Operational Context

Despite a promising environment for improved development, growth and stability, The Gambia is faced with increasing food and nutrition insecurity due to COVID-19, climate-related shocks, rising food costs and conflict.

The results of the 2021 Comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerability Assessment (CFSVA) released in February 2022, reveal the worst levels of food insecurity in The Gambia during the past decade (CFSVA 2011: 5%; CFSVA 2016: 8% and CFSVA 2021: 13.4%). The IPC3+ numbers are the highest in the last five years, doubling from previous years. The number of people in IPC3+ are expected to reach 207,000 during the 2022 lean season (from June to September), with 200,000 in Phase 3 and 7,000 in Phase 4.

CFSVA 2021 results also show a steep decline in the nutritional status of children under the age of five since 2019, with stunting rates at 18.6 percent (0.6% increase), wasting rates at 9.2 percent (4.1% increase), and underweight rates of 16.8 percent (4.8% increase).

In Numbers

92 mt of food assistance distributed
no cash-based transfers made
USD 9.8 m six months (April 2022- September 2022) net funding requirements
3,850 people assisted in March 2021

Operational Updates

Emergency response:
- On 13 March, the Senegalese military launched an operation in Casamance against the Movement of Democratic Forces of Casamance (MFDC), in the southern region of Senegal, affecting all Gambian border communities in the Foni region and nearby districts. This affected approximately 15,000 people, including Gambians and Senegalese who crossed the border into The Gambia, resulting in an influx of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees to be hosted by local communities.

WFP and IOM conducted a rapid assessment in support of the Government, and identified immediate needs such as food, WASH items and shelter. WFP is preparing immediate cash for food assistance for affected populations including IDPs, refugees and host families, and also coordinating responses with the UN Disaster Risk Management Working Group, to meet the diverse needs of affected populations. In addition, WFP is supporting the Government through the Office of the Vice President and the National Disaster Management Agency (NDMA), to coordinate the response at the national level. As the conflict continues, more people are expected to be displaced over the coming months.

Nutrition:
- In March, WFP’s monthly treatment of moderate acute malnutrition reached 4,508 children aged from 6-59 months (2450 girls, 2058 boys), and 4,500 pregnant and lactating women. A total of 54 MT of specialized nutritious food has been distributed.
- WFP conducted a two-day training in North Bank Region for village support groups (VSGs) on basic nutrition and screening using the mid upper arm circumference (MUAC) approach. This targeted 48 members of the VSGs from 11 communities, mostly women.

Resilience:
- A national inception workshop officially launched the Rural Integrated Climate Adaptation and Resilience Building Project (RICAR) on March 25, 2022.
The project is funded by the Adaptation Fund, at a cost of USD 10 million over a five-year implementation period. The event was preceded by two regional workshops in the Central River Region and Upper River Region, and were officially opened by the Director of the National Climate Change Secretariat. The keynote addresses were delivered by the Hon. Minister of Environment, and the WFP The Gambia Representative and Country Director. The first RICAR Project Steering Committee meeting was simultaneously held, with members approving the terms of reference for the first-year work plan.

**Challenges**

- The school feeding programme has been halted in March due to a significant pipeline break. With the upcoming funding and commodities procured, it is expected that the school feeding activities could resume in three regions from May 2022.

- Critical resource constraints are evident for the treatment of malnutrition, during a time when The Gambia is experiencing higher levels of malnutrition, as shown in the CSFVA 2021 results. WFP expects pipeline breaks by April 2022 for children (under the age of five), and for pregnant and lactating women by May 2022.

**Partnerships**

- WFP received a contribution from the Government of France under its 2021 Aid Alimentaire Programmée, supporting school feeding and nutrition activities in The Gambia.

- JAWFP (Japan Association for WFP) rapidly mobilised funding to support WFP’s immediate response in Foni region, for populations affected by the recent unrest/military operation.

**Communications**

- WFP communications team conducted a field visit to document the impact of the unrest to IDPs, refugees and host communities in Foni. Listen to the voices of affected people through this [link](#).

**Donors**

Donors contributing to WFP Gambia CSP 2019-2022 include: The Government of The Gambia, European Commission, Japan, the UN Peacebuilding Funds, France, JAWFP.