WFP Namibia
Country Brief
February 2022

Operational Context
An upper-middle-income country, Namibia has a population of 2.5 million. The country has experienced recurrent floods and drought, insect and worm invasions, and recently the COVID-19 pandemic, all having had a profound impact on food security, health and nutrition. Insufficient food production and reliance on poorly adapted rain-fed agriculture and external markets for food suggests that poor households are particularly less resilient to shocks and vulnerable to food price inflation.

Through the Namibia Country Strategic Plan (2017–2023), WFP provides food assistance to vulnerable people affected by shock, ensures adequate capacity strengthening to the Government, and facilitates effective policies and best practices. The addition of Strategic Outcome 4 to the current CSP aims to strengthen food systems and increase the production capacity of smallholder farmers.

WFP has been present in Namibia since 1990 as a technical partner to the Government, facilitating the development and transfer of knowledge, maintaining capacities to supplement food security and nutrition programmes.

In Numbers

Net Funding Requirements:
USD 4.7 m (March – August 2022)

People Assisted in February 2021
Home Grown School Feeding Programme: 13,915 school children

Integrated Community-based Food Systems Projects: 1,457 community members

Operational Updates

Home-Grown School Feeding (HGSF) Programme

Over 424,000 school learners at 1,530 schools in 14 regions of Namibia continuously benefit from the National School Feeding Programme's fortified maize blend. A total of 13,915 school children have benefitted from the HGSF since its launch in November 2021. The programme aims to provide diversified nutritious meals sourced locally from smallholder farmers. For country-wide reach, the Government is in the process of expanding this programme to an additional 29 schools in 7 regions. To commence this process, the inter-sectoral HGSF Task Force & Technical Working Group developed a workplan to guide implementation at every stage based on lessons learned from the pilot regions.

From 28 February to 1 March, 2022, Namibia joined other African countries at the African Union (AU) virtual event to celebrate the Africa Day of School Feeding, themed: “Nutrition and human capital development in Africa through increased investment in Home-grown School Feeding”. The Minister of Education, Arts and Culture issued a high-level ministerial statement, highlighting the importance of partnerships and collaboration for sustainable school feeding programmes.

Integrated Community-based Food Systems Projects

WFP is strengthening food systems by supporting the Kopano Farmers Group in the Zambezi Region. These farmers have begun piloting barley production to support poultry farming at the Liselo youth poultry project and Choi women poultry project. To date, 20,000 seeds of tomatoes have been planted while over 20,000 seedlings of cabbage have been transplanted by the Kopano Farmers Group. The harvest is earmarked for a readily available market in Namibia and Botswana.

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Photo: Barley production to support poultry farming in Zambezi Region. Kopano/ Joyce Mwangi
WFP contracted Roots Agriculture project as a service provider for technical expertise towards the upscaling of integrated food systems projects at Stampriet, Tsumkwe and Berseba. Roots facilitates learning, production, harvesting storage, processing, market orientation of both crop and livestock and diversity in learners’ meals. To date, Stampriet Primary School operates a chicken coop with a capacity of 1,000 broilers and 1,000 layers. To ensure continuous supply of chicken and sustenance of the operation, 500 broiler chickens are due for learners’ consumption and market offtake in 35 days. A variety of vegetables have also been planted using smart agriculture to ensure learners’ balanced diets and nutrient requirements.

WFP intends to use this school food systems model as a replica for other projects across Namibia in partnership with correctional facilities, communities, schools, and clinics.

### Anti-Stunting and Anti-malnutrition Campaign

WFP in partnership with the Ministry of Health and Social Services (MoHSS) embarked on a campaign to raise awareness on root causes and preventative measures for stunting and malnutrition. The target groups are vulnerable populations (pregnant and lactating women, children, TB/HIV patients) approached through social behaviour communication. To reach the wider Namibian population, two world Olympic champions were recruited as advocates for indigenous sources of nutrition and the consumption of healthier diets. The campaign is envisioned to kickstart in April as preparation for the Agri-expos.

### Partnership

Following the 3rd AU-NEPAD Rural Transformation forum held in Kinshasa in DRC, WFP Namibia hosted a learning visit by a high-level delegation from Zambia and DRC, from 28 February to 4 March. The visit was attended by WFP Country Directors and Representatives, Ministers of Agriculture, Ministers of Education and Ministers of Local Government or Urban and Rural Development and support staff from line ministries and WFP offices. The delegation visited a total of 10 food systems and rural transformation projects in Hardap, //Karas, Omusati, Oshana & Oshikoto Regions. The objective was to share knowledge on rural transformation particularly through working with rural communities and institutions to diversify economies beyond agriculture and boost trade and employment.

### Monitoring

To update national statistics on stunting and malnutrition in Namibia, WFP has received endorsement from MoHSS to conduct comprehensive baseline studies in Omaheke and Ohangwena Regions to inform the current state of stunting and malnutrition in Namibia and alter government programmes and policy dialogues.