



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES

WFP Timor-Leste Country Brief April 2020



In April 2020, WFP donated this mobile storage unit to SAMES (the Medical and Pharmaceutical Supply Agency) for COVID-19 response.

Operational Context

Timor-Leste is one of the world's newest countries, being internationally recognized as an independent state in 2002. Poverty rates have dropped from 49.9 percent in 2007 to 41.8 percent in 2014 according to the World Bank.

A COVID-19 pandemic has hit Timor-Leste, the country confirmed its first case on March 21, 2020, and on March 28, the Government declared a 'State of Emergency' to prevent the spreads of the virus that will now last until May 26, 2020

According to the first [IPC analysis report](#) on the chronic food insecurity situation in Timor-Leste, the major contributing factors to food insecurity in Timor Leste are low agricultural productivity, poor quality, and quantity of food consumption, and low-value livelihood strategies combined with a high dependency on single livelihoods.

WFP has been present in Timor-Leste since 1999. WFP's Country Strategic Plan (CSP 2018-2020) supports the attainment of the Government's vision and contributes to the national Strategic Development Plan 2011–2030. WFP is planning to extend its Country Strategic Plan for one year in view of the current uncertainties.



Population: **1.3 million**

2018 Human Development Index: **132 out of 188**

Income Level: **Lower middle**

Chronic malnutrition: **50% of children between 6-59 months**

In Numbers

US\$ 0.63 m six months (May – October 2020) net funding requirements.

Operational Updates

- The first shipment of relief items arrived at Dili International Port on April 21, 2020. This comprised of four complete sets of prefabricated buildings and air conditioners to be used for temporary quarantine and isolation centres from the United Nations Humanitarian Response Depot (UNHRD) Subang, Malaysia. WFP will donate the items to the Government as part of support to the Government National Response Plan under the COVID-19 Integrated Crisis Management Center. WFP is coordinating with the Shanghai Construction Group in Timor Leste to support its installation.
- WFP has set-up ten hand washing facilities in key public places including the Dili International Airport and marketplaces. WFP has also collaborated with the World Health Organization (WHO) to support the Ministry of Health in printing information, education and communication (IEC) materials to raise COVID-19 health awareness in communities.
- With technical support from WFP, the Government is purchasing a three-month emergency supply (30,000 mt) of rice from Vietnam to offset potential shortages during the pandemic. WFP will continue to provide technical assistance on food storage, delivery, distribution, and monitoring of the Government's food assistance programme, depending on the future food security situation and remaining gaps. WFP is also examining contingency plans for emergency food assistance covering two months of rice consumption needs for 660,000 vulnerable people.
- WFP is working with the Ministry of Health to scale up existing responses, namely the targeted supplementary feeding programme to improve nutrient intake for children under 5, and pregnant & lactating women, as planned under the Country Strategy Plan (CSP).
- WFP is collaborating with the Ministry of Education Youth and Sports (MoEYS) with plans to deliver a nutritious take-home food basket to students and their families. These will be delivered during the school closure imposed by the state of emergency, or as an incentive to bring students back to school post closure, or both.
- WFP plans to donate ten units of laptops, two motorbikes, and one vehicle to the national logistics centre to strengthen their supply chain system.

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Country Strategic Plan (2018-2020)

Total Requirement (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)	Six Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
16.97 m	6.14 m	0.63 m

Strategic Result 2: No one suffers from malnutrition

Strategic Outcome 1: Children under five, adolescent girls and pregnant and breastfeeding women have improved nutrition towards national targets by 2025

Focus area: Root Causes

Activities:

1. Provide nutritious food and raise awareness through social and behaviour change communication for targeted individuals.
2. Provide the Government and partners with technical assistance and evidence for enhancing the efficiency of national programmes and safety nets.

Strategic Result 5: Developing countries have strengthened capacity to implement the SDGs

Strategic Outcome 2: National and subnational government institutions have increased capacity sustainably to deliver food-, nutrition- and supply chain related services by 2020.

Focus area: Resilience

Activities:

3. Provide the Government and partners with technical expertise for improved targeting, monitoring, and programme analysis.
4. Provide the Government and partners with technical expertise for the development of an efficient and effective supply chain management system.

Monitoring

- WFP is supporting the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries and the Statistics Office on food price monitoring; working closely with the United Nations Development Programme on a Social Economic Impact Survey; and INGO partners on Household and Market Surveys.
- A rapid Fall Army Worm (FAW) prevalence assessment supported by WFP and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), conducted by the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, showed that the pest infested 33 percent of maize plants in fields randomly surveyed. The prevalence is high and varies by municipalities between 22 percent in Liquica and 71 percent in Ainaro. If not addressed, the pest will create significant damage to maize for the next main cropping season.
- A rapid 'Chefe de Suco' 'village chief' opinion assessment on the impact of COVID-19 on food and agriculture, conducted by the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries in April 2020, has also shown that food security continues to deteriorate, with many communities reportedly in food distress. Local market disruption is the main immediate cause of food insecurity. Most communities reported that agriculture products were spoiled (fruits, vegetables, and some maize) due to a lack of access to markets – although these impacts may lessen as transportation restrictions are relaxed.

Challenges

- The declaration of a state of emergency due to COVID-19 continues to disrupt the Country Strategy Plan (CSP) activities, hence WFP is adjusting programme implementation based on needs and in line with other UN Agencies and the Government COVID-19 response Plan.

Current Priority Areas

Priority Under Activity 1: Nutrition and Social and Behavioural Change Communication (SBCC)

Interventions:

1. Provided technical support to the Ministry of Health on the updated Nutrition Cluster Terms of References and the Response Contingency Plan.
2. Supported the Government to establish and launch physical social distancing among marketeers in Dili local markets.
3. Provided technical support to the Ministry of Health in developing tools for the COVID-19 information, education and communication materials survey. This will help to strengthen social and behavioural change activities (with most focus on Ministry of Health's Pillar 2 response plan (Risk Communication and Community Engagement).

Priority Under Activity 2: Nutrition policy through Filling Data Gaps

Interventions:

1. Increase advocacy and awareness on the need for consumption of fortified foods during the COVID-19 crisis through SBCC.
2. Supported the development of Concept Note for the provision of THR to students during the COVID-19 school closure.

Priority Under Activity 3: Strengthening Nutrition-related Social Safety Nets

Interventions:

1. WFP has discussed with the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MOEYS) a take-home ration intervention for students. The Ministry has agreed to this initiative and recommended that WFP focus the intervention in one municipality instead of only three schools in Dili as per the previous plan.
2. WFP is developing a short video on a cooking demo and a recipe book for the school feeding programme, with three quotations collected from Agora Food Studio, Delicious, and the East Timor Development Agency to facilitate the process.
3. The Market Price data for April has been consolidated in the market price database and it can also support the May data consolidation.

Priority Under Activity 4: Assuring an effective Emergency Response and Logistic network in Timor-Leste

Interventions:

1. Supporting SAMES and the National Logistic Centers in developing supply chain and logistic capacities in the country relating to COVID-19 emergency response.
2. Enhancing government capacity and strengthening, policy creation, and introducing innovative tools to support supply chain and activities.

Donors

Government of Timor-Leste, Korean International Cooperation Agency (KOICA), SRAC/Multilateral Contributions, China and Japan