



WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME LESOTHO

2020 Annual Country Report Highlights



PEOPLE ASSISTED
370,998



FOOD DISTRIBUTED
3,681 mt



CASH TRANSFERRED
USD 8,228,587

WFP'S LEAN SEASON ASSISTANCE SAVES PEOPLE FROM GOING TO BED HUNGRY

In Lesotho, many families go hungry during the lean season (between October and March). Maseribane from Ha-Mojakisane Phatlalatsa in the district of Mokhotlong is 68 years old and receives WFP's drought emergency assistance. Before this support, her life was a daily struggle. She relies on selling home-brewed beer to feed her family which includes her five grandchildren. "The money I make is not enough to meet all the households requirements. I sell a beer for LSL 5 and when the market is good I make LSL 50 daily and I use the money to buy food," explains Maseribane. When business is not good, she depends on her children for food. She has 9 children who are all struggling to make a living and some have left for neighbouring countries in search for jobs.

WFP's drought emergency response supports 3,075 vulnerable households from two most severely food insecure northern districts - Mokhotlong and Thaba-tseka. Each household received USD 54.75 per month (combination of cash and commodity vouchers). For Maseribane, the assistance has made a huge impact in her life and that of her grandkids as she no longer worries about where the next meal will come from. "I am so grateful for the WFP assistance because there is food and together with my grandkids, we are able to eat healthy meals every day. I am able to save the little that I make from the beer business for other household items" she explains.

Another recipient, Mapuleng added, "At times my kids and I would go to bed hungry because we had no food. I am grateful for the assistance from WFP because we now have enough food to feed my entire family". She relied on odd jobs to feed her family of six children. In her neighbourhood, odd jobs were already hard to find and the situation was further exacerbated by COVID-19, so the assistance that she received from WFP was a lifeline for her family.

CONTRIBUTIONS

USD 24.19 million

[Full Lesotho Annual Report](#)

COVID-19 IMPACT AND ADAPTATION



The Government declared a national emergency and then a lockdown in March, 2020. The lockdown was relaxed on 19 May and was reviewed on a fortnightly basis. Lesotho already had serious macroeconomic and social challenges exacerbated by climatic shocks, political instability, and decelerated economic growth. During the year, the devastating economic consequences of the pandemic were evident, including an increase in unemployment and poverty.

WFP's emergency distributions were affected by movement restrictions and border closures, which hampered availability of supplies and ability of retailers to source commodities. There were also price increases in some commodities that required adjustments to the food basket, such as reducing quantities without changing the transfer value. Additionally, monitoring had to be done remotely.

Due to COVID-19, food insecurity has significantly increased in the urban areas of Maseru, Mohale's Hoek, Mafeteng, Quthing, and Qacha's Nek districts.

CROSS-CUTTING RESULTS



While progress on some gender aspects is evident - among them education attainment - Lesotho ranks 88 out of 153 countries on the 2020 Global Gender Gap Index. Women still face challenges around gender-based violence, low influence in decision-making at household and community levels, and a high burden of responsibilities. COVID-19 has widened the gap further due to increased unpaid care work, women's inability to access critical health services and compressed livelihood opportunities.

WFP's gender mainstreaming efforts focused on challenging the existing gender stereotypes and practices rooted in Basotho culture. In all Food Assistance for Assets sites, WFP advocated for the inclusion of women in decision making positions. WFP utilized retailer shops to discuss gender issues with assisted households. WFP worked with the Ministry of Forestry, Range and Soil Conservation to initiate the national public work guidelines that included gender, nutrition and shock responsiveness elements to advance women's position.

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Strategic outcome 1: Shock-affected people in Lesotho are able to meet their basic food and nutrition needs during times of crisis



202,594 people reached with food and cash assistance



38,496 children, pregnant and breastfeeding women received nutrition support



7 districts affected by drought and COVID-19 received cash and commodity vouchers

Strategic outcome 2: Vulnerable populations in Lesotho benefit from strengthened social protection systems that ensure access to adequate, safe and nutritious food all year round



118,134 learners received school meals



100 caregivers were trained on the ECCD manual on nutrition

Strategic outcome 3: Vulnerable populations in Lesotho have improved nutritional status at each stage of the lifecycle, in line with national targets by 2024



2,000 households from 4 districts with high stunting rates were provided with a variety of vegetable seeds and recipe booklets



WFP supported the Government with the development of the Fortification Legislation and Regulation

Strategic outcome 4: Communities in targeted areas, especially women and youth, have resilient, efficient and inclusive food systems by 2024



WFP linked smallholder horticulture farmers to retailer markets



More than 3,000 community members participated in intensified and upscaled household based assets creation activities

FFA

11,774 community members received cash assistance under the Food Assistance for Assets programme

Strategic outcome 5: Government and partners in Lesotho have access to effective and reliable services throughout the year

WFP supported the United Nations Development Programme with provision of mobile money to people assisted by UNDP's Reducing Vulnerability from Climate Change (RVCC) project. WFP assisted with cash payments through Vodacom Mpesa platform to more than 2,000 community members participating in land rehabilitation activities under the RVCC project.

PARTNERS

Catholic Relief Services, China, European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations, International Fund for Agricultural Development, International Organization for Migration, Food and Agriculture Organization, Japan, Lesotho Red Cross, Lesotho Association of People Living with HIV, Ministry of Trade and Industry, Ministry of Small Business Development, Cooperatives and Marketing, Phelisanang Bophelo, United Nations Children's Fund, Renewed Efforts Against Child Hunger (REACH), UN Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), United States of America, World Vision, World Health Organization