



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES  
CHANGING LIVES

# WFP The Gambia Country Brief September 2020

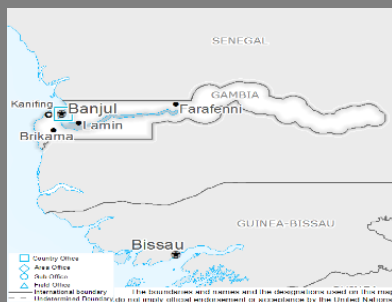


## Operational Context

With a population of 2.2 million, the Republic of The Gambia is faced with rising food insecurity, poverty and malnutrition, despite a promising environment for improved growth, stability and partnerships.

The COVID-19 pandemic coincides with and exacerbates a deteriorating food and nutrition insecurity situation which follows an early onset of lean season and successive years of bad harvests. Thus, The Gambia, a net-food importer, has seen a spike in the number of food insecure people across the six regions, up to 733,000 persons including about 40,000 urban population reported to have lost jobs and livelihoods. Furthermore, COVID-19 contributes to the increasing acute malnutrition by an estimated 36 percent affecting 58,177 children with a further quarterly increase of 2.7 to 5.6 percent. The affected population will require food assistance until October 2020 when the next harvest is expected.

The country office faces a critical pipeline break of the prevention of malnutrition programme during the lean season which is key during this period as the COVID-19 state of emergency has resulted in an increase in food insecurity. The pipeline break will lead to a complete suspension of this activity. WFP in The Gambia will prioritize treatment of pregnant and lactating women (PLW) and crisis response during the lean season (June – October) to vulnerable populations and nutritional support to children aged 6-23 months.



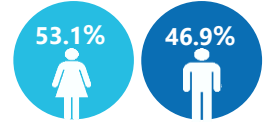
## In Numbers

174.4 mt of food assistance distributed

US\$ 252,994 cash-based transfers made

US\$5.5 m six months (October 2020-March 2021) net funding requirements

171,772 people assisted in September 2020



## Operational Updates

- COVID-19 situation in the country:** The Gambia registered a total of 3,585 COVID-19 cases at the end of September. The bulk of the active cases remain asymptomatic. Eight new deaths were also recorded, taking the total to 108. Following the expiration of the current state of public emergency effective midnight on 17 September, the Government of The Gambia announced a suspension of the daily night curfew (which was from 10pm to 5am).
- With the support of development partners, the Government of The Gambia is preparing for the reopening of the school system (target date set for October 2020). The Government has instituted under the leadership of the Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education (MoBSE) a working group tasked with the development of a strategy for the reopening of schools across the country. The working group is led by MoBSE, WFP and UNICEF. As part of the working group, WFP in collaboration with UNICEF is also supporting the development of a "catch-up plan" that will help recover instructional and learning hours disrupted by school closure since March 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- WFP continues to provide technical support to the Government through the National Disaster Management Agency (NDMA) to conduct rapid needs assessments and monitoring the impact of the ongoing heavy rainfall and windstorms across the country. Initial assessments indicate that flash floods, windstorms, domestic and bush fires affected 20,708 persons (912 households) across the country. The affected families need food assistance, shelter and clothing support.
- The ongoing mobile vulnerability assessment and mapping (mVAM) food security and market price assessment by WFP and the Government continues to reveal rising food insecurity across the country. The number of people with insufficient food intake rose to 22 percent in August compared to 20 percent in July 2020, and the situation is expected to worsen as more people continue to lose income and livelihoods as a result of the surging COVID-19 pandemic across all regions of the country.

Contact info: [anta.kahjanneh@wfp.org](mailto:anta.kahjanneh@wfp.org)

Country Director: Yasuhiro Tsumura

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

Main photo credit: ©Mamadou Jallow/WFP The Gambia

Caption: Through the cash for work project, WFP supported rural women who were delayed by the COVID-19 pandemic in the Central River Region (CRR) in harvesting their rice.

## Country Strategic Plan (Jan 2019- Dec 2021)

2020 Total Requirement (in USD)	2020 Allocated Contributions (in USD)	Six Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
23.1 m	8 m	5.5 m

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

**Strategic Outcome 1:** Crisis-affected populations, including those impacted by seasonal shocks, in targeted areas are able to meet their basic food and nutrition needs during and in the aftermath of crisis

**Focus area:** Crisis Response

**Strategic Outcome 2:** Food-insecure populations including school-aged children, in targeted areas have access to adequate and nutritious food all year

**Focus area:** Resilience Building

#### Activities:

- Provide food assistance to crisis-affected populations
- Provide school meals to vulnerable pre- and primary school children during the school year, and strengthen capacity of local government to manage school meals programmes as a national safety net

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

**Strategic Outcome 3:** Vulnerable populations including children and pregnant and lactating women and girls and other nutritionally vulnerable individuals, in food insecure regions have improved nutritional status by 2023

**Focus area:** Resilience Building

#### Activities:

- Provide specialized nutritious foods to pregnant and lactating women and girls and children under five to treat and prevent acute and chronic malnutrition and provide training and technical support to national institutions to manage nutrition programmes

### Strategic Result 3: Countries strengthened capacities

**Strategic Outcome 4:** Food-insecure smallholders including vulnerable households in targeted areas have enhanced livelihoods and resilience to better support food security and nutrition needs by 2023

**Focus area:** Resilience Building

#### Activities:

- Provide supply chain and market support including Home-Grown School Feeding (HGFSF) to farmers to increase productivity and access to markets, complemented by community asset creation through Food Assistance for Assets (FFA)

### Strategic Result 5: Countries strengthened capacities

**Strategic Outcome 5:** National and subnational institutions have strengthened capacity to meet Zero Hunger Targets by 2023.

**Focus area:** Root causes

#### Activities:

- Provide technical assistance to the Government on the implementation of the National Social Protection Policy (NSSP), with focus on the gradual handover of the home-grown school feeding programme, resource mobilisation and disaster preparedness and shock response systems

- The monthly treatment of moderate acute malnutrition (MAM) targeting children aged 6-59 months continued. Treatment was provided to 2,498 children in September 2020. Nutrition education and counselling was also delivered at all the distribution points providing MAM services.
- WFP is also supporting the Government through the Ministries of Trade and Agriculture to establish and roll out cross-border food trade monitoring system. An agreement has been signed and monitoring is expected to start in October 2020.
- Preparations to carry out a rice miller assessment at Central River Region (CRR) is ongoing, to identify the capacity of rice milling machines in different villages for a possible partnership with WFP on the rice fortification programme. Three rice millers have been identified for cooperation with WFP for the production of fortified rice in support of the home-grown food feeding programme in CRR.
- WFP is also expected to receive rice donation from the Government of The Gambia to support families affected by the economic downturn of the COVID-19 pandemic. WFP will facilitate transportation and distribution of the rice to provide immediate food support to target most food insecure and vulnerable population.

## Challenges

- The country office faces critical resource constraints for the prevention of malnutrition programme during the lean season, which is key during this period as the COVID-19 state of emergency has resulted in an increase in food insecurity. These gaps will lead to a complete suspension of this activity. The country office plans to prioritize malnutrition treatment of pregnant and lactating women (PLW), crisis response during the 2020 lean season (June-October) to vulnerable populations and nutritional support to children aged 6-23 months.

## Partnerships

- WFP 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 chairs the UN Disaster Risk Reduction group and participates in working groups in key sectors such as education and social protection.

## Donors

Donors to WFP The Gambia in 2020 include the Government of The Gambia. Additional support has been provided by the UN Peacebuilding Fund.