



World Food Programme

SAVING
LIVES
CHANGING
LIVES



WFP Algeria Country Brief September 2020

In Numbers

133,672 people assisted
In September 2020



2,228 mt of food assistance distributed under general food assistance

2,169 kcal/person/day provided through the general food basket

US\$ 3.3 m six months (November 2020 – April 2021) net funding requirements

Operational Context

Algeria has been hosting refugees from Western Sahara since 1975. These refugees are in camps in the harsh and isolated desert environment of western Algeria, where opportunities for self-reliance are limited, forcing them to depend on humanitarian assistance for their survival.

The 2018 Decentralised Evaluation of the nutrition activity recommended that WFP clarify its role in nutrition and improve intersectoral coordination. The 2018 Food Security Assessment confirmed the dependence of the Sahrawi camp population on food assistance; 30 percent of the population is food insecure, while 58 percent is vulnerable to food insecurity. Only 12 percent of the Sahrawi population is food secure.

The 2019 nutrition survey indicated a deterioration of women's and children's nutritional status. Global acute malnutrition (GAM) among children of 6-59 months increased from 4.7 percent in 2016 to 7.6 percent. The anaemia prevalence among children 6-59 months is 50.1 percent, and 52.2 percent among women of reproductive age.

WFP currently represents the main regular and reliable source of food for the Sahrawi refugees in Algeria. Upon the request of the Algerian Government, WFP has been present in the country since 1980.



Anaemia prevalence: **50%**
among children 6-59 months

Anaemia prevalence: **52%** for
women 15-49 years

Global acute malnutrition: **> 7%**
of children between 06-59
months

Chronic malnutrition:
19% of children between 6-59

Operational Updates

- WFP distributed a complete food basket in September that included 8 kg of wheat flour, 2 kg rice, 2 kg barley, 2 kg of lentils, 750 g sugar and 1 litre of vegetable oil. The ration reached 2,169 kcal/day, 103 percent of the planned value.
- For the treatment of moderate acute malnutrition (MAM) and anaemia in pregnant and lactating women (PLWGs), WFP distributed daily rations of wheat soy blend mixed with sugar and vegetable oil to 625 women. In addition, around 8,000 PLWGs received fresh food vouchers to prevent MAM and anaemia. For the treatment of MAM in children, 469 children aged between 6-59 months received daily rations of 100g of specialised nutritious food. To prevent MAM in children, 13,587 boys and girls aged 6-59 months received specialized nutritious food in health centres.
- WFP's school feeding programme restarted on 13 September after being suspended since March due to the COVID-19 pandemic. 39,098 boys and girls in all the camp schools are encouraged to enrol and attend the schools through the distribution of a mid-morning snack consisting of high energy biscuits and a glass of milk.

The situation in the camps

- No new cases of COVID-19 have been confirmed in the Tindouf refugee camps in September. After the first cases were confirmed on 27 July, by the end of August there were 25 cases, 23 of whom are recovered and 2 deaths.
- The humanitarian community is reviewing some of its COVID-19 measures, including reopening the UN base in Rabouni, due to the recent positive development of cases in the camps.

Photo Caption:

Sahrawi refugee children have returned to school under special safety measures including wearing of masks. This lesson is taught outside the classroom to allow for better circulation.
WFP/Amel Derras

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**Interim Country Strategic Plan
(mid-2019-mid-2022)**

| Total Requirements (in US\$) | | Allocated Contributions (in US\$) |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|
| 59 m | | 30.7 m |
| 2020 Requirements (in US\$) | 2021 Requirements (in US\$) | Six-Month Net Funding Requirements (in US\$) (November 2020 – April 2021) |
| 20 m | 20 m | 3.3 m |

Strategic Result 1: Everyone has access to food

Strategic Outcome #1: Targeted food-insecure Sahrawi refugees in camps near Tindouf meet their basic food and nutrition needs all year

Focus area: Crisis response

Activities:

- Provide general food assistance to targeted food-insecure refugees in camps near Tindouf.
- Provide nutrition-sensitive school feeding.
- Provide refugees with complementary livelihood opportunities that benefit women and men equitably.

Strategic Result 2: No one suffers from malnutrition

Strategic Outcome #2: Targeted Sahrawi refugees in camps near Tindouf have improved nutrition status by 2022

Focus area: Crisis response

Activities:

- Provide children aged 6–59 months and pregnant and lactating women and girls with assistance for the treatment and prevention of moderate acute malnutrition.

- Prevention and safety measures remain in place for WFP activities, including the adjusted distribution procedures for food and voucher projects that encourage social distancing and the use of personal protective equipment, while avoiding overcrowding. Remote monitoring also remains in place for the time being.

Challenges

- WFP urgently requires approximately USD 560,000 to cover food needs until the end of the year and USD 3.3m for the next 6 months. New funds are required in time to allow for the purchase and transport of food to the camps that can take up to three months. WFP's assistance is vital for the refugees' survival and even more important during a global pandemic.

- The COVID-19 crisis continues to pose a threat to the Sahrawi refugees, as high anaemia prevalence and malnutrition rates might make many refugees less resistant to the virus.
- The camps health system is weak especially facing a pandemic that has pushed the world's most advanced health systems to their limits. The water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) situation is also problematic in the isolated desert environment in which the refugee camps are located.

New Nutrition Approaches

- The 2019 nutrition survey has shown a deterioration of the nutritional situation of the refugees and it was evident that the existing support by WFP and others was not enough to halt this trend. Under the 2019-2022 Interim Country Strategic Plan (ICSP), WFP is mainstreaming nutrition across all its activities and playing a more active role in the nutrition coordination in the camps. New approaches are being introduced to fight malnutrition in the camps.
- Since last October, a USAID-funded voucher presents a milestone in the camps; the first large-scale voucher project that provides pregnant and lactating women and girls (PLWGs) with access to fresh food to diversify their diet.
- WFP is now further reinforcing the prevention activity for PLWGS with the monthly distribution of multiple micronutrient supplements (MMS) to provide these women with the nutrients they need in this special time. This is expected to begin by December 2020.
- However, the last years have shown that the distribution of special nutrition products is not enough. WFP will now also focus on community screening for malnutrition and anaemia to help identify cases earlier while also increasing efforts sensitize the refugee community on nutrition issues.
- A new malnutrition screening project, launched by WFP in coordination the Algerian Red Crescent, allows to detect malnutrition cases earlier by regularly screening thousands of children in schools, dispensaries and even at the household level.
- WFP is also finalizing its Social Behaviour Change Communication (SBCC) strategy that aims to change behaviours and promote social change by positively influencing knowledge, attitudes and social norms regarding nutrition and healthy eating practices.
- On 29 and 30 September, the SBCC strategy was validated by all actors working on nutrition in the camps including the local health authorities the Algerian Red Crescent, international and national NGOs, UNHCR and UNICEF. The final SBCC strategy will be ready by end October 2020.

Donors

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