



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES

WFP Benin Country Brief May 2020



Operational Context

The Republic of Benin is a low-income food-deficit country with an estimated population of 11.2 million, who are predominantly rural. A politically stable democracy since 1990, with a socio-political environment that is friendly and conducive to business, the country nevertheless ranked 163 of 189 countries on the 2017 Human Development Index and the national poverty rate stood at 40.1 percent in 2015.

More than 70 percent of the population depends on employment in the agricultural sector, which accounts for 25 percent of GDP. However, productivity is low, farmlands are small, and high food prices affect the households' access to food. More than 43 percent of households are on the verge of food insecurity while chronic malnutrition, which prevents body growth and cognitive development with irreversible consequences after the age of 2, affects 32 percent of young children.

In Benin, the first case of COVID-19 was confirmed on 16 March 2020. As of 8 June 2020, the total number of confirmed cases reached 305, including 4 deaths.

WFP has been present in Benin since 1964.

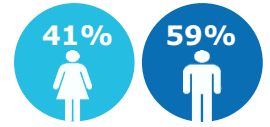


In Numbers

96 mt of food distributed

USD 2 m six months net funding requirements
(June–November 2020)

47,766 people assisted in May



Operational Updates

- The main activity of WFP Benin Country Strategic Plan 2019–2023 that started on 1 July 2019 is the implementation of an integrated national school feeding programme in 3,852 public primary schools throughout the country, benefiting 620,000 schoolchildren.
- The school canteens programme was suspended during the closure of schools from 30 March to 11 May, as one of the COVID-19 prevention measures decided by the Government of Benin.

Resuming of school canteens operations

- The primary schools have re-opened on 11 May for the last section of primary schools (grade 6 or CM2, representing about 10 percent of the total pupils) who will attend school until their end of year exam set on 6 July.
- Together with its NGO partners, WFP planned and coordinated the resumption of school canteens operations in 2,486 out of 2,492 re-opened schools, offering warm nutritious meals to 47,766 schoolchildren in the second week of the school re-opening.

Implementation of Coronavirus prevention measures and communication campaigns

- In collaboration with the Ministry of Primary Education, WFP enforced sanitary and barrier measures to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 virus in the primary schools with canteens.
- This included the renovation of hand-washing facilities, the provision of soap bars, and trainings on hygiene and sanitation delivered to the children and school canteen actors, including the voluntary cooks.
- A communication and sensitization campaign aimed at the wider rural communities was broadcasted in local languages via a network of 15 local community radios, partners to WFP.
- In order to avoid food damages and to ensure the conservation of the food kept in school stores, WFP initiated an operation to ventilate and clean the storage facilities, to dry, winnow and recondition the food stocks.
- A plan to distribute food surpluses in the form of take-home dry rations to the children's households before the start of the September school year has received the validation of the Minister of Primary Education.

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Main Photo: Handwashing of pupils in the re-opened Djègoun Nagot primary school, in Ifangni Commune, Department of Plateau, Benin.

Credit: Jonas HOUNMANOU

Country Strategic Plan (2019-2023)

2020 Total Requirement (in USD)	2020 Allocated Contributions (in USD)	Six Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
130 m	59 m	2 m

Strategic Result 1: Everyone has access to food

Strategic Outcome 1: Vulnerable population including school-aged children in Benin have adequate access to safe, nutritious food and basic social services all year-round

Focus area: Root causes

Activity:

- Provide integrated and inclusive school meals programmes in targeted communities in a way that relies on and stimulates local production

Strategic Result 2: No one suffers from malnutrition

Strategic Outcome 2: Vulnerable population including children under 5, adolescents and pregnant and lactating women and girls (PLW/G) in targeted areas have improved their nutritional status in line with national target by 2023

Focus area: Root causes

Activity:

- Provide specialised nutritious food to children and PLWG to treat malnutrition and prevent risk of stunting and support Benin health services on nutrition education and gender-sensitive behaviour-change.

Strategic Result 5: Institutional capacity-strengthening

Strategic Outcome 3: National and local institutions in Benin have increased capacity to implement an integrated school feeding programme and to achieve food security by 2023.

Focus area: Root causes

Activity:

- Provide technical assistance and policy support, including through South-South cooperation, to local and national institutions in the areas of gender-sensitive school feeding, food security, and emergency food preparedness and response.

Strategic Result 1: Everyone has access to food

Strategic Outcome 4: Crisis-affected populations in Benin are able to meet their basic food and nutrition requirements in the aftermath of shocks.

Focus area: Crisis response

Activity:

- Provide food and nutrition assistance to crisis-affected populations and strengthen the capacity and coordination among national partners in responding to crisis as a contingency measure.

Monitoring of COVID19 impact

- WFP M&E unit launched data collection surveys to assess the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on food security at micro-levels (households and markets) and to provide information on the needs for food and nutrition assistance in vulnerable communities of Benin.
- Using its mobile technology system and a database developed in collaboration with GEOPOL, WFP has conducted a first data collection survey at household's level before processing with data analysis and the publication of reports in national bulletins.
- A data collection survey at markets' level to inform food accessibility and availability will start in the coming weeks, pending signature of a memorandum of understanding with the Government and the mobilization of resources.



Pupils respecting COVID-19 protection and distancing measures at the primary school of Djègoun Nagot, in the commune of Ifangni, Department of Plateau, Benin.
Photo: Jonas Hounmanou.

National workshop with local authorities

- In order to improve the involvement and engagement of elected officials in the school canteen operations within their localities, WFP organized in May an information workshop for members of the National Association of Municipalities of Benin (ANCB).
- The meeting brought together 30 participants including seven mayors from different regions of the country. The discussions revolved around the implementation of the National School Feeding Programme, its key successes and the major challenges that may require the support and greater involvement of local authorities and prefects.

Partners

Government of Benin, EDUCO, UNICEF, IFDA, UNFPA, WHO, UNDP, UNAids, local NGOs.

Donors

Government of Benin, Kingdom of the Netherlands, Federal Republic of Germany, Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, the Choithram International Foundation.