Operational Context

The Republic of Benin is a low-income West African country ranked 158 out of 189 countries on the 2020 Human Development Index report. The estimated population of 11.8 million is predominantly rural and juvenile, with an average age of 21 years. The quality of education and the school environment are poor, and in many rural districts the net enrolment rate at primary schools remains below 50 percent, particularly among girls.

The agricultural sector, predominantly small fragmented farms with low productivity, employs around 70 percent of the population and contributes 33 percent of GDP.

Households spend on average 63 percent of their budget on food. Food insecurity mostly affects impoverished rural households, worsens during the lean season and increases after natural disasters such as the heavy floods that affect the country every rainy season. Benin is classified by RISK INFORM as the 36th nation most vulnerable to climate change out of 190 states considered.

In Benin, from 3 January 2020 to 3 June 2021, 8,082 cases of COVID-19 and have been confirmed including 102 deaths. As of 31 May 2021, a total of 12,934 vaccine doses have been administered.

WFP has been present in Benin since 1964.

In Numbers

- **1,342 mt** of food assistance distributed in April
- **USD 1.1 m** six months net funding requirements (June-November 2021)
- **612,860 people assisted** in April 2021

Operational Updates

**Implementation of a Benin school feeding model**

- WFP supports the Government of Benin’s national development priorities - of achieving food and nutrition security and promoting access to education - through the National Integrated School Feeding Programme (PNASI 2017-2021).

- A national committee was established to pilot the design of a national home-grown school feeding (HGSF) model adapted to the local context, which is being tested in 30 selected primary schools. The HGSF links school feeding programmes with local smallholder farmers to provide schoolchildren with locally produced food that is safe, diverse, and nutritious. WFP’s role within the steering committee consists of identifying the schools, coordinating and implementing the pilot project, strengthening institutional capacities, and advising the committee.

- Partnership agreements were established with the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and with the World Vegetable Centre, who will share their expertise to enhance the school and community gardening techniques. This aligns with WFP Benin’s Country Strategic Plan (CSP) strategic outcome 1, which aims to promote education, health, and nutrition outcomes within targeted schools and communities, in a way that relies on and stimulates local food production.

**Community mobilisation towards the school feeding programme**

- WFP provides daily school meals to public primary schools located in vulnerable rural areas of the country, to meet daily food and nutrition needs of schoolchildren and to increase school enrolment and attendance rates. This includes facilitating the purchase, transport, and delivery of food items, including maize, rice, beans and peas, to provide a complete food basket.

- In May, WFP provided school meals to over 600,000 schoolchildren in targeted rural communities.

- WFP organized a workshop in Bohicon to meet potential local food producers and suppliers to the school feeding programme, and to invite them to participate in and apply to WFP’s food procurement process. This approach emerged as an opportunity to improve the livelihoods of rural communities and to strengthen the nexus between nutrition, agriculture, and social protection.
WFP Country Strategy

Country Strategic Plan (2019-2023)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2021 Total Requirement (in USD)</th>
<th>2021 Allocated Contributions (in USD)</th>
<th>Six Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>33 m</td>
<td>10 m</td>
<td>1.1 m</td>
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</table>

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

**Strategic Outcome 1:** Vulnerable population including school-aged children in Benin have adequate access to safe, nutritious food and basic social services all year-round.  
**Focus area:** Root causes

**Activity:**  
- Provide integrated and inclusive school meals programmes in targeted communities in a way that relies on and stimulates local production

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

**Strategic Outcome 2:** Vulnerable population including children under 5, adolescents and pregnant and lactating women and girls (PLW/Gs) in targeted areas have improved their nutritional status in line with national target by 2023.  
**Focus area:** Root causes

**Activity:**  
- Provide specialised nutritious food to children and PLW/Gs to treat malnutrition and prevent risk of stunting and support Benin health services on nutrition education and gender-sensitive behaviour-change.

**Strategic Result 3: Institutional capacity-strengthening**

**Strategic Outcome 3:** National and local institutions in Benin have increased capacity to implement an integrated school feeding programme and to achieve food security by 2023.  
**Focus area:** Root causes

**Activity:**  
- Provide technical assistance and policy support, including through South-South cooperation, to local and national institutions in the areas of gender-sensitive school feeding, food security, and emergency food preparedness and response.

**Strategic Result 4: Everyone has access to food**

**Strategic Outcome 4:** Crisis-affected populations in Benin are able to meet their basic food and nutrition requirements in the aftermath of shocks.  
**Focus area:** Crisis response

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

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Workshop organized by WFP in Bohicon to meet potential local food producers and suppliers. WFP/ Makeba Tchibozo.

**Capacity strengthening and knowledge management**

- WFP is encouraging a review of the National School Food Policy to support the Government of Benin in the development of a law focused on food and nutrition security. This law is intended to integrate school feeding. Under the CSP strategic outcome 3, WFP aims to institutionalize the school feeding programme and to strengthen the capacities of national and local institutions. Technical discussions have started.

- WFP is also interacting with the Regional Centre of Excellence against Hunger and Malnutrition (CERFAM) based in Abidjan, in order to explore areas of collaboration to support the Beninese Government in the fight against malnutrition.

**Monitoring and Evaluation**

- WFP has a robust data collection and programme monitoring system in place. The platform MoDa (Mobile Operational Data Acquisition) is used to collect data with the involvement of school canteen directors, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and parent associations. To enhance monitoring capacities of partners, WFP provided training for all stakeholders involved, including NGOs and the presidential monitoring unit on the use of these tools.

- The technical committee made up of WFP and the Ministry of Primary and Preschool Education (MEMP) held a first working session aimed at harmonizing monitoring indicators of the Integrated National School Feeding Programme (PNASI). This will allow the two main institutions in charge of the school feeding programme to improve monitoring of the programme through common datasets and as such, implementation of the programme.

**Donors**

Top five donors to WFP Benin CSP 2019-2023 include the Government of Benin, Netherlands, Germany, Switzerland and the Choithram Foundation.