In Numbers

In August 2021, WFP assisted 463,573 beneficiaries with in-kind food assistance and 213,320 beneficiaries through cash transfer in the 9 drought-affected southern Madagascar districts.

With the beginning of the lean season, WFP is operating according to a scaled-up implementation plan for its emergency response in southern Madagascar whereby the organization plans to reach 687,000 people in IPC 3+, including around 370,000 people in IPC 4 and 5 who will be provided with full rations from September to November 2021. This is a key step forward as WFP and the other food security and nutrition actors had so far only managed to provide a half ration (due to financial constraints) with the exception of the 14,000 people in IPC 5 who have been given a full ration since June 2021.

For the December 2021-April 2022 period, WFP intends to gradually reach 1,016,000 people in IPC 3, 4 and 5 with full rations based on its revised needs-based plan. This scale-up is designed to address overall response gaps recently identified during consultations with food security and nutrition actors involved in the south.

Key Highlights

WFP’s Director of Emergencies and the Regional Director for Southern Africa visited Madagascar on 16-21 August to enhance WFP collaboration with the Government on the food insecurity crisis. The directors travelled to the Great South and met with local authorities and communities to discuss the ongoing response and durable solutions to mitigate the adverse impact of the cyclical drought situation. In Antananarivo, the team met with the Minister of Water and the Vice-Minister of Agriculture to discuss the crisis and ongoing response. Other meetings with partners and the UN Country Team were also held. The mission called for increased support as the dire food crisis is expected to further deteriorate in the months ahead. Both directors particularly highlighted the need to combine emergency food assistance with integrated resilience activities at the same time so that affected communities can withstand similar climate related shocks next year.

WFP has started the process of registering beneficiaries on SCOPE, the organization’s digital beneficiary information and transfer management platform, in the districts of Ambovombe and Amboasary. Among various advantages, SCOPE allows for (i) enhanced assurance that the intended benefit has been given to the right person and (ii) the secure management of data so that each person's data is further protected.

At least 500,000 children under five years of age are expected to be acutely malnourished through April 2022 in southern Madagascar, including 110,000 severely malnourished requiring urgent life-saving assistance, according to the latest IPC Acute Malnutrition analysis conducted in ten districts in the Grand Sud.

Operational Updates

Drought Situation

Madagascar continues to face the most severe drought since 1981, affecting most of the areas in the south, including Atsimo Andrefana region, the breadbasket of the Grand-Sud, and resulting in a severe humanitarian crisis.

The latest Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) analysis shows that 1.14 million people need urgent assistance (IPC Phase 3 or above). Amboasary Atsimo is the most affected district, classified in Emergency (IPC Phase 4), 75 percent of its population is in IPC Phase 3 or above, and nearly 14,000 people are in Catastrophe (IPC Phase 5). The situation is expected to continue deteriorating from October to December 2021, bringing the number of people in IPC Phase 3 or above to 1.31 million, including twice as many people in IPC 5 (from 14,000 to 28,000 people).
Drought Response
In August, WFP reached 463,573 beneficiaries with in-kind food assistance, in line with the planned target for the month. Beneficiaries served include 13,975 people in IPCS who received full rations of food assistance. WFP’s cash-based assistance reached 213,320 beneficiaries. As part of WFP’s strategy to couple general food distributions with prevention of moderate acute malnutrition activities, 118,900 children aged 6 to 59 months and 39,900 pregnant and lactating women also received nutritional supplements. In addition, 26,900 children aged 6 to 59 months were treated for moderate acute malnutrition.

Upcoming Planting Season
In light of the upcoming planting season, WFP is working alongside the Government and various partners to support the procurement and distribution of seeds for eligible households in the Great South.

UNHAS Flights
Between the first flight on 9 August and 20 September, the UN Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS) has transported 131 passengers and 220 kg of light cargo through 46 flights. This service operated by WFP provides humanitarian personnel with rapid access from Antananarivo to the following locations in Southern Madagascar: Fort Dauphin, Ambonbory, Ampaniphy and Tulear. With funding shortfalls foreseen as soon as January 2022, additional funds are urgently needed in order to ensure service continuity of UNHAS up to the end of the lean season (April 2022) and beyond if need be.

International Humanitarian Flights
As soon as authorized by the Government of Madagascar, WFP stands ready to resume international humanitarian flights (WFP Global Passenger Air Service) between Johannesburg and Antananarivo.

COVID-19
To date, WHO has registered 43,570 COVID-19 cases and 958 deaths in Madagascar. Although the state of sanitary emergency has been extended, internal borders have reopened, internal flights have resumed and there is no longer a curfew in place. Nevertheless, regular international commercial flights remain suspended.

WFP Regular Programmes

School Feeding
WFP participated in the Government-led school feeding review workshop held on 25-27 August. Building on the challenges and recommendations identified from the previous year, a joint annual work plan was developed for the new school year.

WFP has started implementing a home-grown school feeding programme in the Amoron’I Mania region. An initial mission helped identify the schools to be enrolled under this programme and liaise with school management committees as well as communities around the goals of this initiative.

Resilience
WFP continues the implementation of its Food Assistance-for-Assets programme in the area of Tameantsoa (District of Betioky) with a progress rate of 43% at the end of August. The activities initiated in June 2021 include the rehabilitation and creation of dikes as well as the restoration of a water canal.

WFP is supporting the development of a partnership between the Government and the Regional Centre of Excellence against Hunger and Malnutrition (CERFAM) on the evaluation, transformation and promotion of the cassava value chain in support of school feeding programmes based on local production in Madagascar.

Funding Challenges
WFP is facing serious funding shortfalls that can hinder its ability to assist crisis-affected people. WFP urgently requires USD 91 million to sustain its assistance during the next lean season (September 2021 – April 2022).

WFP currently faces critical pipeline breaks for its emergency response as soon as January 2022 for both in-kind assistance and cash-based assistance.