



World Food Programme

SAVING
LIVES
CHANGING
LIVES

WFP Cuba Country Brief October 2020

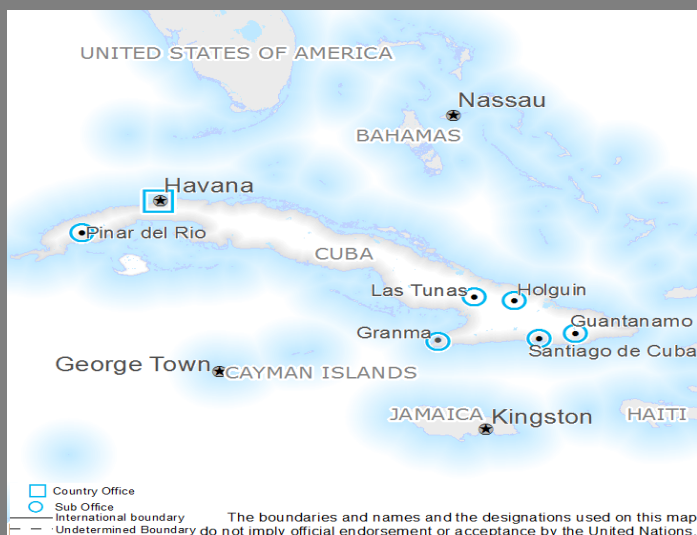


Operational Context

Over the last 50 years, Cuba's comprehensive social protection programmes have primarily eradicated poverty and hunger. Although effective, these programmes mostly rely on food imports and strain the national budget. Recurrent natural shocks place further challenges to food security and nutrition.

WFP accompanies the Government on its efforts to develop a new management model to make food-based social protection programmes more efficient and sustainable. WFP supports social safety nets for different vulnerable groups, strengthens agricultural value chains and promotes the improvement of resilience and disaster risk management. These activities contribute to Sustainable Goals 2, 5 and 17.

WFP has been working with Cuba since 1963.



Population: **11.2 million**

2018 Human Development Index:
72 out of 189

Income Level: **Upper middle**

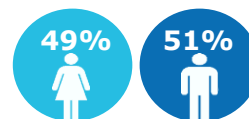
2017 Gender Inequality Index: **67 out of 162**

In Numbers

USD 7.8 m total requirements

94.00 mt of food assistance distributed

103,660 people assisted
(September 2020)



Operational Updates

- WFP distributed micronutrient powder (MNP) to children between 6 and 11 months old, and Super Cereal (CSB) to children aged 12-23 months and pregnant and lactating women in selected municipalities of Santiago de Cuba and Guantanamo provinces. WFP also distributed Super Cereal to elderly people and vulnerable population through the community canteens in 22 selected municipalities from the five eastern provinces.

COVID-19 response

- In October, Government authorities lifted the restrictive measures in La Habana based on the improvements in the evolution of the pandemic. Likewise, the rest of the provinces maintained a favorable evolution, except Pinar del Río and Ciego de Avila, which increased the number of confirmed cases. As of October, national authorities reported a total of 6,887 confirmed cases, 6,245 recovered and 128 deaths.
- As part of the UN socio-economic response plan to COVID-19, WFP continued distributing beans, rice and vegetable oil in the five eastern provinces through the community canteens.
- WFP is also supporting the local food systems, social protection programmes, school feeding, nutrition interventions and logistics jointly with FAO, IFAD, UNDP, UNICEF and other partners. A joint resource mobilization effort is ongoing, supported by the Resident Coordinator and the Government.

Emergency Preparedness and Response

- In close coordination with the National Civil Defence, WFP continues monitoring the evolution of the current hurricane season in the Atlantic Basin which is considered as one of the most active in the last decades.

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WFP Country Strategy



Interim Country Strategic Plan (2020)

Total Requirement (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)	Six Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
7.8 m	14.3 m	0.8 m

Strategic Result 3: Food systems are sustainable

Strategic Outcome 1: Key food system stakeholders have enhanced capacities to mitigate risks and better support social safety nets by 2021

Focus area: Root causes

Activity 1:

- Provide training, equipment and technical assistance to smallholder women and men, including young people, cooperatives, distributors and other stakeholders in agricultural value chains

Strategic Result 2: End malnutrition

Strategic Outcome 2: Nutritionally vulnerable groups, including school-age children, have improved nutrition status and more diversified and nutritious diets by 2021

Focus area: Root causes

Activity 2:

- Provide unconditional food assistance to shock-affected populations from prepositioned food stocks to ensure swift delivery.

Activity 3:

- Provide food assistance and educational messages to school-age children through the school feeding programme and training and technical assistance to national and local experts and decision makers involved in the programme

Strategic Result 5: Developing countries have strengthened capacity to implement the SDGs

Strategic Outcome 3: National and local authorities have strengthened capacities to ensure food and nutrition systems' resilience to shocks by 2021

Focus area: Root causes

Activity 4:

- Strengthen the capacities of national and local decision makers in disaster and climate risk management, emergency preparedness and response, food security and nutrition analysis and monitoring and information management

Strategic Result 1: Everyone has access to food

Strategic Outcome 4: Populations affected by natural hazards maintain access to food during and in the aftermath of a disaster

Focus area: Crisis response

Activity 5:

- Provide timely food assistance to shock-affected people using pre-positioned stock, and supply non-food items to support the local food distribution system

Donors

European Union, ECHO, Government of Cuba, Italy, KOICA and the Russian Federation.

Monitoring

- Field monitors continues visiting selected institutions along with government counterparts, in order to monitor WFP's food stocks and distribution to final beneficiaries.

Partnership

- The Nobel Peace Prize had a wide press coverage in the country and the Cuban President praised the exemplary support of WFP for decades. WFP Executive Director replied recognizing the Cuban Government's efforts to improve food security and nutrition and highlighted the close collaboration between WFP and Cuba.
- In celebration of the World Food Day, WFP visited agricultural cooperatives in the capital along with counterparts from the Ministry of Agriculture and the national Government. The agricultural production of the capital only covers the 10 percent of its population food needs. WFP will explore future collaborations with counterparts for strengthening the local food system in La Habana. In the province of Las Tunas, WFP carried out a small activity for promoting healthy nutritional habits to elderly people in a community canteen.
- WFP, FAO and the Ministry of Education initiated strategic discussions to explore opportunities of collaboration on school feeding, leveraging on synergies within ongoing projects. As a result, it is envisaged a more comprehensive support package that will inform resource mobilization for future scale up.

Challenges

- The COVID-19 crisis has caused delays in the implementation of the capacity strengthening activities of the Interim Country Strategic Plan. However, trainings, assessments and meetings have been adjusted to be carried out virtually.
- The COVID-19 has also affected the procurement process considering that no commercial airlines are travelling to Cuba and the courier service is not available, with an increase in external transport costs. In addition, the increasing of embargo restrictions has diffculted the payments to international suppliers.
- Although no timeline has been confirmed, the Government has announced the monetary unification which could trigger an increase in programmatic costs.