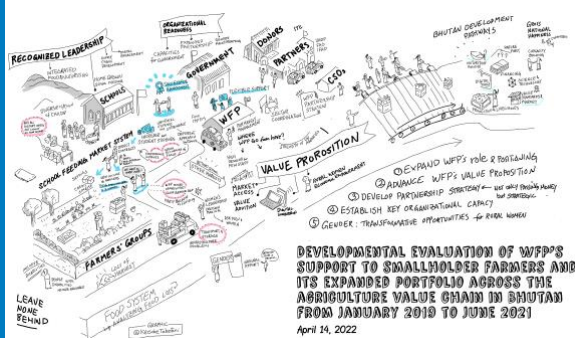




World Food Programme

SAVING
LIVES
CHANGING
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WFP Bhutan Country Brief April 2022



Operational Context

Bhutan will transition to Lower Middle-Income Country status by 2023 and considers WFP's support critical to this transition process.

The national poverty rate, as measured by the international poverty line of US\$ 1.9 per person per day, has fallen from 23 percent in 2007 to 8.2 percent in 2017.

Although overall nutritional status has improved, health problems related to a lack of nutritional and balanced diets remain a challenge, including micronutrient deficiencies.

Bhutan remains highly vulnerable to earthquakes but lacks the necessary data information systems, response plans and coordination systems to adequately prepare for emergencies.

WFP has been present in Bhutan since 1974.



Population: **0.73 million**

2015 Human Development Index:
132 out of 188

Income Level: **Lower middle**

Chronic malnutrition: **21.2% of children between 6-59 months**

Highlights

A meeting was held between the Ministry of Agriculture and Forests (MoAF), IFAD and WFP to finalize the design plans for the Building Resilient Commercial Smallholder Agriculture (BRECSA) project. Coordination meetings were also organized to identify key priority activities to support implementation of the National Humanitarian Supply Chain and Logistics Preparedness Working Group action plan.

Operational Update

- The project design mission for the BRECSA project began on 4 April 2022 with virtual meetings and consultations with the Royal Government and relevant stakeholders in the country. A tripartite meeting between MoAF, IFAD and WFP was conducted in March 2022, during which it was agreed that the detailed project design will be begin in April 2022. The terms of reference for the mission members were drafted and agreed, consultants were identified and deployed by both IFAD and WFP. As part of the technical assistant component, WFP has been allocated USD 2.6 million. The 22 million project has USD 13 million from the Global Agriculture and Food Security Program (GAFSP) and USD 9 million from IFAD. The detailed project design report is expected to be completed by June 2022 followed by the approval processes.
- Coordination meetings were organized to identify key priority activities to support implementation of the National Humanitarian Supply Chain and Logistics Preparedness Working Group action plan. The working group, established in October 2021, comprises technical staff from the Department of Disaster Management, MoAF and WFP.
- A validation workshop on the decentralized evaluation of the Country Office took place 14 April 2022. An evaluation was also carried out in 2021 to commissioned to assess the period January 2019 to June 2021. The key objectives were to engage in dialogue, draft actionable and realistic recommendations and management response to improve the next country strategy. The workshop was attended by participants from government agencies (central and district), UN agencies, other development partners of Bhutan, NGO and WFP staff from the country office and the Regional Bureau. Recommendations from the workshop were incorporated in the final evaluation report.

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WFP Bhutan Strategy

Country Strategic Plan 2019 – 2023

Total Requirement (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)	May - Oct 2022 Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
8.94m	6.50m	0.00

Strategic Result 1: Everyone has access to food

Strategic Outcome 1: School-age children, women and vulnerable groups in Bhutan have improved nutrition in line with national targets by 2023

Focus area: Root Causes

Activities:

- Assist the Government in its transition to a national school nutrition programme based on an integrated approach to school feeding that connects school feeding with nutrition education, school health and school agriculture and embeds gender across all activities, strengthened supply chains and school nutrition infrastructure optimization.
- Provide technical assistance to the Government and the national food production and trade sectors to ensure that sound policies are in place and ensure quality and safety of fortified foods, especially rice, throughout their supply chains.

Strategic Result 5: Countries have strengthened capacities to implement the SDGs

Strategic Outcome 2: Government has strengthened capability to address food security and nutrition challenges and prepare for and respond to crises, including those resulting from climate change, by 2023.

Focus area: Root Causes

Activities:

- Provide the Government with gender-informed and vulnerability-focused capacity strengthening relevant to its management of national emergency resources, development, enhancement and testing of national emergency response plans and coordination systems, through WFP's leadership of the emergency logistics and communications sectoral working group.

Challenges

- With the surge in Omicron variant of COVID-19 in the country, including within the UN house, most staff worked from home. Where possible, virtual meetings, workshops and campaigns were carried out.

- Following an official request, WFP investigated providing technical analysis and advisory support to the Education Ministry's School Health and Nutrition Division. The Ministry of Education's School Health and Nutrition Division will be implementing a pilot on decentralised supply of commodities for the National School Feeding Programme. A request was made to WFP to provide technical analysis and advisory support to the pilot project. WFP will be engaging in a partnership with academia or other supply chain partner to provide the support requested by SHND.
- WFP implemented the Invoice Tracking System from 7 April 2022. The system provides an electronic invoice approval workflow and allows acceleration of Logistics Invoice Verification creation in WINGS. The system replaces the Payment Request Form (PRF) that CO has been using before implementing ITS.

Photo page 1: A LIVE Illustration depicting WFP's expanded portfolio across the agriculture value chain, demonstrated during the decentralized evaluation workshop.

Donors

KOICA; First-line of Defence (USAID); Global Logistics Cluster support; WFP internal funds