



World Food Programme

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WFP Pacific Country Brief March 2022



Operational Context

The 13 Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTs) that WFP covers are home to 10.4 million people across an area of approx. 500,000 square km of land and 27 million sq km of ocean - 6,500 km from east to west and 4,200 km from north to south, which is larger than the size of North America, and scattered over an area equivalent to 15% of the globe's surface. Gross Domestic Product in the Pacific is amongst the lowest in the world and, while levels of poverty differ widely between PICTs, hardship and vulnerability are increasing. The region is highly vulnerable to natural disasters, experiencing an average of three major disasters each year. It is particularly vulnerable to the effects of climate change, including sea-level rise, which threatens the existence of some atoll nations, and increasingly frequent and severe climate-related disasters. Evidence shows that pre-existing inequalities mean women and marginalised and vulnerable groups in the Pacific are disproportionately impacted by climate change.

The work of the WFP Pacific Multi Country Office is focused on supporting national governments and government-led clusters across the region to strengthen their emergency preparedness and response capacity in the face of cyclical disaster risks and now also, COVID-19. WFP Pacific's capacity strengthening work is in the sectors of logistics, emergency telecommunications, and food security. In addition, due to the pandemic, WFP Pacific is operating the Pacific Humanitarian Air Service to ensure the movement of humanitarian and medical cargo across the region. In partnership with eight national governments, WFP Pacific is rolling out the mobile Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping (VAM) to remotely monitor household food security, nutrition and food market related trends in real time and support evidence-based humanitarian decision-making. mVAM data collection supports gender and disability disaggregated analysis.



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Highlights

US\$ 0 six months (Apr-Sep 2022) net funding requirements

Food Security and Livelihoods

- On 23 March, WFP as the co-lead of the regional Pacific Food Security Cluster (rPFSC) partnered with the University of South Pacific to launch a Critical Market Assessments project in Fiji and Samoa. This will be implemented in coordination with the Ministries of Agriculture of both countries to assess market dynamics and advocate for data-driven decision making in response to climate shocks.
- In March, the rPFSC continued liaising with active national and regional partners in Tonga to collect comprehensive data on food security to better understand the overall situation since the volcanic eruption and to determine gaps to inform response efforts.
- WFP and UNFPA held initial discussions on partnership for responses with cash for emergencies in the Pacific. The proposed partnership will focus on UNFPA building upon WFP's existing work on cash-based programming with Government to access specific population groups with cash support.
- WFP provided its support to the design of the Joint Programme for Rural Women's Economic Empowerment Phase II initiative in the Pacific, leveraging technical expertise in data collection and analysis to address the need for improved data collection in the region.
- Under the Climate Risk Insurance Project, WFP initiated discussions with the Department of Social Welfare (DSW) for a handover ceremony of beneficiary insurance certificates including a launch event and developing communications materials.
- A memorandum of understanding has been developed for the post disaster assessment on Tonga with ILO. This includes finalising timelines, technical aspects and a review of the questionnaire. The assessment will provide information on impact of the Hunga Tonga-Hunga Ha'apai disaster on food security, livelihoods, jobs and skills of affected population.
- The country review of social protection and vulnerability in Kiribati, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu has been shared with the regional office in Bangkok to develop information notes for data-driven decision making.
- The final version of the SPACE-DFAT Report was presented to the Permanent Secretary for Ministry of Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation (MWCPA). Following input from the PS, the final document will be submitted by the MWCPA to the cabinet as an information paper.
- The Pacific Regional Cash Working Group (PRCWG) conducted a quarterly meeting to welcome the newly recruited IMO, discuss the Tonga response, cash dashboard, host an online session on 5Ws and to share the Solomon Islands Oxfam's recent pilot findings with the group as well as PRCWG updates.

Country Strategic Plan (2017-2021)

Total Requirement (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)	Six Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
27.65 m	16.49 m	0.00 m

Strategic Result 1: Countries have strengthened capacity to implement the SDGs (SDG target 17.9)

Strategic Outcome 1: Vulnerable people in the Pacific Island countries and territories receive appropriate, coordinated, timely and uninterrupted assistance to address food security and nutrition challenges following disasters

Strategic Outcome 2: Humanitarian Development partners in the Pacific have access to reliable services during crisis

Activities:

- Through the logistics cluster, provide national disaster management offices and other relevant national and regional institutions and partners with support for improving emergency logistics coordination and supply chain management.
- Through the emergency telecommunications cluster, provide national disaster management offices and other relevant national and regional institutions and partners with support for improving emergency communications infrastructure and coordination mechanisms.
- Through the food security cluster, support national disaster management offices and other relevant national and regional institutions and partners with food security data analysis as well as food security programme response design, coordination and implementation.
- Provide support to national, provincial and regional institutions and other partners for the development of innovative tools and procedures that address climate related disasters and their impact on people.
- The PRCWG conducted a decision-makers workshop in Fiji and two in Papua New Guinea (PNG) in coordination with the PNG Disaster Management team who also supported a Cash Learning Partnership Accredited Core Cash and Voucher Assistance Skills for Programme Staff training in PNG.

Logistics

- WFP as the lead of the Pacific Logistics Cluster (PLC) held two meetings in March 2022 with Donors, Government representatives, UN agencies, INGOs and the private sector to discuss lessons learnt from the Tongan emergency and transitioning to preparedness.
- WFP is supporting the Tonga National Emergency Management Office (NEMO) under a formal agreement to recruit a local warehouse-supply chain officer to aid logistics for response and recovery needs. This is in addition to contracting local service providers for inter-island transport of relief items and recovery building materials to the outer islands.

- WFP has procured five mobile storage units and five generators which were requested by NEMO for the Tongan response. These will be transported to Tonga through a Pacific Humanitarian Air Service flight in mid-April.
- WFP began a tender process for a Long-Term Agreement (LTA) with an international freight forwarder and logistics company to support the import and export of emergency relief items being pre-positioned in Brisbane.
- In March 2022, the PLC cluster warehouse in Nadi had 30 mt of cargo in storage. Throughout the month, it received an additional 9.4 mt of stock, dispatched 3.2 mt of relief items and released 1 mt of medical equipment and supplies. At the end of the month, there was 35.2 mt of stock remaining stored on behalf of six agencies – IOM, Peace Winds Japan, UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF and WHO.

Air Service

- WFP's Pacific Humanitarian Air Service operated two flights in March 2022. The first flight flew on 4 March from Fiji to Tonga, transporting 3.2 mt of humanitarian relief items for the volcanic eruption and tsunami response on behalf of IOM, Peace Winds Japan and UNDP. The second flight flew on 25 March from Fiji to Vanuatu, transporting 5 mt of medical equipment/supplies and dignity kits for the COVID-19 response on behalf of IFRC, MFAT, UNDP, UNFPA, UNRCO and WHO.

Emergency Telecommunications

- In response to the Tongan emergency, WFP as the lead of the Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC) is procuring equipment to enhance communications capacity in the ongoing government response in Tonga. This includes three Unmanned Aircraft Systems, HF and VHF radio systems, and additional satellite phones. Two satellite connectivity VSAT kits from the Government of Luxembourg are in Tonga, to be deployed to improve communication capacity for responders and communities in the outer islands.
- For the VHF radio network for Nauru's National Emergency Services - telecommunications equipment has been received in Nauru and VHF frequencies for the new network have been allocated by Nauru's Chief Regulator. A WFP Fast IT and Telecommunications Emergency and Support Team (FITTEST) specialist has been identified to deploy to Nauru to install the equipment and provide training on the VHF radio solution.
- The ETC Coordinator in the Pacific participated in a disaster preparedness training workshop with the Global ETC and partners from 27-30 March in the UAE.

Donors

Australia, BHA/USAID, CERF, SRAC

Photo credit WFP // 23 March, WFP Pacific MCO team at the University of the South Pacific.