



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES  
CHANGING LIVES

# WFP Guinea-Bissau Country Brief September 2020



## Operational Context

Guinea-Bissau is a low-income and food-deficit country of 1.9 million people, ranking 178th out of 189 countries in the 2019 HDI. Forty-seven years of political instability deeply constrained socio-economic and human development. Poverty impacts women more than men, reflecting gender inequalities in access to land, credit and education. Vulnerabilities were further impacted by COVID-19, compounding institutional weaknesses, inadequate public services, lack of safety nets and overreliance on cashew nut exports. On 9 September, the President replaced the State of Emergency with a three-month State of Calamity due to COVID-19.

General elections in 2014 marked a return to constitutional order after the 2012 coup d'état and the first elected president to complete a five-year term in 2019, despite having faced substantive political instability. The country successfully held legislative and presidential elections in 2019, though a legal dispute over the runoff presidential election ensued for over 8 months in the Supreme Court. Before the Supreme Court confirmation, a candidate self-proclaimed as President on 27 February and dismissed the Government, plunging the country into a deeper political crisis. Parliament approved the Government Programme in June and the 2020 State Budget and 2020-23 National Development Plan in August without having a legal majority. The UN has accepted the de-facto Government on 10 August. The Supreme Court on 7 September dismissed the electoral dispute. On 24 September, the Government organised a successful celebration to mark the 47th Independence Day, demonstrating consolidation of the Presidential power. However, the two-track constitutional reform processes and a unity government reconfiguration have not yet been clarified, contributing to political instability. Human right violations remain a concern.

WFP focuses on capacity strengthening of government institutions and builds synergies with partners to optimize mutually supportive interventions as part of integrated strategy encompassing home-grown school feeding, social protection, resilience, stunting prevention and moderate acute malnutrition treatment, emergency preparedness and responses. WFP mainstreams the corporate gender policy across its activities, and WFP has been present in Guinea-Bissau since 1974.



Income Level: **Low income (and food-deficit)**

Child stunting: **28% of children under 5 years old**

## In Numbers

**39.9 mt** of specialized food distributed

**US\$ 26,000** cash-based transfers made

**US\$ 4.4 m** six months (October 2020-March 2021) net funding requirements

**9,497 people assisted** in September 2020

## Operational Updates

- WFP and UNICEF on 25 September launched a joint social protection programme to mitigate the socioeconomic impact of COVID-19, having registered over 1,500 families with multiple vulnerabilities in the eight most food insecure sectors in the country and Bissau. Each family will receive monthly transfers of XOF 40,000 (approx. USD 71.9) for three months. In September, 366 families (2,562 people) received mobile money in Quinhamel and São Domingos sectors, while the remaining 1,174 families will receive transfers in October.
- The reopening of schools on 5 October was approved by the Council of Ministers. WFP has thus been preparing with Ministry of Education, throughout September, for the safe resumption of the on-site school feeding programme including training of cooks and school staff to ensure safe school feeding in the COVID-19 context. Since school closures in mid-March, WFP reoriented school feeding activities to distribution of take-home rations, reaching 180,000 schoolchildren from 874 schools.
- WFP in partnership with the National Civil Protection Service has been preparing for direct support to families affected by floods and strong winds in eight regions and Bissau. From 19 to 25 September, WFP conducted a joint needs assessment in Bissau and will continue onto other heavily affected regions in early October. A needs assessment in Bissau indicated 15 percent of the families interviewed have been displaced and nearly 60 percent of the families was food insecure and in need of immediate assistance.
- WFP-supported health and nutrition centres distributed 39.9 mt of specialized nutritious foods (CSB++) provided by WFP to 582 children under treatment for moderate acute malnutrition (MAM) and 6,681 children targeted by stunting prevention programmes in Oio, Bafatá and Gabu regions (in 47 centres). These three regions have the highest stunting rate in the country.
- An NGO partner conducted participatory diagnostics in 11 communities in Gabu region to design a series of trainings for 500 rural women. The latter aim at empowering women to contribute to stability and peacebuilding in their communities, and to more effectively advocate the local administration and members of the Parliament for better public services and policies.

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Main Photo: Mothers waiting to receive CSB++ in nutrition centre in Nhacra

Credit: WFP/Silva Clusse

## Country Strategic Plan (2019-2024)

2020 Total Requirement (in USD)	2020 Allocated Contributions (in USD)	Six Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
12.3 m	11.4 m	4.4 m

### Strategic Result 1: Everyone has access to food

**Strategic Outcome 1:** Crisis-affected populations in Guinea-Bissau are able to meet their basic food and nutrition requirements in the aftermath of shock.

**Focus area:** *Crisis response*

**Activities:**

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

**Strategic Outcome 2:** School-age children in Guinea-Bissau have access to nutritious meals during the school year.

**Focus area:** *Root causes*

**Activities:**

- Provide nutritious school meals to pre- and primary schoolchildren and take-home rations for girls in years 5 and 6 and strengthen the capacities of the Government and partners at the central and local levels to implement and monitor a nutrition-sensitive and gender-transformative school feeding programme.

### Strategic Result 2: No one suffers from malnutrition

**Strategic Outcome 3:** Populations at risk of malnutrition in Guinea-Bissau, particularly children, women and girls of reproductive age and people living with HIV, have improved nutrition status in line with national targets by 2024.

**Focus area:** *Root causes*

**Activities:**

- Support the implementation of the national nutrition policy and the protocol for the integrated prevention of stunting and treatment of moderate acute malnutrition focusing on the provision of support for policy design and gender and age-informed implementation, technical assistance and capacity strengthening to the Ministry of Public Health, Family and Social Cohesion; social and behaviour change communication, the prevention of stunting among children aged 6–23 months, the treatment of moderate acute malnutrition among children aged 6–59 months, and food and nutrition assistance to people living with HIV and their households.

### Strategic Result 3: Smallholder productivity and incomes

**Strategic Outcome 4:** Smallholder farmers in Guinea-Bissau, particularly women and young people, have improved livelihoods and increased household incomes by 2024.

**Focus area:** *Resilience building*

**Activities:**

- Provide an integrated package of assistance interventions to associations of women and young smallholder farmers that comprises nutrition and literacy education, training in basic business skills, sensitization to their rights to adequate food and nutrition, market access through the school feeding programme and the transfer of knowledge on the optimization of agricultural value chains.

### Strategic Result 5: Countries strengthened capacities

**Strategic Outcome 5:** National institutions and legislators in Guinea-Bissau have enhanced capacity in and are accountable for the development, implementation and monitoring of evidence-based food security and nutrition policies and programmes by 2030.

**Focus area:** *Root causes*

**Activities:**

- Provide national institutions with support for policies, technical assistance and the transfer of knowledge and advocate for the effective formulation and implementation of gender-transformative social safety nets, food security and nutrition programmes (including data collection and analysis, evidence generation and monitoring systems) and emergency preparedness and response mechanisms.

- WFP continued to provide supply chain support to the COVID-19 health response. Between July and September, WFP supported import operations of seven oxygen import operations, procured 250 empty cylinders, 693 filled oxygen cylinders and 100 flowmeters funded by the Government, WHO and UNICEF. WFP delivered essential medicines, personal protective equipment (PPE), materials and equipment for oxygen therapy to hospitals, laboratories, the testing centre and health centres. WFP also delivered 150,000 fabric masks to Government entities, religious and civil society organizations. As of 26 September, Guinea-Bissau had 2,362 positive cases of COVID-19, including 1,638 recovered cases and 39 deaths.

## Monitoring

- WFP conducted two missions to monitor distributions of specialized nutritious foods (CSB++) and assess storage conditions in two recovery centres, three health centres and two communities. Recommendations on aspects to improve were made to the Ministry of Health.
- WFP conducted four field missions to monitor the preparation of the social protection cash transfer programme in Quinhamel, São Domingos, and Sonaco. Monitoring activities highlighted that the mobile service provider properly distributed SIM cards and telephones, and registered beneficiaries correctly; however, delays in activity implementation are met due to poor road conditions and lack of beneficiary identification documents.

## Challenges

- Between July and September, above-average rainfall across the country impacted road conditions, causing delays or cancellations in distributions and project activities, posing additional challenges to WFP's operations.
- The COVID-19 pandemic continues to challenge WFP activities. Travelling in-country overnight and organizing meetings and training with partners and beneficiaries is still limited, despite the reduction in COVID-related movement restrictions.

## Food Security and Nutrition Situation

The food security and nutrition situation remains a concern and deteriorated amid COVID-19. In July, a survey conducted by WFP showed that 54.9 percent of the population was in a vulnerable situation and relied on severe livelihoods-based coping strategies to meet food and/or other needs. The steep drop in export volume and international prices of cashew nuts resulted in income losses and impacted peoples' livelihoods. Among monitored food prices, 38 percent remained relatively stable between May and July, while 27 percent decreased and 38 percent increased. The Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) conducted in 2018 estimated that, among children 6-59 months, moderate or severe stunting stood at 28 percent, underweight at 16 percent and wasting at 5 percent.

## Donors

Japan, United States, European Union, Italy, the Netherlands, Sweden, UNAIDS, UN Peacebuilding Fund, UN COVID-19 Multi-Partner Trust Fund and private donors.