



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES

WFP Cuba Country Brief July 2021



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: **70** out of **189**

Income Level: **Upper middle**

2019 Gender Inequality Index: **65** out of **189**

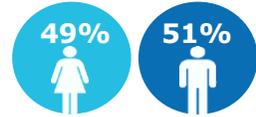
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In Numbers

USD 2.8 million six-month net funding requirements

60,1 mt of food assistance distributed

19,875 people assisted



Operational Updates

- WFP advanced in the implementation of the Pro-Act project -jointly with FAO- in seven municipalities of Villa Clara province. Local counterparts with the remote support of WFP are carrying out the distribution and the starting-up of agricultural equipment. Moreover, a second tranche of procurement process of equipment and training materials is ongoing.
- WFP donated 8.6 mt of milk funded by Switzerland to support the social programmes of the Office of the Historian of Havana City (OHHC) benefitting around 1,300 elderly people, based on the previous support provided by WFP to these social programmes.
- WFP continued foster remotely the project "Increased resilience to multiple hazards in areas of greater exposure and vulnerability in Cuba" financed by ECHO. This project includes activities implemented since 2019 by WFP and UNDP to strengthen the comprehensive management of drought in six municipalities in Eastern Cuba and Camaguey, and comprises activities to strengthen local capacities in Havana to manage multiple hazards. With WFP support, local and national counterparts are enhancing procedures related to the forecast of high-impact events, including modelling studies for heavy rainfall and winds and info-communication flows to disseminate early warning information.

COVID-19 Response

- July 2021 held the record of people infected by COVID-19 in one month (200,398), since the beginning of the pandemic, representing a fourfold increase over June's figure. The provinces of Matanzas, Ciego de Avila, Cienfuegos, Guantanamo y Mayabeque had the highest levels of transmission. In July, national authorities reported a cumulative total of 394,343 confirmed cases, 348,487 recovered and 2,845 deceased.

Country Strategic Plan (2021-2024)

Total Requirement (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)	Six Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
28.7 million	12.5 million	2.8 million

Strategic Result 1: Everyone has access to food

Strategic Outcome 1: Populations facing multiple hazards maintain access to food during and in the aftermath of disasters.

Focus area: Crisis response

Activity 1:

- Provide timely food assistance to shock-affected people while strengthening national and local capacity relevant to emergency preparedness and response.

Strategic Result 2: No one suffers from malnutrition

Strategic Outcome 2: Nutritionally vulnerable groups in targeted municipalities have improved nutrition status and more diversified and nutritious diets by 2024.

Focus area: Root causes

Activity 2:

- Provide nutritious food to nutritionally vulnerable groups through social protection programmes and a social and behavioural change strategy that promotes healthy diets.

Strategic Result 4: Food systems are sustainable

Strategic Outcome 3: Vulnerable groups benefit from local food systems that are more resilient with regard to the impact of climate change and more efficient social safety nets by 2024.

Focus area: Resilience building

Activity 3:

- Provide training, equipment and technical assistance to stakeholders of local food systems while ensuring a more diversified, stable and nutritious diet for school-age children and other nutritionally vulnerable groups.

Strategic Result 5: Countries have strengthened capacity to implement the SDGs

Strategic Outcome 4: National and local authorities have strengthened capacities to manage inclusive, comprehensive and adaptive food and nutrition systems by 2024.

Focus area: Resilience building

Activity 4:

- Strengthen the capacity of national and local decision makers related to the management of social protection programmes and disaster and climate risk, food security and nutrition analysis and monitoring.

Donors: European Union, ECHO, Government of Cuba, Germany, Italy, Switzerland, Republic of Korea, KOICA, the Russian Federation and Latter-day Saint Charities.

- As part of the UN socioeconomic response plan to COVID-19, WFP continued distributing Corn-Soy Blend plus (CSB+) in community canteens of the five eastern provinces, which also received milk (Switzerland donation). WFP also distributed rice, vegetable oil and wheat flour in community canteens nationwide to benefit about 66,400 vulnerable people.
- The Italian Government donated 120,000 euros to WFP to support the response plan to COVID-19. This contribution will allow to purchase 50 mt of vegetable oil and beans to complement the food distribution provided by the Government to more than 2,300 people affected by COVID-19 in hospitals of Havana and Matanzas, 2 of the most affected provinces.

Emergency Preparedness

- WFP is also monitoring the evolution of the cyclonic activity in the Atlantic Basin. In July, the presence of dry air and dust from the Sahara reduced the formation of cyclones in the tropical zone, despite the high sea surface temperatures. This situation is expected to change in the second half of August.

Monitoring

- WFP continuously monitors the implementation of programme activities. Considering the complex COVID-19 situation in the country, field monitors have reduced their visits to institutions and have increased monitoring by using remote alternatives, in close coordination with government counterparts.

Challenges

- Cuba experienced the worst economic downturn of the last 3 decades as evidenced by a GDP fall of 11 percent in 2020. The challenging economic and financial situation of the country has been strongly impacted by the COVID-19 and by the economic, commercial, and financial embargo imposed against it. The pandemic caused a sharp decrease in national and household level income sources, as well as increased the lack of food and basic supplies in the local markets. Furthermore, the monetary reform which started on 1 January has triggered an increase in the cost of living in general.