



WFP Eswatini Country Brief September 2020

World Food Programme

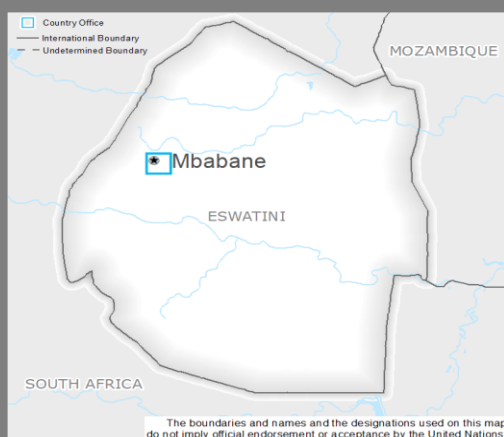
SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES



Operational Context

Despite its status as a lower middle-income country, 69 percent of the rural population in Eswatini live below the national poverty line and 25 percent are extremely poor. Eswatini has a very high HIV prevalence, affecting 26 percent of the population between the ages of 15 and 49. Life expectancy is 49 years, and 45 percent of children are orphaned or vulnerable. Chronic malnutrition is a main concern in Eswatini; stunting affects 26 percent of children under the age of five. Eswatini is vulnerable to drought in the south-east. Smallholder agriculture remains the backbone of rural livelihoods in the country, with over 70 percent of the country's total population (60 percent of whom are women) relying on subsistence farming.

WFP has been present in Eswatini since the late 1960s, providing emergency relief and implementing development projects to strengthen the education and health sectors. Today, WFP supports the Government of Eswatini in improving food and nutrition security and creating safety nets for the most vulnerable people impacted by poverty, and HIV and AIDS.



Population: **1.1 million**

2018 Human Development Index: **173 out of 189 countries**

Income Level: **Lower Middle**

2019 Global Hunger Index: **97 out of 117 countries**

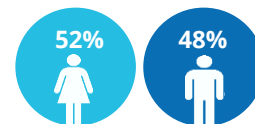
In Numbers

431.894 mt food assistance distributed

US\$ 3.3 million cash-based transfers made between January and September 2020

US\$ 3.1 million six-month (October 2020–March 2021) net funding requirements

95,384 people assisted in September 2020



Operational Updates

- WFP provides social safety nets for 55,000 orphans and vulnerable children under 5 years at 1,700 Neighbourhood Care Points (NCPs) in Eswatini through access to food and basic social services.
- WFP works with the Government in implementing a sustainable, nutrition-sensitive, shock-responsive national school meals programme. The pilot for a Home-Grown School Feeding (HGSF) project started in September 2019, targeting 50 schools and 24,392 students. WFP works with the Ministry of Agriculture and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) to empower local smallholder farmers to provide schoolchildren with food that is safe, diverse, nutritious and local.
- WFP, through the local purchase programme, is supporting the Government in linking smallholder production to the school feeding programme under HGSF programme. Seventeen smallholder farmer organizations with a membership of 653 individual farmers (62 percent female) were registered, with a target to supply 878 mt of maize and 235 mt of beans. In addition to the distribution of commodity bags, WFP supported the farmer organizations in the aggregation, stitching and sampling of the commodities.
- WFP, together with Ministry of Education and Trainings (MoET), and FAO conducted a joint visit to 3 farmer organizations and 1 school under the HGSF initiative. The farmer organizations, Executive Committee, Extension Officer, farmers and headteacher interacted with senior management from MoET and WFP to share their experiences (tonnage supplied, benefits and challenges) under the HGSF pilot programme since its inception in 2019.
- WFP continues to collaborate with the Ministry of Health (MoH), the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV and AIDS (UNAIDS), the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Populations Fund (UNFPA), the Ministry of Tinkhundla and Administration (MTAD), and the Swaziland Network of Young Positives (SYNP+) to conduct integrated treatment literacy activities to empower communities through better nutrition, uptake of and adherence to antiretroviral therapy (ART) and tuberculosis (TB) medication, and sexual and reproductive health services. WFP, through SNYP+ and Membatsise Home-Based Care, has also supported 23 young people (4 males and 19 females) living with HIV through livelihood activities (poultry and gardening).

Country Strategic Plan (2020–2024)

| Total Requirements (in USD) | Allocated Contributions (in USD) | Six-Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD) |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|
| 32.5 m | 12.2 m | 3.1 m |

Strategic Result 01: Everyone has access to food

Strategic Outcome 01: Vulnerable populations in shock-affected areas are able to meet their basic food and nutrition needs during times of crisis

Focus Area: Crisis Response

Activity 1: Provide food and/or cash-based transfers to food insecure populations affected by shocks, including children.

Strategic Result 03: Smallholders have improved food security and nutrition through improved productivity and incomes

Strategic Outcome 02: Smallholder farmers, particularly women, have enhanced capacities to supply structured markets with nutritious foods by 2024

Focus Area: Resilience Building

Activity 2: Strengthen the capacities of smallholder farmers, particularly women, to supply nutritious foods to structured markets, including schools

Strategic Result 05: Developing countries have strengthened capacity to implement the SDGs

Strategic Outcome 03: Vulnerable populations, particularly women, children, adolescent girls and people living with HIV, have access to integrated and shock-responsive social protection systems by 2030

Focus Area: Resilience Building

Activity 3: Provide evidence and strengthen national systems and capacities for designing and implementing nutrition-sensitive and shock-responsive social protection programmes, including school feeding.

- During the reporting period, the Neighbourhood Care Points (NCPs) monitored revealed that NCPs continued to support more than the number of registered children as not all school children were back in schools and hence going to NCPs for meals. NCP attendance for the month of September was at least 240 percent. Most NCPs monitored still had some stock balances to support them, and weekly monitoring of NCP operations continues.
- The first post-distribution monitoring (PDM) report results indicated that although some household still applied consumption-based coping strategies, 81 percent of supported households had acceptable food consumption. Households used the cash received to diversify their diets, with the main food items bought being cereals (100 percent), fruits and vegetables (93 percent) and pulses (84 percent).

Economic Forecast

- According to the Central Bank of Eswatini, the economy has recorded a technical recession in the first quarter of 2020, mainly due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The economic activities are said to have fallen by 6.5 percent on a year-on-year basis in the first quarter of 2020, from a revised decline of 1.2 percent in the last quarter of 2019.

Donors

European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO), Foreign, Commonwealth & Development office, Germany, Global Fund, Japan, Multilateral, and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

Crisis Response

- In response to the impact of COVID-19 and erratic drought conditions, WFP is implementing a crisis response through unconditional resource transfers (URT). The URT aims to provide humanitarian assistance to the COVID-19 and drought-affected populations for 11 months starting in June 2020 until March 2021 through food and cash transfers. A total of 45,000 (October 2020–March 2021) will receive food assistance and 94,000 people (June 2020–March 2021) will be supported with cash-based transfers (CBT). Of this, WFP will support 2,000 people living with chronic illness with CBT. Nutritional conditions will form the basis for targeting the beneficiaries under this activity.
- WFP continued to support 411 refugees in the country. The assistance is done in partnership with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and CARITAS. This activity forms part of the drive for WFP to ensure all relevant vulnerable groups are provided with the necessary support during times of crisis.
- WFP is leading the logistics pillar to support the Ministry of Health-led COVID-19 response. WFP was requested to coordinate the logistics response of development partners and agencies by identifying logistical needs, bottlenecks and gaps of the international community in the response to the COVID-19 pandemic.