



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES



WFP Tajikistan Country Brief April 2020

In Numbers

424,131 people assisted
in April 2020



673.6 mt of food assistance distributed

US\$ 1,333 cash-based transfers made

Operational Context

Tajikistan is a landlocked, low-income and food-deficit country. The mountainous landscape confines arable land to just seven percent of the country's surface and poses enormous food security challenges during the winter period. The country is the poorest in the Commonwealth of Independent States, with 27.4 percent of the population living in poverty and 11.8 percent living in extreme poverty (Tajikistan Agency of Statistics).

In Tajikistan, despite significant improvements in recent years, malnutrition rates remain high. WFP is contributing to the Government's progress on SDG 2, by providing access to appropriate nutritional support and health care, promoting school feeding, building resilience to the impacts of climate change, and ensuring preparedness for recurring natural disasters.

The Government has identified food security and access to quality nutrition as one of its development priorities.

WFP has been present in Tajikistan since 1993. WFP currently operates under the Country's Strategic Plan (CSP) that was launched in July 2019.



Population: **9.1 million**

2019 Human Development Index:
125 out of 189

Income Level: **Low**

Chronic malnutrition: **18% of children between 0-59 months**

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Operational Updates

- According to the Ministry of Health and Social Protection of the Population of Tajikistan, a total of 15 COVID-19 cases were confirmed in Tajikistan as of 30 April 2020. The country keeps its border with China, Afghanistan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan closed. Limited movement for freight transport is allowed through borders with Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan. The country keeps its airports closed for all international flights. Tajikistan opened around 30 quarantine centres for all arrivals/returnees, including non-nationals. Schools were also closed for two-week's vacation on 27 April 2020 due to recent increasing death cases related to pneumonia in the country.
- The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) has prepared an immediate response plan to assist the population affected by socio-economic impact of COVID-19.
- WFP started its preparatory works for the launch of its Cash for Work projects to support vulnerable households in Tajikistan who have been impacted by COVID-19 social and economic shocks. Within the framework of these projects, WFP prioritizes households that are chronically food insecure and rely mainly on remittances sent from their family members working abroad. Under these projects, WFP will involve about 2,800 community members in four districts of Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast (GBAO) in public works for three months through a conditional cash transfer modality. The initiative is expected to assist about 15,000 people to cope with the shocks while setting the basis for the improvement of their livelihood in the medium-term. Recognizing that women are mostly affected by the shocks, the intervention is designed and implemented in a gender-sensitive manner - to support women's economic empowerment and access to cash assistance. WFP in collaboration with local authorities and cooperating partners will engage women in all its projects and ensure that 60 percent of those assisted are women.

Photo Caption: Lunch at secondary school number 23 in Spitamen District under WFP School Feeding Programme. ©WFP

Country Strategic Plan (July 2019 – June 2024)	
Total Requirements (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)
82 m	18 m
2020 Requirements (in USD)	Six-Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD) May20 –Oct20)
16.7 m	900.000

Strategic Result 1: Everyone has access to food

Strategic Outcome 1: Food-insecure vulnerable people, including primary schoolchildren, in targeted districts meet their basic food requirements by 2024.

Focus area: Root causes of food insecurity

Activities:

- Provide nutritionally balanced school meals to targeted schoolchildren

Strategic Result 2: No one suffers from malnutrition

Strategic Outcome 2: Vulnerable groups, especially children aged 6-59 months and pregnant and lactating women and girls - in districts where the national Integrated Management of Acute Malnutrition (IMAM) protocol is being rolled out have reduced levels of malnutrition by 2024.

Focus area: Root Causes

Activities:

- Treat moderate acute malnutrition in children aged 6-59 months and implement malnutrition prevention activities using social and behaviour change communication with vulnerable groups while building the Government's capacity to manage nutrition programmes.

Strategic Result 4: Food systems are sustainable

Strategic Outcome 3: Targeted food-insecure communities in areas vulnerable to climate change have increased their resilience to shocks by 2024.

Focus area: Resilience Building

Activities:

- Carry out climate adaptation, asset creation, and livelihood activities aimed at fostering resilience to shocks and stressors, and conduct early response activities in the event of a small scale disaster

Strategic Result 5: Countries have strengthened capacity to implement the SDGs

Strategic Outcome 4: Government institutions at the central and decentralized level have strengthened capacities to target, design and implement effective food security and nutrition strategies by 2024.

Focus area: Root Causes

Activities:

- Provide policy advice and technical assistance to public institutions and private sector stakeholders involved in advocating for and implementing food security and nutrition programmes, including emergency preparedness.
- Strengthen the capacity of government institutions and schools to implement social protection programmes

Monitoring

- During April 2020, WFP carried out monitoring visits to 200 project sites reaching almost 98 per cent of its planned monitoring activities.
- With the launch of a cash assistance modality in new

districts, WFP closely monitors the cash distribution and beneficiaries' access to the banking service. During the reporting period, no beneficiary feedback was received.

Challenges

- Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, food supply chain disruptions are anticipated - the food delivery may require a longer lead time than usual, resulting in a disruption of timely assistance for the School Feeding Programme and Nutrition Programme. WFP has prepared contingency plans in view of different scenarios for the COVID-19 pandemic.
- As part of the COVID-19 preventive measures, regular field monitoring visits may have to be reduced. WFP is preparing for remote monitoring in case the situation gets deteriorated.
- WFP has 100 Metric Tons (MT) of food commodities allocated for emergency response as a preparedness measure, which is enough to support 4,200 people over a period of two months. To increase its preparedness efforts, WFP requires more funding.
- WFP is planning to complement its existing malnutrition treatment programmes with malnutrition prevention during COVID-19 to provide nutritious commodities to children under 2 years of age and pregnant and lactating women and girls.
- WFP also seeks funding to implement a cash-based malnutrition prevention intervention to support children under 2 years of age and pregnant and lactating women and girls who come from households that are unable to afford nutritious meals. All nutrition interventions will be supplemented with social behaviour change communication, especially as relates to hygiene during COVID-19.
- WFP is currently designing a programme to support the families of the most vulnerable schoolchildren who attend WFP-assisted schools Based on the socio-economic impacts expected as a result of the pandemic, WFP has deemed it necessary to continue supporting these families even during school closures. While funding is currently being sought for these interventions, the challenge of border closures and commodity procurement might potentially hinder realising these plans.

Resourcing

- WFP received a generous contribution of USD 5 million from the Russian Federation to continue the implementation of the school feeding programme in 2020.
- To address the urgent food assistance needs in response to COVID-19 socio-economic shocks, WFP requires additional USD 2.5 million.

Donors

Russian Federation, USA, UN Peacebuilding Fund Private Donors (Japan Association for WFP, the Earth Group)