In Numbers

1,377 mt of food assistance distributed*

USD 55 m six months (June – November 2022) net funding requirements, representing 67% of total needs

124,000 people assisted* in May 2022

*Preliminary figures

Operational Context

Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) faces a lengthy socioeconomic crisis that is already affecting people across the country. In 2020 the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) shrunk by 30 percent, the seventh year in a row.

According to estimates by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, in 2018 a third of all people living in extreme poverty in Latin America were in Venezuela, compared to 8 percent in 2014. Economic difficulties have led to large-scale population movements.

Over the years, access to nutritious food and a diversified diet has become increasingly expensive. This situation is likely to have been exacerbated by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has strained livelihoods across the whole Latin American region.

In April 2021, the Government and WFP signed a memorandum of understanding which allowed WFP to establish a presence in the country and provide support to beneficiaries in vulnerable areas.

WFP established a Country Office on 30 April and distributed the first rations on 6 July 2021. As of May 2022, WFP is providing assistance to targeted beneficiaries in the states of Falcon, Trujillo, Yaracuy, Barinas, Anzoátegui and Monagas, and is preparing to expand its operational to the states of Sucre and Delta Amacuro.

Operational Updates

- In May, WFP has reached 124,000 beneficiaries in six states. Among them, WFP reached 96,000 children under the age of 6 enrolled in pre-primary schools, 5,200 students with disabilities, and 23,000 school personnel.
- WFP launched its operations in Anzoátegui and Monagas, reaching 5,000 people over the first two days of distribution.
- WFP has successfully trained cooperating partners in Monagas and Anzoátegui on programme implementation and monitoring. Also, WFP conducted consultations with key stakeholders to adapt the school meals programme to better serve Indigenous people.
- WFP finalized some new field-level agreements in the framework of its expansion to the eastern states. Nine non-government organizations (NGO) will support WFP in the implementation of its school meals programme in the states of Anzoátegui, Monagas, Sucre and Delta Amacuro. WFP is collaborating with 12 partners, including NGOs focusing exclusively on western states.
- Jointly with UNICEF, WFP carried out trainings for cooperating partners on Super Cereal Plus, nutrition and water, sanitation, and hygiene. WFP aims to start distributing Super Cereal Plus in Falcon in June.
- A taskforce, including WFP and education and infrastructure authorities, was set up in Falcon to start planning the process related to school kitchen equipping and rehabilitation. Cooperating partners are prioritizing the most urgent actions to guarantee the kitchens have the requirements for the provision of onsite school meals.

Contact info: Chiara Cardosi (chiara.cardosi@wfp.org)
Country Director: Laura Melo
Further information: WFP Venezuela
WFP, FAO, and UNICEF continued to define the scope of their joint school-based interventions to build shock-responsive and resilient communities. As a result, children in need of medical attention for nutrition-related issues identified through WFP’s hotline would be efficiently referred to specialized healthcare centres. This collaboration is pertinent in the framework of the Nexus approach linking food assistance interventions with long-term resilience goals.

From July 2021 to May 2022, WFP purchased 20,837 mt of food commodities, of which 6,721 mt were distributed. WFP is currently purchasing rice and salt at the local level and is preparing to start local purchases of maize meal, vegetable oil and pulses. WFP plans to explore regional and local options for food purchases, to ensure needs are covered through regional alternatives while continuing to assess local producers.

**Monitoring**

- In May, WFP received 853 calls and messages through its helpline, out of which 55 percent were positive feedback and 33 percent corresponded to suggestions (mainly on diversifying the food basket or including different categories of schools in the target).

**Challenges**

- Due to the impact of the Ukraine crisis on the supply chain at global level, WFP established Food Supply Agreements to cover needs of vegetable oil in the Latin America and Caribbean Region, including Venezuela. WFP continues to face long lead-times due to a combination of several factors, primarily global delays in shipping. Hence, WFP is looking into expanding local purchases to avoid shortfalls.

- Many of the targeted schools in the state of Sucre are in hard-to-reach areas, which will pose some significant logistical challenges in the implementation of the activities.

**Donors**

Canada, European Union (DG-ECHO), France, Germany (GFFO), Italy, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United States of America (USAID).

Additional support was provided by the United Nations Emergency Response Fund (CERF) and private donors.