



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES

WFP Liberia Country Brief June 2021



Operational Context

Liberia currently faces a series of endogenous shocks, further exacerbated by the impact of COVID-19, and that are largely driven by currency depreciation, declining external assistance, weak domestic revenue generation, and limited expenditure adjustments.

Food insecurity is widespread with an estimated 2.4 million people moderately or severely food insecure (Liberia Food Security Assessment, March 2021). The Cadre Harmonisé (CH) projects that 900,000 Liberians will be food insecure during the height of the lean season (June to August 2021), with 160,000 Liberians falling into the emergency category (CH phase 4). Moreover, 63 percent of the population are multidimensional poor (with women more affected), 30 percent of children aged 6-59 months are stunted, and 3 percent are acutely malnourished.

The Government of Liberia's national development plan, the Pro-Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development (2018-2023), aims to make Liberia a middle-income country by 2030, in line with the Sustainable Development Goals. WFP's Country Strategic Plan (CSP) 2019-2023 links food security, agriculture, nutrition and education through an integrated approach. The CSP also focuses on capacity strengthening of institutions both at national and local levels.

To strategically assist the Government of Liberia's response to the COVID-19 crisis and address increasing humanitarian needs, WFP undertook a budget revision to its CSP, to scale up assistance from 175,000 to 2.2 million people (target). WFP supports the Government's COVID-19 Household Food Support Programme (COHFSP) to provide food assistance to 2.5 million vulnerable persons affected by the COVID-19 prevention measures.



Population: **5 million**

2020 Human Development Index ranking: **175 out of 189**

Income Level: **Low income**

Chronic malnutrition: **30% of children between 6-59 months**

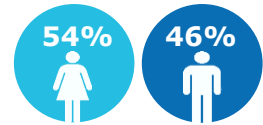
In Numbers

676 mt of food assistance distributed

USD 5,229 cash-based transfers made

USD 2.9 m six months (July - December 2021) net funding requirements

102,700 people assisted in June 2021



Operational Updates

- In June, WFP and partners continued the provision of staple food commodities to the most vulnerable households affected by COVID-19 preventive measures in Liberia under the Government-led COVID-19 Household Food Support Programme (COHFSP), with distributions assisting 97,675 beneficiaries (19,535 households) in 5 of the 15 counties (Bong, Lofa, Maryland, Nimba and Sinoe).
- As part of WFP's emergency food assistance in support of 91,305 severely food insecure beneficiaries (18,261 households) in four of Liberia's most food insecure counties (Grand Gedeh, Maryland, River Gee and Sinoe), WFP and partners continued the distribution of two months' food assistance assisting 3,000 beneficiaries in River Gee county in June 2021.
- WFP commenced preparations to continue on-site school feeding assistance. Due to the recent spike in new COVID-19 cases in Liberia, the Ministry of Education adjusted the academic calendar, which now foresees closure of pre-primary and primary schools from 15 August to 30 September 2021. WFP and partners are prepared to implement programmatic adjustments as necessary given these circumstances.
- In June, WFP assisted 2,025 beneficiaries (405 households) under the cash-based transfer pilot that aims to provide schoolchildren and their families with a monthly e-voucher or a mobile money transfer, to increase their access to nutritious foods. WFP uses SCOPE, its digital beneficiary management platform, to track the transfer of entitlements to the targeted beneficiaries. The cash-based transfer modality allows beneficiaries to purchase food at their local retailer, thus providing them with a dietary choice while contributing to the local economy. To evaluate and improve the cash-based transfer modality, WFP conducted lessons learned workshops in the Maryland and Nimba counties, with the participation of beneficiaries, retailers, cooperating partners and the Ministry of Education.

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Main photo: Credit: WFP/vannette Tolbert

Caption: A mother and her baby receiving food assistance through the COVID-19 Household Food Support Programme in Grand Bassa County.

Liberia Country Strategic Plan (2019-2023)

2021 Total Requirement (in USD)	2021 Allocated Contributions (in USD)	Six Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
10.9 m	1.9 m	2.9 m

Strategic Result 1: Everyone has access to food

Strategic Outcome 1: Food insecure populations, including school-aged children in targeted areas, have access to adequate and nutritious food, including food produced locally, by 2030.

Focus area: Resilience Building

Activity 1:

- Provide an integrated, inclusive and gender-transformative school feeding package to food and nutritionally vulnerable school children including take-home rations of adolescent girls in a way that relies on and stimulates local production (home-grown school feeding).

Strategic Outcome 2: Crisis-affected populations in targeted areas are able to meet their basic food and nutrition needs during and in the aftermath of crises.

Focus area: Crisis Response

Activity 2:

- Provide an integrated emergency food and nutrition assistance package to vulnerable households affected by disasters and/or other disruptions.

Strategic Result 5: Countries strengthened capacity

Strategic Outcome 3: National and sub-national institutions have strengthened capacities to design and manage food security and nutrition, social protection, emergency preparedness and response, and disaster risk management systems by 2030.

Focus area: Resilience Building

Activity 3:

- Provide capacity strengthening support to the Government and its partners to strengthen national coordination mechanisms, information management and monitoring systems for food security and nutrition, and disaster risk management

Strategic Result 8: Enhance Global Partnerships

Strategic Outcome 4: Humanitarian and development partners have access to common services throughout the year.

Focus area: Crisis Response

Activity 4:

- Provide supply chain and ICT services to humanitarian and development partners

- Under the joint UN programme on rural women economic empowerment implemented in collaboration with FAO, IFAD and UN Women, WFP engaged a firm with extensive experience in the fabrication and maintenance of agri-processing equipment. The firm will provide technical support in strengthening farmers' skills to develop the cassava value chain.

Assessments

- In collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection, the Liberia Institute of Statistics and Geo-Information Services and the National Disaster Management Agency, WFP conducted a countrywide market functionality index assessment of 56 markets to assess the current market situation, including issues of access and availability of diverse food products and stability of food prices.

Stakeholder Coordination

- To improve coordination of programmatic efforts and synergies with other UN agencies, WFP participated in several meetings and working sessions to review the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (2020-2024).

Challenges

- Seasonal challenges linked to bad and inaccessible roads severely hampered commodity movement throughout the country, further delaying the completion of the COHFSP distributions. WFP and partners worked with local authorities and community volunteers to improve passage through blocked roads, and used light vehicles to ensure the last mile delivery of the food commodities to the beneficiaries.
- WFP Liberia continues to face a critical funding gap of USD 2.9 million over the next six months (July to December 2021). Amidst the need to respond to high levels of food insecurity and a surge of COVID-19 in the country, funding constraints severely impact WFP's ability to sustain its life-saving food assistance, school feeding and livelihood support, as well as any contribution to the socio-economic recovery efforts in Liberia. Without additional resources to cover the funding gap until December 2021, WFP will not be able to assist 110,000 planned beneficiaries in Liberia until the end of the year.

Donors

Top donors to WFP Liberia Country Strategic Plan 2019-2023 include Canada, the Government of Liberia, Private Donors (Mastercard) and USA. Additional support has been provided by the UN Peacebuilding Fund.