Operational Context

Ghana is a lower middle-income and food-deficit country, with an estimated population of 28.5 million and a gross domestic product per capita of USD 2,220 in 2019. Despite progress in recent years in reducing acute malnutrition and stunting at the national level, high rates of poverty and stunting persist in the Northern Savannah Ecological Zone, at 21.4 and 31 percent respectively. In addition, the November 2019 Cadre Harmonise indicates that 65,645 people were estimated to be food insecure during the 2019 post-harvest season, while 21,712 people are expected to be food insecure during the upcoming lean season (June-August 2020).

COVID 19-The confirmed cases in Ghana was 5,127 as at 12 May 2020; the Government of Ghana instituted a national plan and budget to respond to COVID-19. The global confirmed cases as at 12 May 2020 is 4,18 million. The immediate national focus has been on containing the spread of the virus and enabling the healthcare system to cope. Concerns over the negative impact on the economy and wellbeing has been raised. The combination of lockdown measures, closed borders and broader global economic disruptions is already causing loss of household income due to reduced economic activity, higher prices for basic goods and reduced access to social services. The UN Country Team including WFP Ghana, are contributing to fund the gaps in the national response, based on each agency’s comparative advantage.

WFP’s interventions focus on direct food assistance using vouchers to improve nutritional status of targeted populations, in line with national targets. WFP also aims to ensure vulnerable communities benefit from efficient and resilient food systems which support nutritional value chains, capacity strengthening interventions to manage food security, nutrition and social protection programmes and the Advocacy and coherent policy frameworks support to key cooperating partners. WFP has been present in Ghana since 1963.

In Numbers

- **45,000 beneficiaries** targeted for nutrition support in 2020
- **22,020 smallholder farmers, 12 nucleus farmers and 8 aggregators** targeted for capacity strengthening and market linkages in 2020
- **USD 5.4 m** six months (May-Oct 2020) net funding requirements
- **27,327 beneficiaries** received direct food assistance through vouchers in January 2020

Operational Updates

WFP is distributing double rations to beneficiaries to cover the months of May and June to reduce the contacts that beneficiaries will have at the distribution points. This is an additional strategy for prevention of spread of COVID-19, besides the provision of hand washing stations and sensitization on social distancing and the other preventive protocols.

Specifically, for the COVID response, resource mobilization is ongoing through advocacy to government to implement an Emergency School Feeding (ESF) programme since the closure of schools. ESF has not yet materialized because available funding is channelled into the health response leaving little for other sectors. Advocacy efforts are still ongoing. Resource mobilization is also underway to incentivize adolescent girls to go back to school when schools reopen. WFP is looking for resources to provide orientation and trainings for school feeding caterers on safe and hygienic cooking in the wake of the COVID response. The training will also focus on cooking of immunity-boosting foods. WFP is also supporting the digitization of tools for school feeding enrolment and attendance data.

Motorcycle and 6KVA Generator Set was presented to the Regional Agriculture Directorate to support food security monitoring by the Ministry of Food and Agriculture. Processes are ongoing for similar donations to be made to the Regional Departments of Agriculture, and the Ghana Health Service.

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Main photo A Beneficiary from Choggu Health Centre who received their double ration during WFP field monitoring
Credit: Alex Osei-Yeboah (Nutritionist)
Strategic Result 1: SR 1 – Everyone has access to food (SDG Target 2.1)

Strategic Outcome 5: Crisis-affected populations are able to meet their basic food and nutrition needs during and in the aftermath of shocks

Activities
- Provide food and nutrition assistance to crisis-affected populations including COVID-19 crisis-affected patients in containment and quarantine centres, refugees, adolescent girls to return to schools, and other vulnerable groups; General Distribution; Modality: CBT & In-kind Food

Monitoring

Frequent remote monitoring via phone calls and social media (WhatsApp) was conducted to all 52 implementing sites to provide technical support to health staff and retailers on commodity distribution in the context of COVID-19. New strategies where beneficiaries have to wash their hands, receive their commodities through manual redemption without signing or thumbprinting, distribution of double rations in 30 days period to cover two months and completion of distribution forms were stressed frequently to ensure that the right thing is done. So far, distribution has been very successful in the context of COVID-19.

Partnerships
- WFP in Ghana maintains an active collaboration with government partners, civil society organizations, private sector, academia, development partners and other United Nations agencies, particularly the Rome-based Agencies (FAO and IFAD), to ensure the harmonization of activities in food security and nutrition.
- WFP continues to participate in working groups in key sectors such as education, social protection, agriculture, health and nutrition. WFP also collaborates with the National Development Planning Commission to advocate for increased investment in school feeding and nutrition, using the findings of the cost benefit analysis conducted in Ghana in 2019.
- Final assessment of selected medium-scale and community-level food processors was done jointly with the Food and Drugs Authority, Food Research institute, and Women in Agriculture (a unit under the Ministry of Agriculture).
- The partnership with UNICEF on Adolescent Girls’ Nutrition Intervention towards addressing the triple burden of malnutrition targeting out of school adolescents is ongoing.

Donors
Canada, Ghana, Japan and private donors.