



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES  
CHANGING LIVES

# WFP Lesotho Country Brief October 2020



## In Numbers

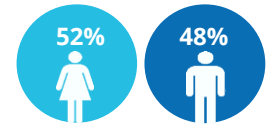
**2,026** confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Lesotho (10<sup>th</sup> November 2020)

**44** deaths

**1,029** recoveries

**US\$16.7 million** six months (Nov 2020 - Apr 2021) net funding requirements, representing 68 percent of total six-month requirements

**428,250 people** targeted in 2020



## Operational Updates

- The Minister of Health and Minister of Home Affairs notified the public that on the 25<sup>th</sup> October that the permitted categories of travellers in Lesotho remain as follows: patients, business travellers, all classes of scholars, migrant workers, pensioners, retrenched Basotho migrant workers, Basotho returnees and travellers with exceptional special needs. Everyone eligible for travelling is required to present a valid, negative PCR COVID-19 certificate conducted within 72 hours of travel
- Cash assistance is ongoing in the urban councils of Maseru, Mafeteng, Mochale's Hoek, Quthing and Qacha's Nek districts and in October, a total of 8,175 households representing 32,700 people (52% female) have been assisted to date with LSL831.00 per household.
- Crisis response interventions are ongoing in the rural districts of Mokhotlong and Thaba-tseka, where, through USAID funding, 6000 vulnerable households are being assisted through a hybrid intervention comprised of cash and food voucher redeemable through a network of contracted retailers. Each household receives a monthly entitlement amounting to LSL811.00.
- As part of the crisis response roll-out, distributions in Mokhotlong were successfully done using SCOPE. SCOPE is a beneficiary information and transfer management platform that helps WFP to enhance the impact of its operations by ensuring that the right person receive the intended benefit at the right time in the best way.



Mr. 'Mitasi, the first beneficiary to receive a SCOPE card in Mokhotlong district.

## Operational Context

More than half (57 percent) of Lesotho's population live on less than one dollar per day. GDP stands at USD 2.3 billion while its national GDI per capita is USD 1,270 (World Bank). Revenue from the Southern African Customs Union (SACU) contributes a significant proportion to Lesotho's national budget. The Government allocates 7 percent of its national budget to social protection programmes such as school meals, pension for the elderly, child grants and public works.

The population's high vulnerability is exacerbated by recurring climatic hazards, including droughts, early frost, and a low performing economy. Twenty-nine percent of people below the age of 35 are unemployed. The country is also characterized by an extremely high HIV prevalence rate (25.6 percent: 30.4 percent for women and 20.8 for men), with care needed for more than 250,000 orphaned children, most of whom lost their parents to AIDS. Life expectancy stands at 49 years.

Agriculture, which contributes 7 percent of GDP, is a major source of livelihood for 80 percent of the population living in rural areas. WFP supports the Government's efforts in building the resilience of communities frequently affected by climatic hazards, with the view to stimulating agricultural production.

WFP has been present in Lesotho since 1962.



Income Level: **Lower Middle**

2018 Human Development Index: **159 out of 189 countries**

Population: **2.2 million**

Chronic Malnutrition: **33% of children aged 6-59 months**

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Further information: [www.wfp.org/countries/Lesotho](http://www.wfp.org/countries/Lesotho)

## Country Strategic Plan (July 2019–June 2024)

Total Requirements (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)	Six-Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
111.3 m	33.7	16.7 m

### Strategic Result 01: Everyone has access to food

**Strategic Outcome 1:** Shock-affected people in Lesotho are able to meet their basic food and nutrition needs during times of crisis.

**Focus Area:** Crisis Response

**Activities:**

- **Activity 1:** Provide cash and/or food transfers to populations affected by shocks.

### Strategic Result 02: Everyone has access to food

**Strategic Outcome 2:** Vulnerable populations in Lesotho benefit from strengthened social protection systems that ensure access to adequate, safe and nutritious food all year round.

**Focus Area:** Root Causes

**Activities:**

- **Activity 2:** Support the Government in evidence-based planning, design, management and implementation of gender responsive social protection programmes, including by handing over the home-grown school meals programme.
- **Activity 3:** Strengthen technical capacity of the Government in early warning, food and nutrition security monitoring and vulnerability assessment and analysis through forecast-based financing approaches.

### Strategic Result 3: End Malnutrition

**Strategic Outcome 3:** Vulnerable populations in Lesotho have improved nutritional status, at each stage of the lifecycle, in line with national targets by 2024.

**Focus Area:** Root Causes

**Activities:**

- **Activity 4:** Provide capacity strengthening to the Government and other actors with regard to multi-sectoral coordination, planning, evidence-building and implementation of equitable nutrition policies and programmes.

### Strategic Result 4: Sustainable Food Systems

**Strategic Outcome 04:** Communities in targeted areas, especially women and youth, have resilient, efficient and inclusive food systems by 2024.

**Focus Area:** Resilience Building

**Activities:**

- **Activity 5:** Support the design and implementation of assets that are nutritionally relevant to improve and diversify the livelihoods of vulnerable communities and households affected by climate change and land degradation.
- **Activity 6:** Provide technical support to smallholder farmers and other value chain actors, particularly women, in climate-smart agriculture, food quality and safety, marketing of nutritious foods and financial services.

## Monitoring

### Lesotho Vulnerability Assessment (LVAC) committee (July 2020).

- From October 2020 to March 2021, about 40% of the population (582,000 people) are projected to be in Crisis or worse (IPC Phase 3) or higher and will likely face high acute food insecurity. All 10 districts in the country are projected to be in Crisis, with pockets of highly vulnerable populations in Emergency (IPC Phase 4). Quthing, Mohale's Hoek and Mafeteng are expected to have populations in Emergency because more than 50% of the households in these areas depend on informal labour opportunities in South Africa. Seasonal migration to South African farms (for the harvest) during May/June is a typical livelihood strategy for people in the southern and eastern part of the country (especially Quthing and Qacha's Nek). Movement restrictions have reduced seasonal incomes from 35% to 15% of the contribution towards household total income as reflected in LIAS.
- Current prices of maize meal have increased by more than 10% compared to the 5-year-average and by 16% compared to 2019.

## Donors

China, ECHO, Japan, USAID/FFP