Everyone has access to food

Strategic Outcome #1: Targeted food-insecure Sahrawi refugees in camps near Tindouf meet their basic food and nutrition needs all year

Focus area: Crisis response

Activities:

- Provide general food assistance to targeted food-insecure refugees in camps near Tindouf
- Provide nutrition-sensitive school feeding
- Provide refugees with complementary livelihood opportunities that benefit women and men equitably

Strategic Result 2: No one suffers from malnutrition

Strategic Outcome #2: Targeted Sahrawi refugees in camps near Tindouf have improved nutrition status by 2022

Focus area: Crisis response

Activities:

- Provide children aged 6–59 months and pregnant and lactating women and girls with assistance for the treatment and prevention of moderate acute malnutrition.

Challenges

- WFP Algeria is facing a shortage of funds for general food assistance (GFA) and the School Feeding programme for the next months. Unless additional funds are made available, WFP will be forced to reduce rations under the GFA and School Feeding programme in the spring of 2020.

New Contributions

WFP welcomes several important contributions to its operations in the Tindouf camps:

- The Spanish Cooperation (AECID) and 10 Spanish regions contributed a total of EUR 1.7 million for general food assistance. This contribution was key to cover severe shortfalls in December and January.

- Germany made a multi-year pledge of EUR 1 million for 2020 and 2021 for the school feeding programme and general good assistance. The funding predictability is extremely appreciated.
- Italy supports all of WFP Algeria's activities with funding amounting to EUR 500,000. The flexibility is key to allow effective programming.
- Saudi Arabia confirmed this year's contribution of dates for the celebration of Ramadan amounting to US\$ 720,000.
- The first private sector contribution by supermarket chain Choithrams was received as part of the Mastercard Mena Campaign of over US\$ 130,000 for School Feeding activities.

Pilot to use *Gofio* (roasted maize) in School Feeding:

- Following a recommendation of the [2019 School Feeding Review](#), WFP Algeria tried to diversify the mid-morning snack with a mix of *gofio*.
- *Gofio* (roasted maize) is a local delicacy from the Canary Islands and highly appreciated by the Sahrawi refugees. Since 2018, WFP receives *gofio* through a contribution from the Spanish region of Gran Canaria.
- A five-day pilot was conducted at the Souilem school in Awserd camp with 1,225 students, including 599 boys and 626 girls. The *gofio* was prepared in the form of porridge and was given on top of the normal snack (milk and high energy biscuits).
- WFP and the local education authority will use the results of this pilot to assess whether *gofio* can be distributed as part of the School Feeding programme across the 82 camp schools and kindergartens.

First results of H2Optimal Pilot

- In fall 2019, WFP launched its new complementary activity "H2Optimal" that explores innovative cultivation methods to optimize the use of water and allow agriculture in the desert.
- In October, WFP and its partner OXFAM introduced [Groasis waterboxx](#)© that allow plants to grow without hydric stress and reduced evaporation. A total of 2,138 waterboxx (3,000 planned) have been installed, benefiting 172 households and a women cooperative.
- Two experimentation sites were set up to compare the use of water by the waterboxx© in comparison to traditional drip irrigation. The first findings after three months are promising: 90 percent of water could be saved and plants in the waterboxx© grow 16 percent faster.

Donors

Andorra, Brazil, ECHO, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Switzerland, USA, flexible funding, Choithrams and Mastercard