



World Food Programme

SAVING
LIVES
CHANGING
LIVES

WFP WESTERN AFRICA

2021 | Annual Achievements







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NIGER. MULTIFUNCTIONAL HALF-MOONS WORK IN PROGRESS BY THE PARTICIPANTS OF THE FFA ACTIVITIES

Half-moons are semi-circular structures used to harvest runoff for the growth of crop, trees and forage in moisture deficit and degraded areas. It is rainfall multiplier system that allows the growth of trees, crop and forage by intercepting runoff and reduce erosion. They help to improve soil fertility due to the addition of manure. Half-moons are multifunctional with various design: pastoral, agrosylvo-pastoral and sylvo-pastoral.

Foreword

In 2021, the Western Africa region experienced an unprecedented rise in humanitarian needs. Already from 2019 to 2020, the estimated number of people in acute food insecurity had grown by over 94 percent from 12.6 million to 24.5 million people and this number kept rising reaching 31.1 million people in 2021 due to the continued impact of various stressors.

In most countries, food and nutrition insecurity was aggravated by the continued socio-economic consequences of COVID-19 and the impacts of climate change. Expanding conflict, which continued to drive large-scale forced displacements and humanitarian access challenges, was a compounding factor in several countries, especially the Sahel G5 countries – Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, and Niger. The coastal countries also experienced an increase in food and nutrition insecurity with a number of food-insecure people that almost doubled compared to 2020, rising from 3 to over 5.3 million during the lean season.

The region's ability to withstand shocks continued to be hampered by underlying factors that prevented countries from responding, which included limited access to social services as well as fragile food systems. Partnering with various stakeholders, WFP strove to tackle these structural causes of food and nutrition insecurity while scaling up urgent assistance to address the most acute needs at the same time.

Though emergency needs continued to escalate in 2021, they would have been even higher without WFP and partners' interventions. For example, our Integrated Resilience Programme in the Sahel G5 has shown evidence that beneficiaries have an increased capacity to withstand shocks and stressors and are coping better against the current food crisis. Through this programme beneficiaries received an integrated resilience-building assistance package including asset creation support and capacity strengthening, malnutrition prevention and treatment among women and children as well as school meals. Some of the positive results include:

- more than 75 percent of those in the programme indicated that assets created had increased their agricultural potential through improved water management capacity and soil fertility,
- between 75 to 85 percent found that the creation or rehabilitation of assets have helped them be better protected against natural disasters such as droughts and floods,
- in Niger, over 40 percent of households have reported that distress migration has decreased, partly due to the improvements in their food security situation and increased livelihood opportunities.

WFP continued to invest and collaborate to strengthen national capacities in disaster risk reduction and preparedness. The three Rome-based agencies' (WFP, FAO and IFAD) Joint Programme for the Sahel in Response to the Challenges of COVID-19, Conflict and Climate change (SD3C 2020-2027), and the joint UNICEF-WFP programme on adaptive social protection in Niger, Mali, and Mauritania are prime examples of multi-year inter-agency collaboration aimed at achieving long-term humanitarian and development objectives in fragile contexts.

For 2022, this type of programming and initiatives to combat the root causes of hunger and malnutrition need to be supported and prioritized by all stakeholders, particularly governments, sister UN agencies, international and national non-governmental organizations, and our donor partners. This is even more important given the current situation where the lack of funding remains one of the biggest challenges in Western Africa as most countries are left with wide budget deficits due to Covid 19-related spending and have therefore limited space to effectively respond to the growing needs. Moreover, the Russia-Ukraine crisis in 2022 is further revealing the limitations of existing national systems to cope with such shocks.

This publication, WFP Western Africa Regional Achievements in 2021, highlights WFP's and its partners' collective success in staying the course and delivering to the most vulnerable to save lives and our contributions to changing lives. I invite you to have a look at our key achievements summarised across the chapters of this publication and to gain insight into WFP's important work in the areas of emergency response and preparedness, school feeding, nutrition and HIV, climate adaptation, social protection, gender, protection, digital solutions, supply chain and common logistics services.



Chris Nikoi
Regional Director for the
Regional Bureau for Western Africa

18,308,605

People reached¹ out of 19.2 MILLION planned (95%)

576,240 MT
of food distributed out of **956,538 MT** planned (60%)



USD 1.38B
Spent to cover all operations in the region (out of USD 2.2 B needs based plan)³

235
NGO, INGO, government entity and UN partners

19
Country strategic plans (3 ICSPs and 16 CSPs)

USD 277.2 M
Cash distributed out of USD **625.5 Million** planned (45%)



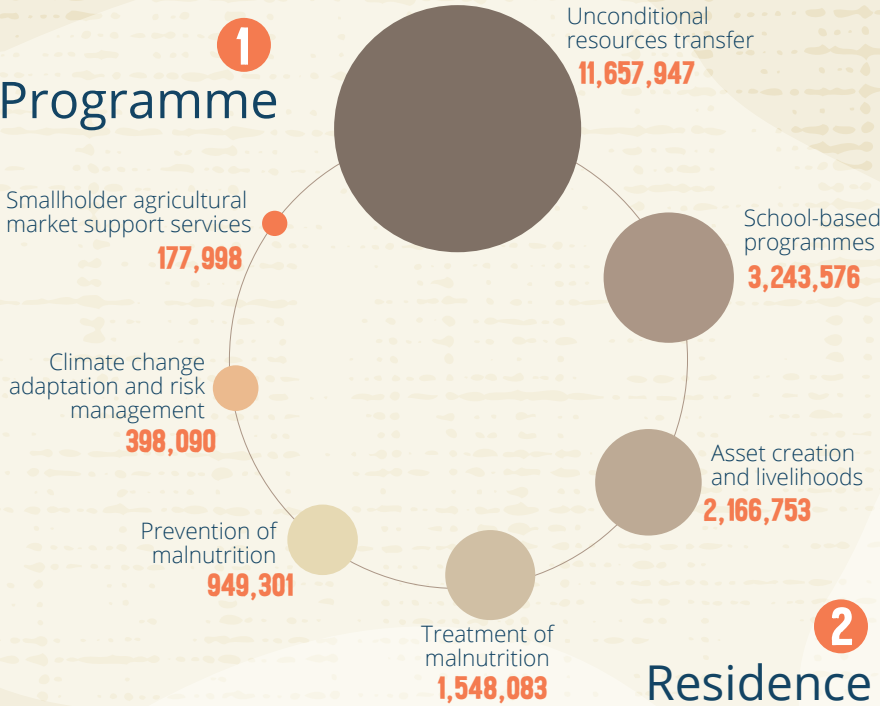
1.8 B
total resourced against **2.2 B** needs based plan²



9
Countries where UNHAS was operational⁴

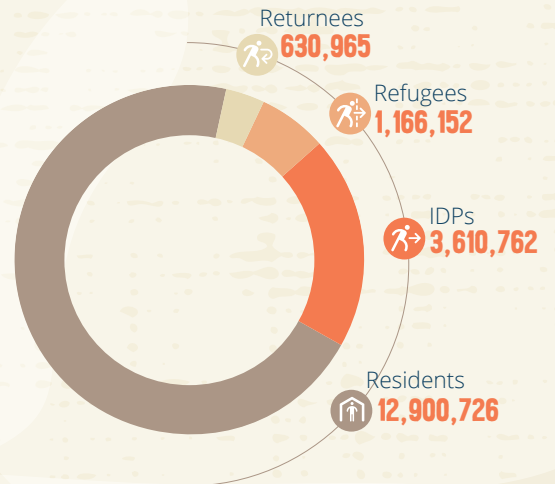


1 Programme

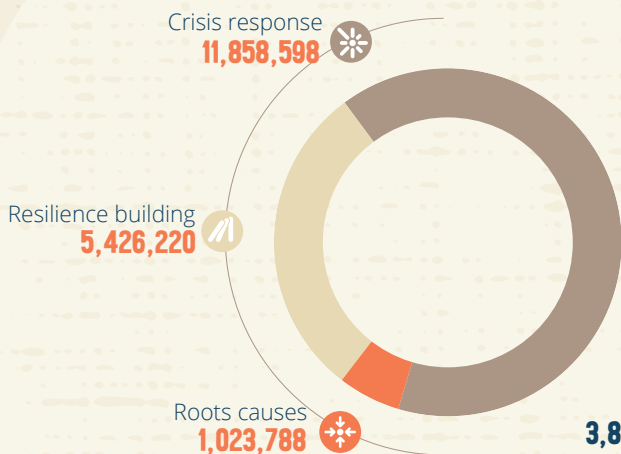


BENEFICIARIES REACHED BY:

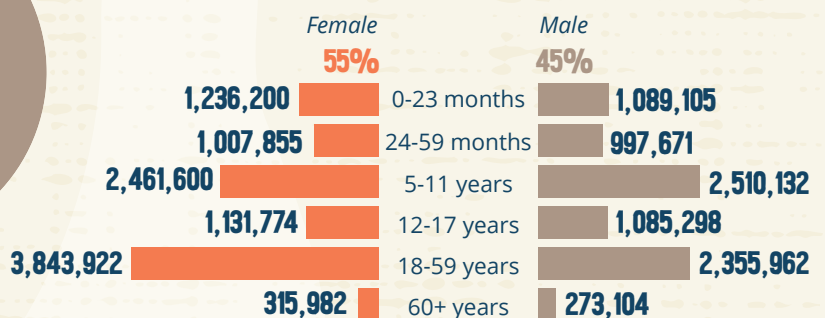
2 Residence Status



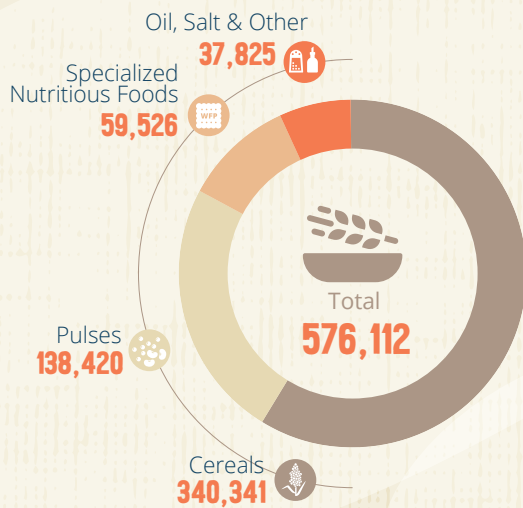
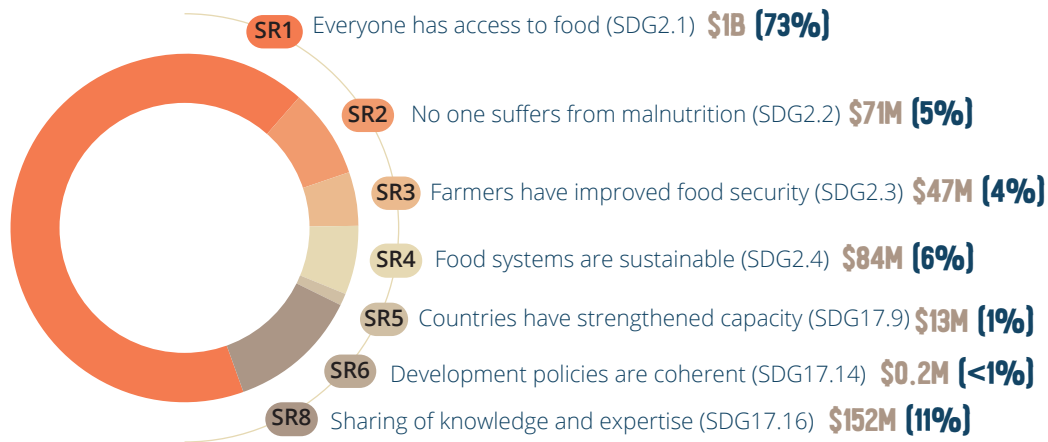
3 WFP Focus Area



4 Sex And Age

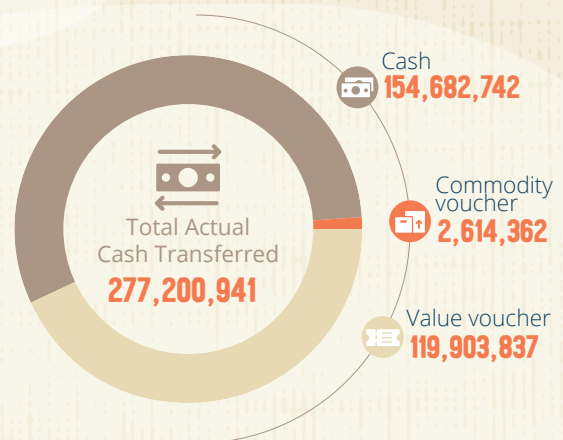


INVESTMENT BY WFP STRATEGIC RESULT (SR)

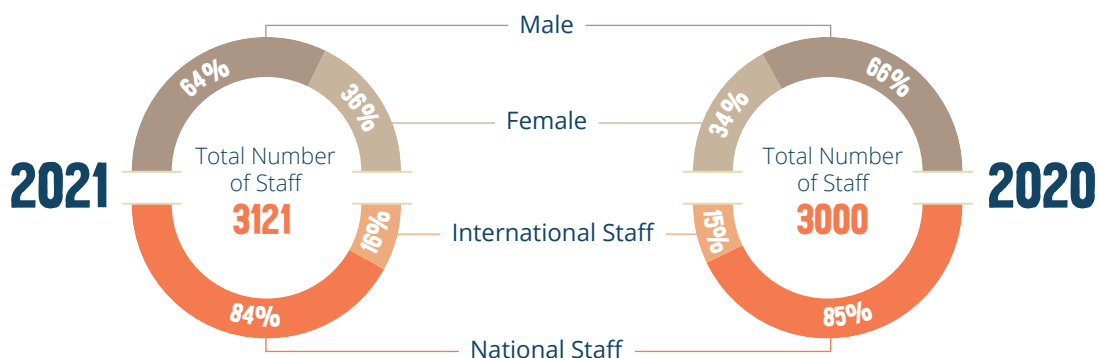


FOOD DISTRIBUTED (MT)

CASH DISTRIBUTED (USD)



WFP WESTERN AFRICA STAFFING



1 Figure excludes Tier 2 and Tier 3 beneficiaries, as well as beneficiary overlaps (i.e. same beneficiaries assisted under various WFP programmes).
 2 3 Source: Annual country reports.
 4 Burkina Faso, Cameroon, CAR, Chad, Guinea, Mali, Mauritania, Niger and Nigeria.

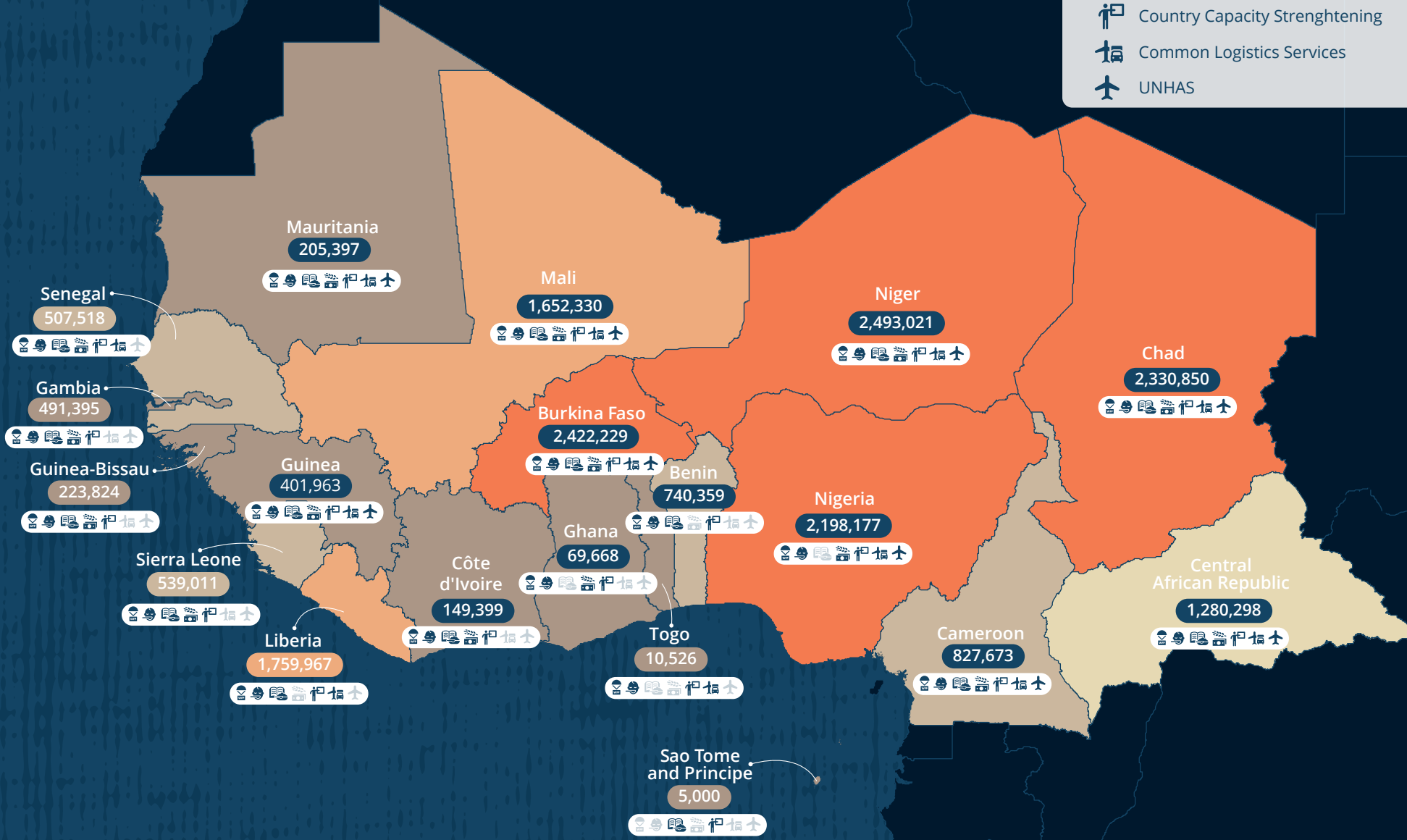
Map of Operational Overview in 2021

Beneficiaries Reached by Country



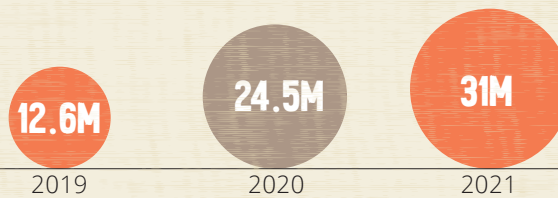
Strategic Outcome

-  Crisis Response
-  Nutrition (Prevention, Treatment)
-  School Feeding
-  Resilience and livelihoods
-  Country Capacity Strengthening
-  Common Logistics Services
-  UNHAS



Regional Food Security and Nutrition Context 2021

ESTIMATED NUMBER OF ACUTELY FOOD INSECURE PEOPLE (IPC/CH PHASE 3–5)⁵



In 2021, **Western Africa faced unprecedented challenges**, including protracted conflicts, health emergencies, climatic shocks, and economic problems. The rising number of emergencies coupled with the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated the food and nutrition insecurity across the region, with people living in poverty and increasingly fragile environments. Pressures such as inflation eroded household purchasing power, with food prices increasing by more than 20 percent in 2021, leading to reduced food consumption, the sale or consumption of productive assets, and other negative coping strategies, making recovery from shocks more difficult. Furthermore, the region experienced a 1.8 percent decrease in regional cereal production compared to 2020, mainly attributed to pest attacks, poor rainfall conditions, very long dry spells and flash floods.

The security situation in the region has also deteriorated, especially in Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger, Nigeria and Chad. Compared to 2020, there has been a 6 percent increase in violent events, mostly perpetrated by non-state armed groups. Conflict and insecurity led to the **forced displacement of nearly 7.3 million people in the region** (including 3 million internally displaced persons in Nigeria, 1.5 million in Burkina Faso, 1.2 million in Mali, 1 million in Chad, 565,000 in Niger, and 72,000 in Mauritania), and also resulted in the destruction of livelihoods, the closure of several health centres and schools, and an

increased burden on social services in areas hosting large populations of IDPs. Armed group attacks were also recorded in coastal countries such as Côte d'Ivoire, Benin, Togo, attesting to the geographic expansion of insecurity. Humanitarian access to conflict-affected areas remained a significant challenge: the deterioration of the food and nutrition security was particularly marked in areas with limited or no humanitarian access.

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic was also evident in 2021. Countries across the region experienced a continued decline in monetary exchanges, the closure of the borders, loss of income-generating activities, disruption to cross-border trade, as well as the rise in international commodity prices and freight costs.

The **nutritional situation deteriorated sharply** in Western Africa, especially in the Central Sahel and the Liptako-Gourma triborder area.⁶ This is a consequence mainly attributed to the deterioration of the security situation, the closure of health centers and the interruption of nutritional care and essential health services. The prevalence of acute malnutrition reached emergency levels in several countries, particularly in Mali, Niger and Nigeria. Alarming, two thirds of the areas analysed have a prevalence of global acute malnutrition (GAM) above the critical threshold of 10 percent and the rate of severe acute malnutrition (SAM) exceeds the alert threshold of 2 percent in most countries.

⁵ Source: Cadre Harmonisé

⁶ Liptako-Gourma (falls in eastern Burkina Faso, southwestern Niger and a small portion of southeast central Mali).

In 2021, 31 million people were in acute food insecurity (crisis phase or worse) during the June-August lean season in Western Africa⁷. WFP maintained the same level of assistance as the previous year, reaching **18.3 million beneficiaries** – which represents a 72 percent increase compared to 2019. Across the region, WFP continued to provide assistance through various interventions such as emergency food assistance to IDPs and host families, refugees, returnees and lean season-affected people; school feeding, including emergency school feeding; treatment and prevention of malnutrition; resilience building through food assistance for assets and complementary support, agricultural market support for smallholder farmers; and national capacity strengthening.

Besides in-kind food assistance, **WFP increased the use of cash-based transfers (CBT)** where conditions allowed. Notably, the use of CBT was significantly scaled

up in the region over the past years, with a 70 percent increase between 2019 and 2020; along with a further 10 percent increase in 2021, where around USD 260 million was provided to beneficiaries. In 2021, the CBT modality represented 32 percent of WFP assistance in Western Africa, helping to minimize logistical and supply chain challenges, while also stimulating local markets.

However, **funding gaps in 2021 forced WFP to reduce both in-kind and CBT assistance by up to 50 percent** of the required ration under WFP’s emergency food and nutrition assistance activities across most of the countries, particularly during the lean season when food insecurity peaked.

Beneficiaries Reached by Year – ALMOST 75 PERCENT INCREASE SINCE 2019

NUMBER OF BENEFICIARIES DISAGGREGATED BY COUNTRY

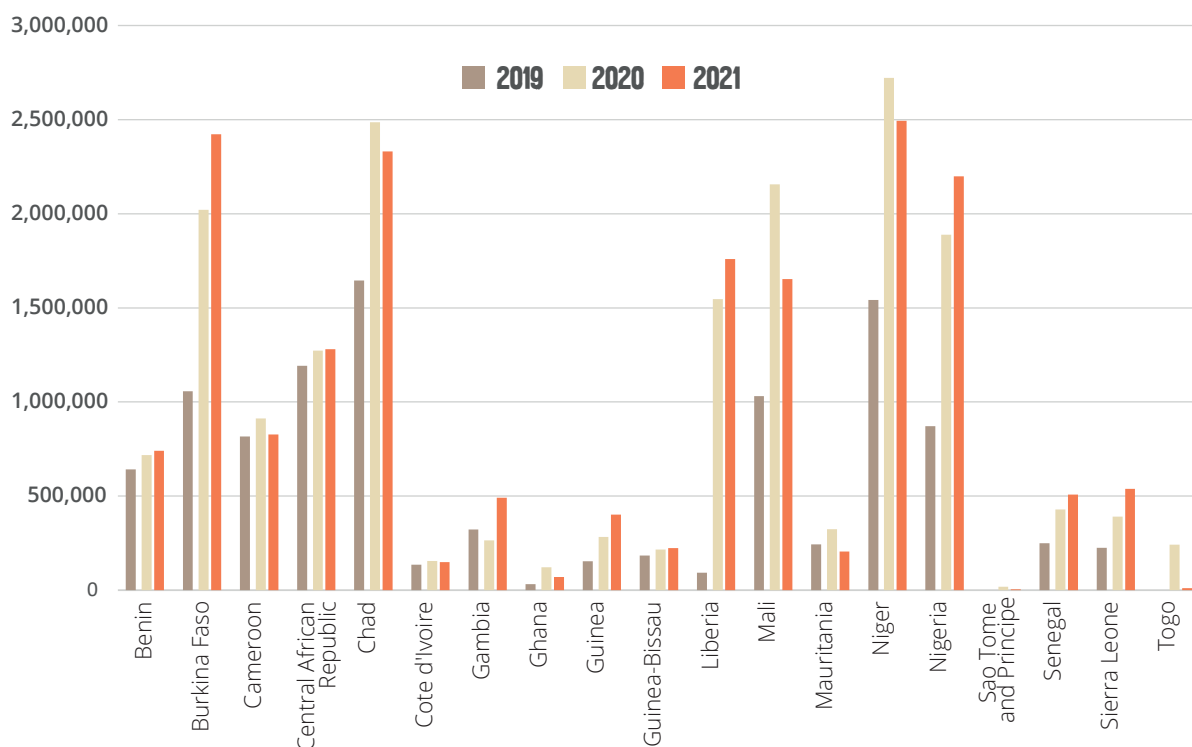
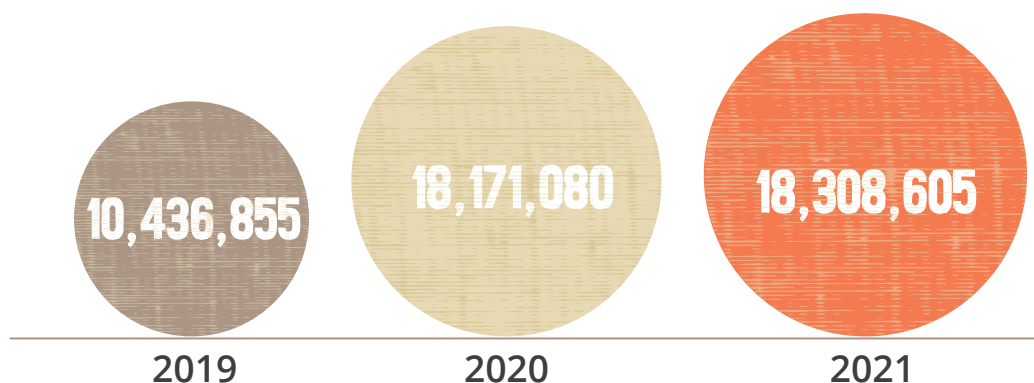


Figure 1: Number of beneficiaries disaggregated by country

A trend analysis of annual beneficiary figures shows a sharp increase from 2019 to 2021. The total number of assisted beneficiaries increased from 10.4 million in 2019 to 18.3 million in 2021 – representing a 74 percent increase between the two years.

⁷ Results of the Cadre Harmonisé acute food insecurity analysis from March 2021.

TOTAL NUMBER OF BENEFICIARIES BY YEAR



WFP'S EVIDENCE-BASED PROGRAMMING

In 2021, WFP refocused its efforts to better address research, analysis and monitoring requirements in Western Africa to improve its partners and own understanding of the prevailing food and nutrition security situation. Evidence generation was placed at the heart of its strategy to provide a more holistic, coherent and strategic approach to programme design - covering **the targeting of vulnerable locations, identifying trends in poverty and food insecurity, assessing the impact of food assistance**, and having the capacity to adjust promptly to changing circumstances through monitoring of field operations. WFP has also partnered with the Tulane University to strengthen evidence generation in Western Africa, with a focus on resource standardization, harmonizing tools and capacity strengthening to country offices.

With the aim to produce rigorous, transparent and consensus-based analyses of current and projected food and nutrition situation in Western Africa, WFP continued to support the Cadre Harmonisé (CH) analysis - a crucial tool to help the humanitarian community better plan their response to food and nutrition crises in the region. In 2021, the CH informed programming by classifying the severity of food and nutrition insecurity based on an international

classification scale. Two CH sessions were conducted in March and November 2021, providing an updated snapshot of food and nutrition insecurity for 17 out of 19 countries in the region.

Additionally, post-distribution monitoring surveys were conducted in assisted countries to assess the quantity/value, use, acceptability and quality of WFP assistance provided. Beneficiaries' perception regarding targeting, the transfer modality (i.e., food, cash, voucher and/or hybrid) and the distribution process was also assessed.

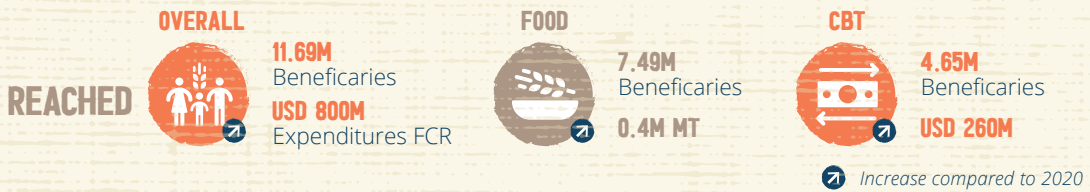
Evaluation evidence makes a key contribution to organizational learning and to ensuring that WFP interventions are evidence-based. Conducting regular independent evaluations of its assistance enables WFP to determine whether it is achieving its objectives and explore how things could be done differently to make WFP interventions more effective, efficient, impactful, relevant and sustainable.

In 2021, WFP completed five decentralized evaluations focusing on specific programmes in Western Africa, namely in the Gambia (nutrition activities), Ghana (nutrition value chains), Guinea-Bissau (school feeding), Mauritania (adaptive social protection), and Niger (school feeding in emergencies). In parallel, six other evaluations were underway (Benin, Chad, Guinea, Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia and Nigeria). Evaluation reports are publicly available on WFP's [website](#).

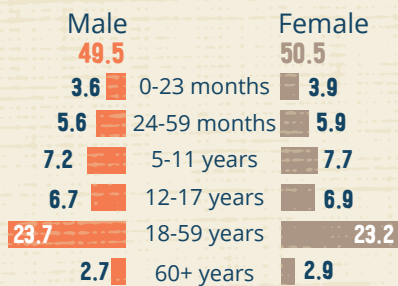


Emergency Preparedness and Response

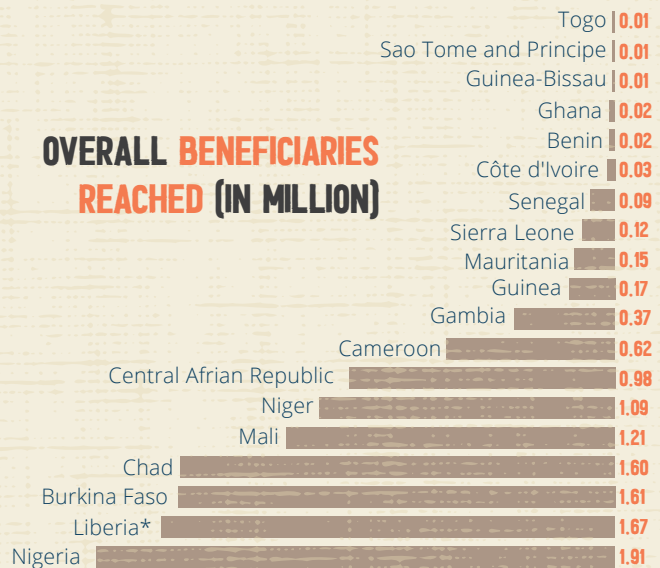
CRISIS RESPONSE 2021



ACHIEVEMENT BY SEX AND AGE (%)



OVERALL BENEFICIARIES REACHED (IN MILLION)



* Assistance was over two months for COVID response

Crisis response – Reaching more people

In 2021, the West Africa region experienced a record level of food insecure people to increased levels of violence, new displacements, and significant limitations of humanitarian access, coupled with the impact of COVID-19. The number of internally displaced people (IDPs) in the Western Africa region increased by some 1 million (from 6.3 million in December 2020 to 7.3 million in December 2021). In Burkina Faso, the IDPs number tripled from 0.5 million in December 2019 to 1.5 million in December 2021.

In 2021, to ensure smooth transition of the COVID-19 Response largely implemented in 2020, WFP Western Africa region maintained the same level of assistance, targeting in total 19.4 million people, of which 18.3 million beneficiaries were reached out of the 38 million people in crisis phase of food insecurity. ***More specifically for Emergency Crisis Response activities in 2021, WFP has targeted 11.63 million people, of which above 100% (11.69 million) has been reached representing 68 percent of WFP total achievements,*** providing emergency food assistance to IDPs and host families, refugees and lean season-affected people; including emergency school feeding; treatment and prevention of malnutrition. WFP has also put effort in 2021, on implementing Nexus approach where feasible, ensuring that Crisis response assistance is linked to Food Assistance for Assets (FFA) to small-scale agriculture, while providing national capacity strengthening. In this sense, WFP continued its support to Governments in monitoring COVID-19 impact on food security, providing food and nutrition assistance, as well as expanding safety nets to cover populations increasingly affected by the socio-economic effect of the health crisis. Inflation has furthermore eroded household purchasing power, with food prices jumping by more than 20 percent, leading to reduced food consumption, selling or consumption of productive assets, and other negative coping strategies that obstacle make recovery from shocks.

CBT activities have significantly scaled up within the Regional Bureau for Western Africa, with 70 percent increase between 2019 and 2020. Further increase of 10 percent has been recorded in 2021, with around USD 260 million provided to beneficiaries. CBT represented 32 percent of West Africa total 2021 portfolio, helping to minimize logistical and supply chain challenges, while also helping to spur local markets. Unfortunately, funding gaps in 2021 have forced WFP to reduce both in-kind and cash-based transfers by up to 50 percent of the required ration in most of the countries' emergency food and nutrition assistance, notably during the lean season, the peak of food insecurity.

Furthermore, WFP has provided critical logistics, telecommunication, and air transport services to the humanitarian and development community, while bridging critical infrastructure gaps, as well as strengthening the capacity of government institutions, non-governmental organizations and commercial partners.

Lean Season Response

During the 2021 lean season response, WFP assisted 4 million vulnerable persons (peak month in August) in Central Sahel, Chad, and Nigeria, reaching 66 percent of the initial Lean season target of 6.1 million people (out of 12.6 million people projected to be food insecure (CH 3-5) between June and September 2021). The level of lean season needs continued to increase in 2021 and were around 17 percent higher than the already unprecedented levels of food insecurity registered in 2020. Although 2021 was not labelled a crisis lean season as 2012 and 2018, it nonetheless called for large-scale responses that required timely planning and execution, adequate capacity in country teams, careful management of resources and well-informed operational and strategic choices. In 2020 and 2021, considerable investments have gone into building capacities and recruit specialized expertise in humanitarian access, civil-military, conflict sensitivity, etc. at regional and country office level. At the same time, WFP countries operations and security teams have developed strategies to reach food insecure populations in highly insecure zones. These investments and efforts are now starting to show their impact. An instructive example is how WFP mounted special operations that mobilized UNHAS air assets and civil-military coordination capacity to reach highly food insecure populations cut off from markets in Mansila and Tin Akoff in Burkina Faso.

Efforts to test and try approaches have taken place in 2021, including in Mali where the lean season response integrated support for the national social protection schemes with an additional caseload drawn from the single registry that WFP has supported for years. Complementarities with the regular social protection scheme have been put in place by adding top-ups through WFP's own response has allowed to effectively expand horizontally and vertically the social protection response. WFP continued to provide emergency assistance and nutrition services to Malian refugees in Mauritania supporting graduation towards self-reliance. Similarly, in Chad, WFP supported the unified social registry to be used to respond to seasonal shocks. These are important examples of how lean season can be more articulated with or within social protections systems and how WFP can invest in systems-building and pave the road for gradual shifting of caseload, possibly as part of second-generation Country Strategic Plans (CSPs).

Anticipatory Action and Climate Risk Financing

Anticipatory Action (AA) is increasingly receiving attention and offers great potential for rethinking lean season responses in a manner that bolsters communities before shocks and hunger strike. Acting in anticipation of disasters, using increasingly confident impact predictions, WFP can better protect vulnerable people, save more lives and increase the impact of available funds. Especially in crises involving climatic shocks, available data can help facilitate the decision to release pre-arranged funds for pre-agreed interventions before such shocks occur. AA helps at-risk populations avoid negative coping strategies and enables a faster, cheaper, and more dignified humanitarian response while protecting development gains. WFP has extensive experience and works with the African Risk Capacity (ARC) and the ARC Replica. In 2021, an ARC disbursement was triggered for Mali with a pay-out of USD 12 million for the Government with an ARC Replica of USD 6 million for WFP Mali. ARC and other forecast-based financing (FbF) are important tools that can be leveraged to escape the timeliness issues resulting from the Cadre Harmonise sequencing and traditional donors' funding cycles.

Conflict sensitivity

West Africa – and Central Sahel and Nigeria in particular – has witnessed spiralling levels of violence and increasing operational and access constraints in recent years and 2021 was no exception. Given the challenging operating environment, WFP has deployed expertise in key countries such as Mali and Nigeria, enhancing access negotiation capacity, prepositioning commodities in strategic locations and ensuring the mainstreaming of protection in WFP's operations. WFP has launched different conflict-sensitivity initiatives in Mali and Nigeria since 2020. In Mali, 280 participants from WFP and partner staff attended workshops on how to manage programs that take conflict-sensitivity into account at from the assessment and targeting stage, program design to implementation. A study was conducted by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) in 2020⁸, revealing that insecurity in Mali affects women and men the same way with the exception of gender-based violence

and women desire to be more involved in decision-making and peacebuilding. These findings informed WFP programming in 2021 in Mali. In 2021, a study was conducted in partnership with IFRPI⁹ to better understand to what extent do WFP's programmes address the food security and livelihoods needs of individuals who may feel compelled to undertake irregular migration. A baseline study was also conducted the same year, in partnership with FAO and IOM¹⁰. In northeast Nigeria in 2021, SIPRI conducted a study to demonstrate whether and how WFP contributed to peace through its intervention. A conflict sensitivity risk assessment has also started at the end of 2021 with Search for Common Ground.

Nexus approach in Western Africa

Throughout 2021, WFP's Regional Bureau for Western Africa (RBD) progressed on the articulation of its approach to operationalize the humanitarian-development-peace (HDP) nexus and WFP's programmatic offer in the region. As a dual mandated agency, WFP is addressing humanitarian and development needs from multiple angles, including interlinked programmatic pillars working at individual, household, community and systemic levels, promoting Government leadership and building strategic multi-sectoral partnerships. As part of a layered and sequenced approach, WFP has scaled up resilience interventions across the Sahel countries, complementing humanitarian responses through an integrated package of activities with other partners providing complementary multi-sectoral interventions.

8 Women in Mali: Key influencers in turning the tide, SIPRI, 2020.

9 Case-study : Irregular migration in Mali, 2022.

10 With the framework of «Réconciliation communautaire et renforcement du vivre ensemble au Centre du Mali» project.

Nutrition/ HIV



0.9 MILLION

children aged 6-23 months and pregnant and lactating women benefited from malnutrition prevention programmes in **13 COUNTRIES**



1.5 MILLION

children aged 6-23 months and pregnant and lactating women received malnutrition treatment in **13 COUNTRIES**



60,000 METRIC TONS

of specialized nutritious foods distributed, an increase of **11 PERCENT** compared to 2020

2021 was characterized by another year of significant deterioration of the nutrition situation in the Sahel region. The joint WFP-UNICEF **Nutrition Hotspot Analysis** conducted in six Sahel countries (Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Niger and Senegal) showed that approximately **6.3 million children aged 6-59 months** were affected by acute malnutrition in 2021. Compared to previous years, the number of expected GAM cases has never been so high, showing **an increase of 27 percent from 2021 and a 40 percent increase from 2020**, reaching a record high level for the fifth year in a row. As in 2020, northern Mali, the Liptako-Gourma region, the Lake Chad Basin and Chad were projected to be the most impacted as these areas had been severely affected by

humanitarian crises even before the COVID-19 pandemic. Insecurity continued to increase, particularly in the Central-Sahel and Lake Chad Basin regions, further aggravating an already fragile and precarious food and nutrition situation.

In addition to **improved needs estimates**, WFP also took steps to better understand the challenges related to the **coverage of nutrition interventions** in hard-to-reach areas. In Niger and Chad, the **Last Mile Project** aimed to identify bottlenecks and solutions to ensure the optimal distribution of specialized nutritious foods (SNF) to beneficiaries, improve programme coverage and avoid pipeline breaks.

In collaboration with the Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS) and Action Against Hunger, WFP brought together key stakeholders (e.g. ECOWAS, OECD, donors, UN, NGOs, civil society and academia) to share and discuss the **results of the study on regional food systems for safe, affordable and nutritious diets in West Africa/Sahel**. Based on three pillars (food value chains; food policies, strategies & frameworks; food and nutrition security), the **study** will contribute to a regional roadmap for resilient food systems in the region.

Carried out in eight countries in 2019 and 2021 (Burkina Faso, Mauritania, Niger, Mali, Guinea Bissau, Chad, Cameroun and Nigeria), the **Fill the Nutrient Gap analyses** indicated that on average **three out of five households in the Central Sahel cannot afford of a nutritious diet**. This is even higher in remote or conflict-affected areas. Non-affordability increases further during lean season and households in pastoral areas are particularly vulnerable. The non-affordability of a nutritious diet is particularly affecting pregnant and lactating women, as well as young children since proportionally their nutrient requirements are highest. To prevent malnutrition at scale, it is therefore essential to restructure food systems, build nutrition-sensitive social protection systems and develop markets with the aim to ensure access to affordable nutritious diets for all, including in remote and conflict affected areas. The findings of these analyses also enabled WFP to advocate for more nutrition-sensitive social protection systems in Niger, Mauritania, Mali and Burkina Faso.

In 2021, WFP aimed to make nutritious food more affordable by strengthening the **production of nutritious foods at community level**. Implemented in Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Niger and Mauritania, WFP's **integrated resilience approach** reduced the non-affordability of a nutritious diet from more than 60 percent to 7, 5 and 8 percent in pre-lean season, lean season and post-lean season in agro-pastoral and pastoral areas respectively.

Furthermore, as the **large-scale food fortification of staples** may also reduce the cost of a nutritious diet, WFP continued to assist the governments in **Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, The Gambia, Nigeria and Senegal** to evaluate opportunities for food fortification (rice and other staples). Moreover, progress was made in developing national roadmaps and assessing the technical feasibility of integrating fortified rice in WFP's school feeding programmes in Senegal, Cameroon and The Gambia. As staple food fortification is insufficient to cover the needs of women, adolescent girls and young children, due to their much higher nutritional needs compared to the general population, WFP continued to support the local production

of **complementary foods (also called 'baby foods')** such as fortified protein-rich instant cereals to cover the nutritional needs of women and children in a cost-effective manner. In Chad, WFP and UN partners (UNICEF, FAO, WHO) successfully completed the 5-year fortified complementary foods project (PRO-FORT) that reduced chronic malnutrition among children aged 6-23 months through enhanced local production.

While improving the production and supply of safe and nutritious foods is essential, it is also important to ensure the access and consumption by women, adolescent girls and children. Funded by the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa and piloted by WFP in Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger, **the CRIALCES programme** (Réponse à la Crise Alimentaire au Centre Sahel - Response to the Food Crisis in Central Sahel) is an innovative approach to improving nutrition outcomes among vulnerable populations by integrating local food systems in highly volatile settings. In 2021, the project made progress in strengthening smallholders' capacities, supporting the local production of nutritious complementary foods, strengthening national analytical capacities for monitoring markets and food prices, and preventing malnutrition among pregnant and lactating women and children aged 6-23 months by supporting their access to nutritious food through vouchers.

In addition to the CRIALCES pilot countries, enhancing nutrition value chains was WFP's key objective in other locations as well. Notably, **in Ghana WFP supported two industrial food processors** to increase the production of specialized nutritious foods (SNF) such as Super Cereal. These production capacities will not only improve the availability of SNF in Ghana, but importantly, in the wider Western Africa region as well.

Collaboration with other United Nations and NGO partners remained key to WFP's nutrition efforts in the region. The **enhanced UNICEF-WFP partnership** has had an added value in strengthening synergies to address child wasting at the regional level, as well as in Chad, Mali and Niger. The close collaboration between the two agencies resulted in improved joint situation analysis, advocacy, programming and monitoring. These also contributed to an enhanced continuum of care between prevention and treatment of malnutrition in targeted areas. Lastly, WFP supported coordination mechanisms such as the regional Food Security and Nutrition Working Group and national nutrition clusters to further enhance the capacity of partners, including governments counterparts, to identify and prioritise needs.

HIV



46,556 BENEFICIARIES of HIV/TB interventions received nutrition support and food assistance in **10 COUNTRIES**



14 COUNTRIES implemented HIV/TB-specific or sensitive activities, including the provision of cash or specialized nutritious foods to people living with HIV/TB and capacity strengthening activities

HIV remains a global health crisis fuelled by inequalities with approximately 1.5 million new HIV infections and 680,000 AIDS-related deaths in 2020. Despite relatively low HIV prevalence rates in West and Central Africa (WCA)¹¹, there were an estimated **4.7 million adults and children living with HIV** in the region in 2020, making it one of the world's most affected. The region accounted for more than one third of new HIV infections among children and more than one fifth of AIDS-related deaths globally, reflecting significant gaps in the prevention of mother-to-child transmission and the test, treat and retain strategy. Overall, in WCA, 27 percent of people living with HIV (PLHIV), and 44 percent of pregnant women living with HIV were not accessing lifesaving antiretroviral therapy (ART) in 2020 (UNAIDS, 2021).

Food insecurity and HIV/AIDS interact in a vicious cycle. Hunger, malnutrition, and food insecurity increase negative social risk management strategies that put people at risk of HIV exposure, and that hinder ART initiation, adherence and outcomes. In turn, HIV weakens the immune system, limits nutrient absorption and destabilizes household food security by increasing medical expenses, reducing productivity and damaging livelihoods. Addressing food insecurity and malnutrition, protecting the livelihoods of HIV-affected households and ensuring access to inclusive social protection can help prevent HIV and ensure treatment efficacy and outcomes. As a cosponsor of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), WFP is supporting vulnerable PLHIV through various interventions.

As the region continued to grapple with long-standing socioeconomic challenges exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, impoverished and vulnerable PLHIV and their households were hit hard, including by the loss of livelihoods, reduced incomes and diminished access to health services.

In 2021, WFP continued to work with Governments, partners and communities to provide food and nutrition assistance and support inclusive social protection for people living with or affected by HIV and TB, with a focus on **the UNAIDS fast-track countries in Western Africa** (Cameroon, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Nigeria and Mali) that account for more than 80% of the HIV burden in the region.

WFP maintained **HIV/TB care and treatment activities** in Cameroon, CAR, the Gambia, and Guinea, and conducted **HIV Mitigation and safety net activities** in Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Niger, Senegal, and Sierra Leone reaching more than **45,000 beneficiaries**. Malnourished PLHIV/TB patients received specialized nutritious foods, as well as food support for their households as an accompanying measure to limit ration sharing, while vulnerable PLHIV and their households received cash transfers to support ART adherence and their food security and diversification. In addition, WFP provided **livelihoods support** to vulnerable PLHIV and their households in Benin, Cameroon, CAR, or Ghana through capacity strengthening, equipment provision, seed funding, or the creation of farmers' groups and cooperatives.

Furthermore, WFP continued to provide **technical assistance** to strengthen national HIV responses and to advocate for inclusive social protection through studies, guidelines and training. In Burkina Faso, Cameroon, CAR, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Sierra Leone and Togo, WFP supported national assessments on the vulnerability of PLHIV, and on the HIV-sensitivity of social protection systems. As part of the Regional UN Joint Team on AIDS, WFP and partners commissioned a regional mapping on HIV and social protection in 12 WCA countries, organized a virtual workshop on enhancing inclusive, people-centred social protection for HIV outcomes, and advocated for promoting dialogues around removing barriers to national social protection systems and schemes.

¹¹ The UNAIDS WCA region for which regional HIV data are produced covers the following countries: Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cameroon, CAR, Chad, Congo, Cote d'Ivoire, DRC, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo.



Livelihoods and Resilience

Food Assistance for Assets



2.1 MILLION PEOPLE (55 percent women) reached through household and community-based asset creation and livelihood activities across **12** countries



USD 41 MILLION and **9,670 MT** of food distributed to households participating in FFA projects to cover their immediate food needs, while creating or rehabilitating community assets.



74,664 HECTARES of agricultural land cultivated and/or rehabilitated under FFA projects



1.4 MILLION METERS of dikes, weirs, embankments, bunds, dams, and reservoirs constructed and/or rehabilitated to improve irrigation schemes for agricultural purposes.



244 KM of feeder roads rehabilitated/built/maintained, gullies reclaimed, irrigation canals constructed/rehabilitated, live fencing created.

Smallholder Agricultural Market Support



178,000 people assisted as part of SAMS activities



954 smallholder aggregation systems supported across **11 COUNTRIES**.



11,834 MT of food, with an estimated value of **USD 5 MILLION** were sold by the smallholder farmers assisted, through WFP-supported aggregation systems.



9,410 MT of local produce, with a value of **USD 88,000** purchased by WFP directly from smallholder farmers in 6 countries (CAR, Chad, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Sierra Leone) the countries)

Climate Insurance



1.5 MILLION people were protected in five countries, with a financial coverage exceeding **43 USD MILLION**. Of these, **460,000** received an insurance pay out in 2021.

Food Assistance for Assets (FFA)

WFP supports vulnerable communities in the region through resilience building activities, targeting the most food insecure people. WFP's FFA activity supports participants - selected jointly with the community - to rebuild or strengthen their productive assets to improve their capacity to withstand climate or other related shocks.

Across the G5 Sahel countries (**Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Niger**), 2.5 million people benefitted from a WFP integrated resilience package in more than 2,000 villages. Through FFA activities, 1.4 million people participated in asset creation and rehabilitation activities including 38,000 hectares of land rehabilitated, 340 ponds constructed or rehabilitated and 98 wells/shall wells constructed.

Positive monitoring results In **Niger** in 2021, highlight that resilience programmes are providing a buffer to instability by strengthening social cohesion and reducing natural resource conflicts. Over 92 percent of households enrolled in resilience programmes (since 2018), reported that activities had reduced conflict within their village; and 91 percent of households reported activities reduced conflict with neighbouring villages.

Smallholder Agriculture Market Support (SAMS)

WFP's SAMS programme empowers farmers through various skills and market linkages to improve local food systems along the value chain.

In **Ghana**, 240 farmer based organization leaders were empowered with skills in governance, financial management and marketing. In **Guinea**, WFP strengthened the technical and operational capacities of over 280 farmers organisations (10,900 members; 44 percent women). Trainings were also delivered in **Burkina Faso** to 37,000 small-scale producers (54 percent women) through 17 farmer organisations, on farming techniques related to agricultural production, storage practices, and the reduction of post-harvest losses.

In **The Gambia**, WFP's SAMS programme continued to provide interlinkages between smallholder farmers and WFP's home-grown school feeding market – where farmers contributed 1,300 metric tons (USD 88,000) of various food commodities. Women farmers were also supported, through the construction of nine rice drying floors to improve post-harvest losses for 6,570 women farmers, enhancing the participation of women to supply rice to WFP's school meals programme.

Climate Insurance

To mitigate the risks of drought in the region, **over 1.3 million people** were covered in **five countries** (The Gambia, Burkina Faso, Mali, Senegal, Mauritania) through climate insurance mechanisms (micro and macro insurance policies), with a financial coverage exceeding **USD 3 million**. Of this group, up to **460,000** received an insurance pay out in 2021.

In 2021, WFP continued subscribing to the African Risk Capacity (ARC) Replica micro-insurance programme in **Mali, The Gambia, Mauritania and Burkina Faso**. Simultaneously, WFP played an advisory role to Governments, benefiting from guidance in areas of disaster risk financing (Mali), as well as improving risk transfer parameters (The Gambia), enabling governments to improve their capacities to plan, prepare and respond earlier to disasters caused by extreme weather events.

In **Mauritania**, technical support to Government on index customization and risk transfer parameters through the ARC programme has led to gradual improvements in the configuration of the agricultural insurance index, and the modelling of a new pastoral insurance index that was tested in 2021.

Through the micro insurance programme in **Senegal**, WFP supported the National Agricultural Insurance Company (CNAAS) to extend their coverage and develop new insurance products, that enables farmers better protection against drought targeted areas.

Climate Information

WFP **Niger** and **Senegal** worked alongside national meteorology departments and local organizations to provide climate information to farmers. Based on the seasonal forecasts, over 4,000 farmers in **Senegal** received information twice a week in local languages – reaching over 800,000 people through 50 radio broadcasts. The messages included information on the expected rainfall, the varieties and recommended seeding periods to help farmers plan their activities.

Sustainable Energy Solutions

WFP **Mauritania** commenced the implementation of an energy efficiency strategy that emphasizes sustainable energy solutions to reduce the use of firewood in school canteens - the primary cooking fuel - in order to reduce deforestation. In **Niger**, nearly 93,000 fuel-efficient cookstoves were supplied in homes and school canteens to reduce the domestic burden, protection risks, and time spent collecting firewood by women.



School-Based Programming



3.2 MILLION CHILDREN supported through Government-led national school feeding programmes



5 COUNTRIES implemented emergency school feeding, reaching a total of **166,395 BENEFICIARIES**: Burkina Faso, CAR, Chad, Niger, Mauritania



14 COUNTRIES in the region are implementing home-grown school feeding programmes.



419,000 SCHOOL CHILDREN (63 percent girls) and their families received alternative take-home rations in replacement of on-site school feeding in **16 COUNTRIES**

Emergency school feeding

Emergency School Feeding (ESF) relates to the provision of meals to schoolchildren in situations that are classified as humanitarian crises. WFP provides ESF to respond to humanitarian crises when the context is appropriate. While ESF programmes normally prioritise primary schools, there are also some additional considerations that encourages the inclusion of other vulnerable students (pre-school, secondary, or those receiving non-formal education).

Home-Grown School Feeding (HGSF)

14 countries are implementing HGSF either through government direct implementation and ownership of their national school feeding programme (Nigeria, Ghana, Sao Tome and Principe) or through operational support from WFP (Niger, Chad, Cote d'Ivoire, Senegal, Burkina, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, CAR, Liberia, The Gambia, Togo).

In **Guinea** WFP is operating 200 schools under the HGSF modality across the country, purchasing 30 percent of food from smallholder farmers. The programme is also gender-sensitive by providing entrepreneurial and leadership opportunities for women, who make up a majority of smallholder farmers.

The Government of **Sierra Leone** developed a national school feeding policy with WFP's support, aiming to transition to the HGSF model. WFP's pilot project was launched across 17 schools reaching 5,070 students, aiming to scale up the programme over the coming year.

Cameroon is also aiming to launch its first HGSF pilot in 2022.

Improved annual (2020-2021) enrolment, attendance, and retention rates

- **Chad:** Attendance rates increased by 7 percentage points (16 percentage point increase for girls). Retention rates improved from 89 percent in 2020 to 98 percent (18 percentage point increase for girls).
- **The Gambia:** Retention rates increased from a baseline of 82 to 95 percent, with girls reaching 99 percent retention rate.
- **Benin:** The drop-out rate in schools with canteens reduced by 3 percentage points (15.5 to 12.5).
- **Côte d'Ivoire:** Enrolment rates improved for girls as a result of take home rations (from -1.41 percent in 2020 to -0.23 percent in 2021).
- **Central African Republic:** Retention rates improved by 3 percentage points (from 85 to 88 percent).

Sahel- Breaking Barriers to Girls' Education

As part of its second year, the joint WFP, UNICEF and UNFPA initiative was implemented in **Niger and Chad**. WFP targets schoolchildren and adolescent girls through school feeding and complementary activities (cash; iron and folic acid supplements; WASH assets and kits; and awareness-raising sessions¹²). Incentives are provided for girls to discourage child marriage and encourage girls to pursue a secondary education.

In **Niger**, quarterly stipends were provided to over 14,000 primary and secondary school girls in 2021, with nearly 90 percent of households with girls receiving cash grants noted a positive impact on their school attendance. In **Chad**, these incentives have resulted in attendance rates among girls increasing from under 40 percent to over 88 percent. This included the resumption of education for girls who had left school due to marriage.

Recent Initiatives

- An 'enhanced partnership' was developed in 2021 between WFP and UNICEF across West and Central Africa - including **Chad, Mali** and **Niger**. The initiative aims to accelerate the results for people in the Sahel, particularly children, by focusing on an integrated approach across nutrition, education and building resilience.
- A focus on 'energizing school feeding' across **Guinea, Senegal** and **Mauritania**. Needs assessments provided country offices with an understanding of energy consumption and the needs of schools - providing recommendations for improved energy solutions, helping to reduce environmental degradation and deforestation from the use of fire wood for cooking.



¹² Topics include sexual and reproductive health, gender-based violence, child marriage and early pregnancies, and the benefits of girls' education.



Social Protection

WFP's strategic engagement and objectives in Western Africa

Governments in Western Africa are investing in social protection, with all countries having at least one social safety net in place. However, coverage is critically low as only about 12 percent of the population receive at least one social protection benefit, compared with 47 percent globally¹³. Given the high levels of poverty and hunger, the risk exposure of the region and the frequency of shocks, investing in social protection systems is essential to enhance resilience, and protect people from further deprivation in the face of predictable, recurrent and protracted crises.

WFP in Western Africa has been supporting governments in their efforts to build nationally led social protection systems, focusing on their ability to help people manage risks and shocks, while also contributing to food security and improved nutrition. WFP's contributions to social protection are provided through various channels, from support to policy processes, evidence generation and advocacy, and programme design and implementation.

Supporting adaptive social protection in the Sahel and beyond

Year-round, social protection systems can play a crucial role in supporting people to better manage and cope with risks and shocks. Access to regular social protection benefits supports households to smooth their consumption over time and avoid resorting to negative coping strategies to mitigate the impact of shocks, thus creating a buffer effect. During crisis, social protection systems may serve as a vehicle to provide emergency assistance to existing or new beneficiaries in an effective and timely manner.

In 2021, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, WFP contributed to an unprecedented **expansion of social protection programmes in the region**. For instance, in Mali, Mauritania, and Niger, WFP and UNICEF continued to support governments to reach an additional 1.4 million people to mitigate the socioeconomic effects of the pandemic. In parallel, WFP continued to work with its partners to **strengthen social protection systems**. This support, for instance, aimed to make national systems more shock-responsive so that they can better contribute

¹³ Authors calculation based on ILO, 2022. World Social Protection Report 2020-2022.

to future crisis responses. In Burkina Faso, WFP supported a simulation workshop (SIMEX) with this objective. In Niger, Burkina Faso and Mauritania, WFP supported the World Bank in piloting their new “Stress Test” tool which seeks to assess the readiness of social protection systems and cash transfer programmes to respond to shocks.

WFP also supported studies on forecast-based financing to define drought triggers, and actions to be implemented in the event of an anticipated shock to reduce the impacts of the crisis.

Making social protection systems more nutrition-sensitive and HIV-inclusive

Enabling social protection systems to promote food security and nutrition is another key priority in WFP’s social protection strategy. Increasingly, WFP has been **supporting the nutrition sensitivity of national social protection systems**. WFP’s Fill the Nutrient Gap analysis is a key tool in this process. In Mauritania, the launch of the study was an opportunity to present nutrition-sensitive social protection to stakeholders and engage them in a strategic discussion on linkages between social protection and nutrition. In Mali, WFP supported vulnerable women to receive a food voucher top-up to supplement the national social safety net (Jigisemejiri) to allow them to purchase nutritious food on local markets.

People living with HIV (PLHIV) face significant barriers when trying to access social protection benefits that take their specific needs into account. To mitigate this, WFP,

UNAIDS and other partners have been supporting national governments to **expand social protection systems to include PLHIV** and people at risk of and affected by HIV. In Ghana and Togo, WFP supported country-led assessments to assess the HIV-sensitivity of social protection systems and identify key barriers that (may) impede access to social protection services. These assessments will inform national social protection and HIV/AIDS policies, guide dialogue and support government prioritization of issues concerning HIV social protection systems.

Supporting social registries for improved targeting

WFP aims to improve national data and information systems to better inform the design of programmes. Social registries hold the potential to serve as effective gateways for assistance, including in response to shocks if their coverage is sufficient and their data maintained up-to-date.

In The Gambia, WFP supported the Government in the development of guidance for data sharing and protection for their social registry. In Mali, WFP supported the Government to examine the functionality of the social registry, and supported a survey on 100,000 households for potential inclusion into the registry. In Mauritania, WFP, UNICEF and the World Bank supported a review of the social registry and strategies for data updating. Bringing together multiple African countries under its South-South and triangular cooperation initiative, WFP supported the Government of Chad in their strategic discussions on the country’s nascent social registry.





Cross-cutting Issues

Gender

Across the region, persistent challenges exist with gender inequality, with 13 (out of 19 country offices) ranked in the bottom one third of the 2021 [Global Gender Gap Index](#).

WFP's [Gender Transformation Programme](#) aims to institutionalise gender equality across country office functions, through the development and implementation of an action plan to improve seven areas of operation.

- Two countries (Senegal, Nigeria) are implementing the programme.
- Two countries (Mauritania and Cameroon) have successfully completed.

WFP is committed to gender equality through a mainstreaming approach throughout its activities, with progress measured annually by ranking activities using the Gender and Age Marker (GaM) score.

Improving girls' education retention rates

In **Niger**, WFP launched innovative solutions such as the Safe Space Cycle - a platform that supports adolescent girls to return to school that had previously dropped out, in addition to providing quarterly stipends to over 14,000 primary and secondary school girls. Nearly 90 percent of households with girls receiving cash grants noted that this had a positive impact on their school attendance.

- **Chad:** Retention rates improved from 89 percent in 2020 to 98 percent (18 percentage point increase for girls).
- **The Gambia:** Retention rates increased from a baseline of 82 to 95 percent, with girls reaching 99 percent retention rate.

Training and capacity strengthening

In **the Gambia**, a UN peacebuilding fund project which aims to strengthen community responses to the risks of climate-induced conflict, up to 30 women and 1,500 additional cascaded learnings were achieved in agricultural production techniques.

Changing the perception of youth in agriculture is equally important to improve engagement. WFP and the Ministry of Agriculture partnered together in **Sierra Leone** to support 59 community youth contractors (8 percent women) with technical support.

Research and advocacy

In the **Central African Republic**, WFP and MSF (Médecins Sans Frontières) Spain carried out a joint study to assess linkages between food insecurity and gender-based violence (GBV), with results showing a high vulnerability to food insecurity of GBV survivors. The research has informed WFP's decision to provide food assistance to GBV victims during medical treatment – and will replicate the study in rural areas in 2022.

Protection and Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP)



1,020 WFP STAFF; 2,785 cooperating partners or service provider staff were trained on protection, AAP, or PSEA (Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse)



8 COUNTRY OFFICES strengthened the capacity of staff through trainings in 2021



13 COMMUNITY Feedback Mechanisms (CFMs) in operation



87,400 NUMBER OF CALLS registered through CFMs (54% female; 46% men)

Prioritise safety and dignity, and do no harm

WFP operates in complex environments across the region, in new or protracted humanitarian crises where populations are affected by food insecurity and high levels of violence. Through protection risk assessments, WFP and partners were able to identify and reduce the potential harm to affected populations.

WFP responded effectively to identified risks such as gender-based violence (GBV), forced recruitment by armed groups and child protection, amongst others - through programmatic adjustments, referrals to other actors, or training personnel to minimize harm.

In **Mali**, WFP worked with the protection cluster, GBV and child protection sub-clusters, and other networks across national and regional levels to share information and coordinate responses. More than five multi-sectoral assessments were conducted with partners, in addition to joint protection analyses alongside UN agencies - focusing on the needs of people displaced by insecurity. These assessments provided comprehensive analysis beyond food and nutrition insecurity and informed programming.

In **Burkina Faso**, WFP conducted field surveys and 15 focus group discussions with IDPs in different geographical areas, that focused on the perception of humanitarian assistance and protection risks. Results showed that persons affected were unaware of their rights as beneficiaries. Their worst fear was to never be able to return home. Direct engagement with affected populations was vital to share information, understand needs and risks together.

Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP)

Community Feedback Mechanisms

To improve accountability, a strong focus was placed on improving Community Feedback Mechanisms (CFMs) across the region in 2021. **WFP Burkina Faso** optimised its call centre in 2021, finalising a mapping exercise that will serve as a baseline to create an inter-agency CFM, and proceeded with plans to expand its services to the broader UN Country Team (UNCT). It aims to provide a streamlined inter-agency information and complaints management platform, to improve services to affected populations and provide the UNCT with strengthened evidence-based humanitarian action.

In **Mauritania**, a stronger focus on CFMs across the operation showed positive improvements in how information is delivered and received, with 96 percent of people assisted in 2021 reported being informed about the programme, a sharp increase from 60 percentage points in 2020. Similarly in **Cameroon**, personnel from more than 200 cooperating partners were trained in complaints management, a timely opportunity to strengthen skills during a year where WFP CFMs received over 10,000 calls.

Information Provision and Community Engagement

To reduce language barriers, WFP **Nigeria** partnered with Translators Without Borders to improve access of food assistance recipients to accurate and timely information - by developing a glossary of terminology in nine local languages. The glossary provided local terms associated with diverse topics of concern to recipient communities, including the reasoning behind prioritization and targeting practices and use of assessments to improve quality of assistance.



In **Sierra Leone**, using various communication mediums allowed WFP to improve agricultural practices and exchange information on local environmental issues. Alongside partners, trainings were provided to over 300 lead farmers (50 percent women) in nutrition-sensitive agriculture, using an adult learning approach comprised of practical demonstrations. Theoretical sessions included pictorial presentations to overcome literacy related barriers, particularly for women smallholder farmers.

Meaningful Access

Disability inclusion

WFP **Central African Republic** continued to focus on disability inclusion, through the collection and disaggregation of data through the inclusion of the Washington Group Questionnaires. By including data in the national food safety assessment, findings showed that households with at least one member with a disability were more likely to be food insecure and twice as many were severely food insecure¹⁴. WFP has engaged with specialized actors on how to adapt its food assistance and resilience package to better suit the needs of persons with disabilities and contribute to food security in their households. WFP **Cameroon** also continued to collect sex, age and disability disaggregated data that was used in the identification and targeting of vulnerable populations for assistance. In the Far North region, WFP and partners even tailored assistance by delivering food directly to the homes of recipients with disabilities or older persons or supporting people with means of transportation to distribution sites.

Indigenous Peoples

In the **Central African Republic**, WFP concluded its analysis on the livelihood and food security of indigenous peoples in 2021. After consulting with Bayakas and Mbororos, findings showed that these groups had twice the levels of food insecurity when compared to the national level. WFP is considering the launch of an integrated food security project focused on school feeding and food assistance for assets and reviewing its targeting approaches to ensure inclusion of specific at-risk groups.

Participation and Empowerment

In **Liberia**, WFP engaged more closely with Indigenous peoples, who are often marginalized or excluded within social structures. Trainings were specifically provided targeting government personnel about protection and accountability, to advocate for the inclusion of local indigenous peoples within the 'affected communities' for concession awarding processes. As a result, the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding occurred between concessionaires and affected populations, aiming to increase collaboration on the creation of sustainable livelihood opportunities.

¹⁴ Findings also showed that twice as many households with a member with a disability were classified as IPC 5, compared with households without; along with other disparities in coping strategies and spending a higher proportion of household income on food.

THE DAY THE FLAME OF HOPE WAS REKINDLED FROM THE SKY IN BURKINA FASO

by Esther Ouoba

World Food Programme Insight
May, 2022
Medium



Five years ago, Maimouna Ada, a widow in her fifties, was living an ordinary life in Mansila. Mansila is a small town in the northern part of Burkina Faso, in the Sahel region. This was until slow, but insidious changes occurred. Ada started feeling things were not as they used to be. At that time, Ada would meet regularly with her friends and acquaintances in front of their houses to speak about their lives and plans. These were also moments when they would discuss about the most significant changes each of them had noticed. Over time, it became more difficult for Ada and her fellow villagers to access running water, electricity, and even firewood which they used to collect easily around the village, because of attacks perpetrated by some “bush men” in the surrounding area. As if that was not enough, people from neighbouring villages started to come and settle in Mansila after their villages had been attacked.

Then, the “bush men” came into Ada’s town. Their recurrent incursions resulted in the closure of the main market and people fearing to stand outside of their yards as they used to, just a few months ago. Soon, no one could enter Mansila and those living in the small town could no longer leave it for fear of crossing the path of the “bush men”. Indeed, such displacements were at their own risk - including being kidnapped and the risk to step on an improvised explosive device.

For a moment, locals from Mansila and those who sought refuge there shared what they had with one another, but they eventually ran out of resources. In April, the members of a humanitarian assessment mission witnessed a main market that was desperately empty, quiet, and odourless. Wooden tables used by women to sell vegetables, spices and other goods were overturned on top of each other and covered with a thin layer of dust. The doors of the shops around and inside the market were locked, reinforced with iron bars and padlocks.

According to Ada, people desperately needed food, water, electricity - commodities most of us have easily access to and generally take for granted - and to regain the ability to travel in and out of their town. One of Ada’s acquaintances further explained in June that contrary to the previous year, people could no longer venture into their fields located a few kilometres away from the small town to grow crops.

Humanitarians had attempted to bring food commodities to Mansila by road, but these attempts had to be abandoned as accessing Mansila by road became more and more challenging security-wise. Hence, WFP explored alternative ways to deliver basic food commodities and nutritional products to the thousands of persons, internally displaced people and host populations, isolated in Mansila. If food could not be delivered by road, what about delivering it by air? The more the security crisis deepened, the greater and more urgent needs started to arise. To contribute to saving thousands of lives, WFP organised airborne operations via its United Nations Humanitarian Air Service helicopter to bring food to Ada, her family, and other people needing assistance in Mansila.

For Ada, this was more than she could expect. She had previously stated that challenges are what make people stronger. However, with all the pressure they had to endure for years, everyone in Mansila had reached their limit.

On the day Ada received her first food ration, a puzzled expression was on her face. It was a mix of hope and worry of what the future might hold for her and the other people living in Mansila. What Ada did not know, was that reaching her in Mansila had paved the way for WFP to supply by air, the other thousands of people suffering like her in enclaved areas, such as Tin-Akoff (Sahel region) and Madjoari (Est region), with lifesaving food rations composed of cereals, pulses, oil, salt, and ready-to-use nutritional products.

Environment

Environmental Management System

- EMS activities implemented across **5** countries in 2021

An Environmental Management System (EMS) is a management tool used by organizations to identify, manage and reduce their impact on the environment. WFP focuses on energy, water, wastewater and waste management, sustainable procurement and staff awareness and training.

In the **Central African Republic**, WFP installed 324 solar panels in 2021, providing electricity to ensure reliable internet connectivity to remote offices. An assessment was also carried out across four field-offices, in order to identify sustainable solutions for solid waste management. The findings have led to the launch of an EMS including recommendations for implementation across all field offices.

In 2022, WFP has commenced implementation of EMS activities (waste management) in the Central African Republic and Senegal, with further plans to scale up implementation across six countries over the coming years.

Environmental and social safeguards and risk screening in programmes

- **4** countries were trained on WFP Environmental and Social Safeguards (Senegal, Cameroon, Niger, the Gambia)

WFP is implementing environmental and social safeguards to ensure its programmes do not cause unintended harm to the environment or populations. In the **Central Africa Republic**, WFP conducted a study on the socio-economic and environmental screening of FFA resilience activities, with results showing positive impacts to social cohesion, creation of temporary jobs and improved livelihoods. Findings have further enabled WFP to mainstream environmental and social risk management throughout its operations.

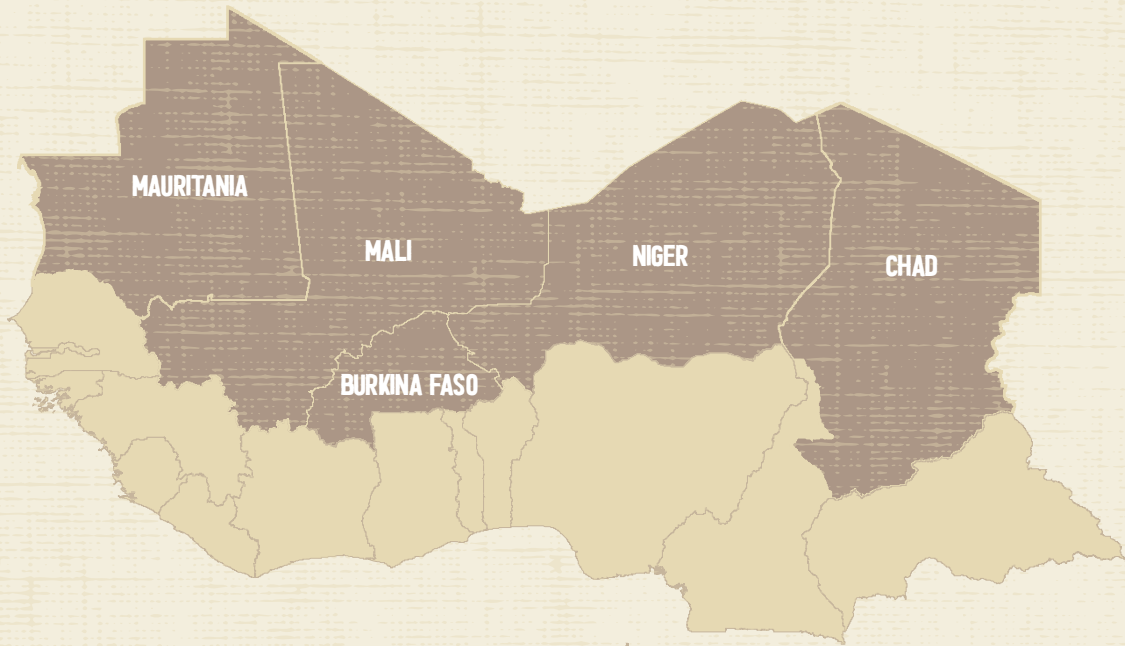
Fuel efficient stoves

In **Cameroon**, WFP and partners sensitized communities on the effects of climate change and the importance of protecting the environment. An environmental impact survey was also carried out in each FFA site prior to implementation of activities, to minimize environmental harm. Similarly in **Togo**, the use of improved stoves helped contribute to reducing the frequency and time spent collecting wood in rural areas. Cooking demonstrations were organized during food distributions, using local foods and specialized nutritious foods to demonstrate the improved cooking stoves that help to reduce the consumption of firewood.





Sahel



5.7 MILLION PEOPLE
reached through unconditional
resource transfers



884,600 SCHOOLCHILDREN
reached through nutritious school
meals and take-home rations



1.4 MILLION PEOPLE
reached through asset creation
and livelihood interventions



621,900 WOMEN AND CHILDREN
reached through nutrition
prevention programmes



1.3 MILLION WOMEN AND CHILDREN
reached through nutrition
treatment

In 2021, **the humanitarian situation continued to deteriorate** in the five Sahel countries (Mali, Niger, Chad, Burkina Faso, Mauritania) due to rising insecurity and conflict, exacerbated by increasing food prices and the global COVID-19 pandemic. Notably, violence against civilians soared: by the end of the year **2.6 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) and 1 million refugees were registered** across the five countries.

2021 was marked by a dramatic deterioration of the food security and nutrition situation. The November 2021 Cadre Harmonisé (CH) analysis highlighted that **6.7 million people were acutely food insecure (phase 3-5) in the Sahel at the end of the year**, while projected that this number would increase to 10.5 million during the next lean season (June-August 2022), including 1.1 million people in emergency (phase 4). This is the highest number of food insecure people registered in the post-harvest period since the launch of the CH in 2014.

Nutrition surveys showed alarmingly high levels of acute malnutrition. According to estimates, **4.9 million children aged 6-59 months were affected by acute malnutrition** in 2021. Moreover, the prevalence of acute malnutrition remained alarming with values exceeding the critical threshold of 10 percent in several areas in Mali, Burkina Faso, Chad and Niger. The 'Fill the Nutrient Gap' analyses conducted between 2019 and 2021 indicated that three out of five households in the Sahel cannot afford a nutritious diet.

In line with the **humanitarian-development-peace (HDP) nexus approach**, WFP's response in the Sahel is two-fold: while reaching vulnerable populations with life-saving humanitarian assistance, WFP also aims to change lives by addressing the root causes of fragility, hunger and malnutrition through resilience building activities. WFP's emergency response centred on the provision of critical food and nutrition assistance to IDPs, host families, refugees, and acutely food insecure people during the lean season. Overall, **WFP's life-saving assistance reached over 3.2 million vulnerable people in the Sahel during the 2021 lean season**. However, due to funding constraints, WFP was forced to reduce rations (between 80 to 50 percent of the full ration of 2,100 Kcal).

To bring about sustainable change in the lives of vulnerable people, **WFP continued to scale up its integrated resilience programme and reached over 2.5 million beneficiaries** in more than 2,000 villages across the five Sahel countries. Overall, 1.4 million people benefitted from asset creation activities, 450,000 children received nutritious school meals, 1 million children and women received malnutrition treatment/prevention support, and more than 24,600 people were trained as part of capacity strengthening including smallholder farmers, cooperating partners and government staff. Providing vulnerable communities with access to an improved asset base (both natural and physical) is central to WFP's resilience building efforts. Since 2018, together with the communities and partners, WFP rehabilitated nearly 109,000 hectares of degraded land, created some 1,850 hectares of garden to produce fresh vegetables and fruits, and built more than 1,160 ponds, 480 wells and 185 boreholes to enhance access to water. Evidence suggests that **WFP's work on changing lives is bearing fruit**: the food security of beneficiaries in assisted areas is comparatively more stable and less impacted by external shocks, stressors and seasonal variability, attesting to increased resilience.

Furthermore, in a region facing the adverse effects of climate changes and environmental degradation, WFP continued to develop green partnerships and climate-smart interventions to assist communities in adapting to and better withstanding climatic shocks, such as droughts and floods, and mitigate the impact through anticipatory action. In parallel, WFP and its partners supported the inclusion of crisis-affected populations in national social protection systems, which will also allow for increased national ownership of assisting people in need as well as long-term strategies to reduce needs..

Digital Transformation



60 PERCENT of CBT assistance was unrestricted cash and **40 PERCENT** were vouchers



USD 215,000,000 distributed through SCOPE in 2021, representing a **100 PERCENT** increase compared to 2020



USD 277 MILLION in cash-based transfers made to assist over **5.9 MILLION BENEFICIARIES**



2,600,000 BENEFICIARIES registered in SCOPE in 2021, in 14 countries, bringing the total number to **OVER 9,000,000** in Western Africa

Using satellite technology in the fight against hunger

Digital innovation and technology are foundational to WFP's fight against hunger. In 2021, WFP continued to harness the power of digital technologies to better serve people in need, including through digital cash transfers, the use of high-resolution satellite imagery and the digitalization of beneficiary management systems.

Monitoring food security and assessing progress across its intervention areas require WFP to have access to reliable and timely data which are often difficult to acquire, especially in hard-to-reach areas. To this end, WFP takes advantage of cutting-edge satellite technologies to inform its assessments and programming. In 2021, satellite and drone technologies were used by WFP in various countries, in particular in Niger, Burkina Faso, Mali, Nigeria and Mauritania.

The European Space Agency's Sentinel-2 imagery allowed WFP to collect evidence on cropland abandonment in conflict-affected areas, particularly in the Sahel, demonstrating a strong spatial correlation between agricultural decline and the incidence of violence.

Satellite technologies also proved to be essential for assessing the positive effects of WFP's resilience building interventions in the Sahel. In Niger, **WFP partnered with the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and the NASA Marshall Space Flight Center to assess vegetation changes in WFP's asset creation sites** with the help of satellite imagery and remote sensing techniques. The findings indicated that in the analysed sites vegetation indices were 55 percent higher as compared to previous years, and 25 percent higher than in nearby areas where WFP did not intervene.

The positive impacts of resilience building do not stop there. As rehabilitated lands also serve as carbon sinks, WFP and the Aghrymet Regional Center in Niger measured the carbon sequestration potential of WFP's land rehabilitation activities and found that on average each hectare of rehabilitated land sequestered 6 tons of CO₂ equivalent per year. The 190,000 hectare rehabilitated by WFP in Niger between 2014 and 2021 plus the estimated additional land which will be rehabilitated until 2030 amounts to over 20 million tons of CO₂ sequestered over the period 2014-2030, representing over 60 percent of Niger's greenhouse gas emissions reduction target by 2030!

Digitalizing cash-based assistance

While in 2021 over sixty percent of its assistance was delivered in the form of in-kind food, WFP continued to steadily move towards a digital and financially inclusive cash programming in Western Africa. Instead of distributing bank notes or paper-based value vouchers, WFP increasingly leveraged financial service providers such as banks, micro-finance institutions and mobile money companies to transfer cash assistance to beneficiaries, which often represent the first time vulnerable people are introduced to the formal financial sector. Importantly, where possible WFP provides assistance through beneficiary-owned accounts, enabling beneficiaries to use their accounts to access financial services and continue to use their accounts even after WFP's assistance was concluded.

Over the past years, WFP made considerable progress in shifting to cash-based transfers (CBT) in Western Africa. Compared to 2019, the total volume of CBT transferred increased by 77 percent in 2021, providing over USD 277 million in assistance to almost 6 million people in West African 18 countries in 2021. **This makes WFP the largest humanitarian cash actor in the region.**

Besides being a particularly efficient assistance delivery mechanism, WFP recognizes a wide range of other important benefits associated with cash-based assistance, such as empowering beneficiaries to freely make decisions over the use of assistance, injecting millions of dollars into local economies, and promoting gender-equality through targeted gender-sensitive programming.

From emergency assistance to asset creation activities, WFP utilized cash for a wide range of programmes. In Liberia, for example, WFP's school feeding pilot assisted over 600 children and their families with take-home rations through cash-based transfers. Between February and September, beneficiaries were assisted through electronic value vouchers or mobile money transfers that enabled them to buy staple food commodities at local retailers. The pilot successfully laid the foundation for the scale-up of the cash-based transfer modality in WFP's interventions in Liberia for 2022.

WFP made significant progress in digitalizing its beneficiary management. In this regard, WFP continued to expand the use of its electronic beneficiary and transfer management platform (SCOPE) to register beneficiaries, confirm identities and thus ensure that assistance is distributed to the people to whom it was intended. **In 2021, WFP registered 2,600,000 beneficiaries in SCOPE in 14 countries, bringing the total number to over 9,000,000 in Western Africa.**

Feature Story

WFP NIGERIA'S CONTROL TOWER

WFP is working smarter in Nigeria, integrating the digital world's latest innovations from the fields of technology and data science into its supply chain planning. Launched in 2020 and rolled out in 2021, the 'Control Tower' system allows WFP to reach greater efficiency in its humanitarian operations, better optimize resources, and enhance value for money in food procurement to reach the most at-risk households on time and with the best food quality. **Providing unprecedented supply chain visibility, this innovative tool enables fast analysis, provides essential real-time information and sends timely alerts ahead of potential supply chain disruptions that could adversely affect operations in any location where WFP intervenes.** Having successfully demonstrated its positive impacts on WFP operations in Nigeria, the use of the Control Tower will likely be expanded to other countries while also integrating additional functionalities, including sex-disaggregated data on recipients of food assistance for improved gender analysis.



Common Services



UNHAS

Activated at the request of the humanitarian community, UNHAS is the only United Nations-mandated air transport service providing safe, reliable, cost-efficient and effective passenger and light cargo transport to and from areas affected by natural and human-made disasters. UNHAS provides services to the entire humanitarian community, where no one else can, often becoming the first responder and the only viable solution to access areas with extreme logistical constraints and operationally challenging environments.

In 2021, UNHAS served 133 regular and ad-hoc destinations in 9 countries in Western Africa, specifically in Burkina Faso, Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Chad, Guinea, Mali, Mauritania, Niger and Nigeria. In most of these countries, UNHAS remained the backbone of the humanitarian response in hard-to-reach areas due to major challenges including insecurity, poor road networks and infrastructure, vast distances, inaccessibility during the rainy season, as well as the lack of locally available commercial flights.

Supporting 500 user organisations, **UNHAS transported 123,457 passengers and 792 metric tons of light cargo including medical supplies and vaccines.** In addition, UNHAS performed 165 medical and 280 security evacuations of humanitarian personnel.

Feature story

UNHAS LAUNCHED IN GUINEA FOR THE FIRST TIME

On 14 February 2021, Guinean health authorities declared a new Ebola virus disease (EVD) outbreak - the first time since the deadly outbreak ended in 2016. As a response, WFP rapidly launched UNHAS to provide the Government and the humanitarian community with a safe and reliable transport service to the epicentre of the outbreak - located in the hard-to-reach south-eastern part of the country. Importantly, **UNHAS was the only option for the timely delivery of Ebola vaccines, medical teams, and equipment as no commercial flights were available in the country.** Launched for the first time in Guinea's history, UNHAS enabled stakeholders to rapidly access the affected areas and successfully respond to the outbreak which was declared over just four months later.



Provision of Bilateral Services

Using its expertise in humanitarian logistics and extensive frontline field presence in complex operating environments, WFP provides supply chain solutions to its humanitarian partners, including to national stakeholders, NGOs and United Nations agencies. Often, these on-demand services prove the difference between the success and failure of humanitarian interventions, especially in deep field locations where logistics infrastructure and services are limited or non-existent.

In 2021, WFP provided such bilateral logistics services in several countries in Western Africa, principally in Burkina Faso, Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Chad, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania and Togo. The services provided by WFP fell into three categories: 1) **increasing storage capacities** through the deployment of mobile storage units; 2) **handling and transporting** life-saving relief items (e.g. medical and food supplies, treated mosquito nets, hygiene products) to intervention sites on behalf of user organizations; 3) providing **capacity strengthening** to national and international partners on logistics (e.g. warehouse management).

Emergency Telecommunications Cluster

Led by the World Food Programme, the Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC) is a global network of organizations that work together to provide shared communications services in humanitarian emergencies.

In 2021, the ETC in the **Central African Republic** provided internet and security communications services to humanitarian partners in 13 operational areas across the country and put in place 11 Security Operations Centres used by UN agencies and NGOs to ensure the safety of their staff and property. Furthermore, the ETC recognizes that communications services may constitute a lifeline for internally displaced persons (IDP) living in camps. To enable them to communicate with their families and contact humanitarian helplines free of charge, the ETC set up phone booths in the IDP camp in Bria which hosts the country's largest displaced population of nearly 39,000 people. In the same location, over 3,000 devices (e.g. mobile phones, radio receivers, flashlights) belonging to IDPs were powered up through the free-of-charge charging facilities provided by the ETC.

In **Burkina Faso**, WFP continued to lead the Information Technology Common Services Sector (ITCSS) which delivered vital communication services to the entire humanitarian community. To address the communications challenges in hard-to-reach locations of the Sahel region, the ITCSS installed VSAT internet to provide data connectivity services, set up two cybercafés for humanitarian workers, linked two NGOs offices with point-to-point connection and deployed solar electrical charging system to ensure 24/7 services.

In **Nigeria**, the Emergency Telecommunications Sector (ETS) provided internet connectivity services to over 3,500 users from 104 organisations to support the humanitarian response in North-East Nigeria and Maiduguri. Furthermore, the ETS supported the establishment of six Remote Security Operations Centres to enhance security communications services and further improve the safety and security of staff in highly insecure locations. Notably, the ETS also completed a large-scale solar panel project to equip eight humanitarian hubs with sustainable and reliable energy solutions to connect humanitarian staff located in deep-field locations where previously only fossil-fuelled generators were available.

Logistics Cluster

As the lead agency of the **Logistics Cluster/Sector**, WFP supported the humanitarian community's logistics response in three countries in Western Africa: Burkina Faso, the Central African Republic and Nigeria. In these countries, WFP facilitates access to various services that include coordination, information management, transportation and storage.

In **Burkina Faso**, WFP launched a logistics capacity assessment (LCA) to provide the entire humanitarian community with updated information on critical logistics infrastructure, processes, regulations, and capacities in the country. In **CAR**, the Logistics Cluster facilitated the air transport of almost 300 metric tons of life-saving items on behalf of 23 organizations to deliver urgent assistance to crisis-affected populations. In **Nigeria**, the Logistics Sector-managed warehouses stored 6,000 metric tons of humanitarian supplies for 21 organizations.



Supply Chain

In 2021, the World Food Programme remained on the frontlines in the fight against hunger in Western Africa.

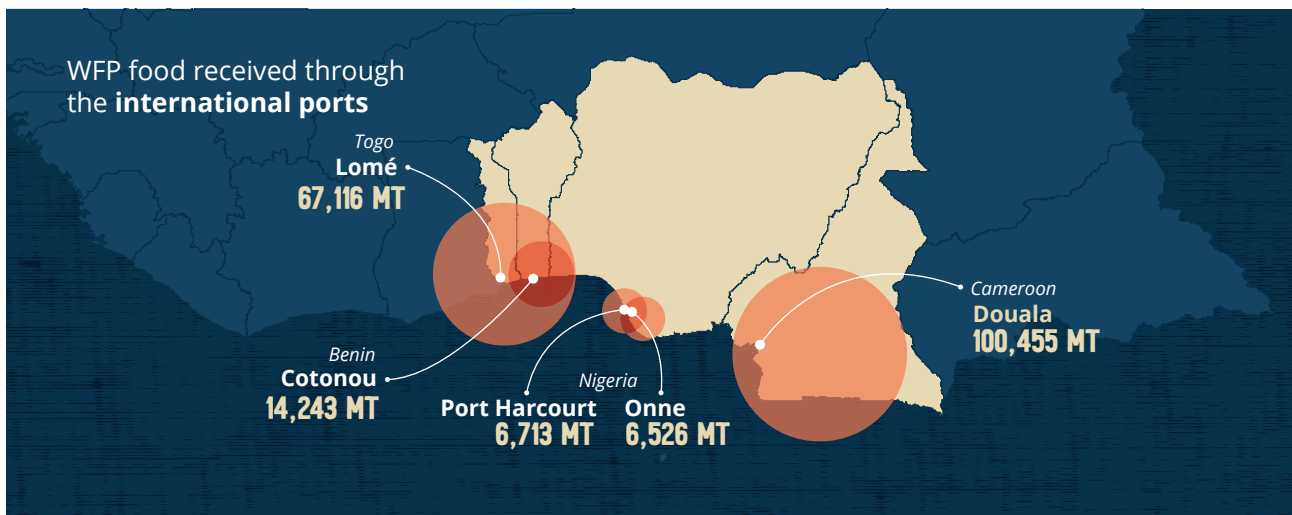
WFP continued to leverage its extensive supply chain capacity and logistics expertise to ensure that vast quantities of food and other essential items reach those who need them most.

Cargo congestion at ports, poor road networks across vast countries, impassable roads during the rainy season, market price volatility and increasingly unpredictable commodity markets represent some of the major supply chain challenges facing WFP in Western Africa, while the insecurity caused by non-state armed groups further aggravates the safe transportation of commodities to vulnerable communities in the Sahel. Notably, out of the 19 countries supported by WFP in the Western Africa region, five are landlocked (Mali, Niger, Chad, Burkina Faso and the Central African Republic) and hosted 30 percent of the region's 28 million acutely food insecure people in 2021.

Procurement

In 2021, over 485,000 metric tons of food were received in the region, of which 195,000 metric tons (or 40 percent) arrived through ports (Douala, Lomé, Port Harcourt and Onne), while the remaining 60 percent of food were procured locally and regionally.

Purchasing the right food commodities at the right time remained a key consideration in 2021. In this respect, the **Global Commodity Management Facility (GCMF) played a central role in WFP's supply chain strategy in Western Africa.** Notably, the GCMF enabled WFP to initiate procurement processes earlier, reduce lead times, and consequently reach crisis-affected people with life-saving assistance more rapidly. In addition, the GCMF allowed WFP to purchase food when market conditions were more favourable, and thus achieve a greater value for money. In terms of lead time gains in 2021 it is estimated GCMF allowed to gain 27 days (or 78% lead time gain) in the region. In 2021, WFP purchased 316,000 metric tons of food from the GCMF in Western Africa, representing a 12 percent increase compared to 2020.



The GCMF also supported WFP's objective of procuring food commodities from local and regional markets as opposed to purchasing them internationally. Overall, **66 percent of the food purchased from the GCMF were sourced locally and regionally – the highest share across all regions where WFP operates.** Besides directly injecting cash into local economies and markets, this procurement strategy increases the cost-efficiency and speed of food delivery, while also reducing WFP's carbon and environmental footprint.

Food Safety and Quality

Besides efficient procurement, another key consideration of WFP is to ensure that the food it delivers is safe, nutritious and of good quality. To protect the health of the people it serves, WFP oversees the safety and quality of its food commodities at every stage of the supply chain, including production, processing, packaging, storage and distribution.

In 2021, WFP had food safety and quality assurance (FSQ) officers in six country offices in Western Africa (Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Ghana, Liberia and Nigeria), while all 19 WFP offices were supported by the regional FSQ team based in WFP's regional bureau in Dakar, Senegal.

In seven countries (Mauritania, Mali, Niger, Burkina Faso, Nigeria, Guinea, Ghana), **WFP worked with 13 suppliers from the private sector to build and improve their capacity in the production of nutritional and fortified food products** to support food aid operations and supply commercial markets.

WFP reached a key milestone in 2021 when its partner Premium Foods Limited launched Western Africa's first Super Cereal processing unit in Ghana. Serving the entire Western Africa region from 2022, the processing unit will provide WFP with access to a reliable supply of specialized nutritious foods (SNF), dramatically decreasing lead times from 24 to 2 weeks.

Strengthening Health Supply Chains

In 2021, WFP continued to leverage its supply chain expertise to help governments and partners strengthen public health supply chains and better prepare them to respond to health emergencies.

Public health systems rely on complex supply chains to provide medicines and other health commodities to people, including to the world's most vulnerable. However, these supply chains can be particularly exposed to shocks. The COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated again that public

health systems can be undermined when a crisis strikes. Notably, the disruption of a country's health supply chain can compromise its ability to continue supplying medicines and health commodities.

In less resilient environments such as in Western Africa, public health supply chains remain fragile and exposed to shocks, such as outbreaks, epidemics and pandemics, that overwhelm governments' capacity to provide vital medicines and health supplies.

Central medical stores (CMS) – the logistic arms of ministries of health – face multiple challenges to efficiently store and transport health products to the many public health facilities they are meant to serve. As part of its commitment to SDG 17 (Partnerships), WFP has been extending its role in mitigating these challenges – for instance during the West Africa Ebola Outbreak in 2014 and the global response to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020.

In 2021, **WFP continued to support national health stakeholders in Guinea, Niger and Côte d'Ivoire with supply chain capacity strengthening and pandemic preparedness solutions** as part of the three-year SOLVE project (2019-2021) with the support of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

- **End-to-End Supply Chain Visibility:** In Côte d'Ivoire, WFP supported the Ministry of Health by introducing a Control Tower approach and the use of monthly dashboards to improve the country's supply chain visibility. Alerting on potential issues and shortages in the Government's malaria, HIV, family planning and nutrition programmes, these tools helped mitigate the risk of stockouts in vital medicines and health commodities.
- **Fleet and Transport management:** In Guinea, Niger and Côte d'Ivoire, WFP helped to optimize the usage of the central medical stores' fleet of trucks, by providing technical advice, new fleet management tools and targeted trainings. Optimising the transport of health products, this collaboration helped improve the timely delivery of health products across the two countries' hundreds of public health facilities, thus making more health products available to vulnerable local communities.
- **Pandemic Preparedness:** In Côte d'Ivoire, WFP continued to bolster national health actors' capacity to better respond to health crises. The country's Emergency Response Toolkit was revamped to better define roles, responsibilities, and procedures to be followed in a health crisis.

Partnerships and Resourcing



Partners in Western Africa: **235**



13 OUT OF 19 COUNTRY OFFICE in the region benefited from private sector funding

TYPES OF PARTNERS

- Government-led institutions
- International Financial Institutions
- Community-Based organizations
- Government Donors
- National/local NGOs
- Academic and research institutions (including local and international universities)
- Private sector
- UN
- International NGOs

As the region faces increasingly complex food security challenges, WFP is fully aware that sustainable solution to the region's food security challenges will be only addressed together with partners. It is therefore paramount for WFP to keep deepening and diversifying its partnerships with various actors.

In 2021, WFP explored several new partnerships to enhance coordination and complementarity. For example, WFP has further intensified its partnership with various academic and research institutes to achieve greater complementarities, including with both international and local universities.

At the regional level, WFP has also continued to strengthen its engagement with regional coordination mechanisms; for example, WFP started to co-lead the Agriculture and Food Security group of the Sahel Alliance together with African Development Bank and FAO.

Technical partnerships were strengthened in 2021. Under its research, assessment and mapping activities, WFP signed partnerships agreements with Impact REACH to improve food security assessment in the hard-to-reach areas in the region. WFP is collaborating with the universities of Tulane in the USA and Laval in Canada to develop strong collection between international universities and local ones.

In Ghana, WFP engages the Center for Technology & Economic Development (CTED) to leverage price to inform commodities exchanges. WFP has also intensified its partnership with the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) by launching a study on social cohesion in integrated resilience interventions in Niger and Burkina Faso. The study aims to further examine WFP's role in supporting equitable access to land and water resources as well as conflict sensitivity considerations in FFA programming through dedicated case studies. The initiative is a follow-up to the study conducted by WFP and the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) in Mali in 2019.

WFP and UN Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) launched a partnership in October 2021 to promote Financial Inclusion for Zero Hunger within the West Africa Region. Through this partnership both agencies can jointly work with regional governments to promote enabling environments to encourage the most vulnerable to gain access to financial services. As governments in this region increasingly turn to cash transfers, there is an opportunity for WFP to work with governments to help ensure their social assistance programmes are financially inclusive.

Private sector partnerships

By leveraging the innovative power of businesses, WFP aims to do even more to reach those furthest behinds and develop sustainable solutions to long-term challenges, such as by supporting local producers through climate change adaptation and by expanding women’s access to income-generating activities. In 2021, 13 out of the 19 countries received contributions from the private sector.

In 2021, WFP undertook a landmark landscape mapping and consultations to identify needs and potential for partnerships at the regional and country level. The result was a document that articulated country office needs that

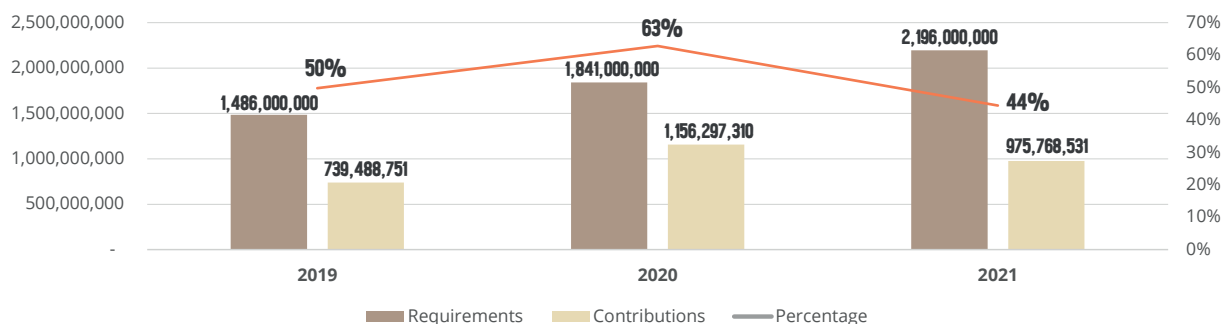
can be supported by the private sector, the various private sector entities that can support (corporations, foundations, international chamber of commerce etc) and the priority sectors to be pursued—fintech, banking, e-commerce etc.

WFP, therefore, aims to conclude technical partnerships that entail a mutually beneficial exchange of expertise to meet the needs of beneficiaries and contribute to the achievement of the SDGs.

Resourcing

- USD 100 MILLION** flexible funding received in 2021 (58 percent increase compared to 2020)
- USD 52.5 MILLION** Funding from host governments (reduced by 39% from 2020 when an over 200% increase was seen compared to 2019 and 2018)
- DIVERSIFICATION OF RESOURCES INCREASED** i.e. Percent of funds received regionally from the top 7 donors: 87 percent in 2020 reduced to 80 percent in 2021
- USD 46 MILLION** Immediate Response Account made available to the region
- USD 458 MILLION** (47% of total contributions) were made eligible by donors for Internal Project Lending (IPL)
- 85 PERCENT** of All Purchases made by RBD were through the GCMF (65 percent of GCMF purchases were sourced locally and regionally)
- 317,000 MT** of food commodities (USD 242 million food + AC) purchased by 12 country offices through GCMF. 3 countries (Nigeria, Burkina Faso and Niger) accounted for 75% of all purchases (230,000 mt)

FUNDING VS. REQUIREMENTS TO WFP WESTERN AFRICA (USD)





In 2021, WFP saw notable improvements compared to recent years in its resourcing outlook with regards to the rates of unearmarked and flexible funding received, and in the diversification of its resource base.

WFP continues to appreciate **flexible and unearmarked** contributions which allowed it to quickly respond to the evolving assistance needs. Flexible contributions are crucial for our emergency responses, and protracted relief and recovery efforts, whenever and wherever needs are greatest. These allocations greatly supported the country operations to quickly respond or scale-up at the onset or escalation of emergencies, for example, to address rapidly deteriorating food insecurity in Northeast Nigeria, provide a flood response in Mali and Niger, and for preparedness activities for potential Ebola virus disease reported in Guinea and Cote d'Ivoire.

As the assistance needs increase across the world, WFP has been intensifying its efforts to engage a wider range of partners to **diversify its resource base**. Since 2018, WFP has been steadily diversifying its resource base; while 87 percent of the region's contributions were received from the seven biggest donors in 2018, this rate has dropped to 80 percent in 2021.

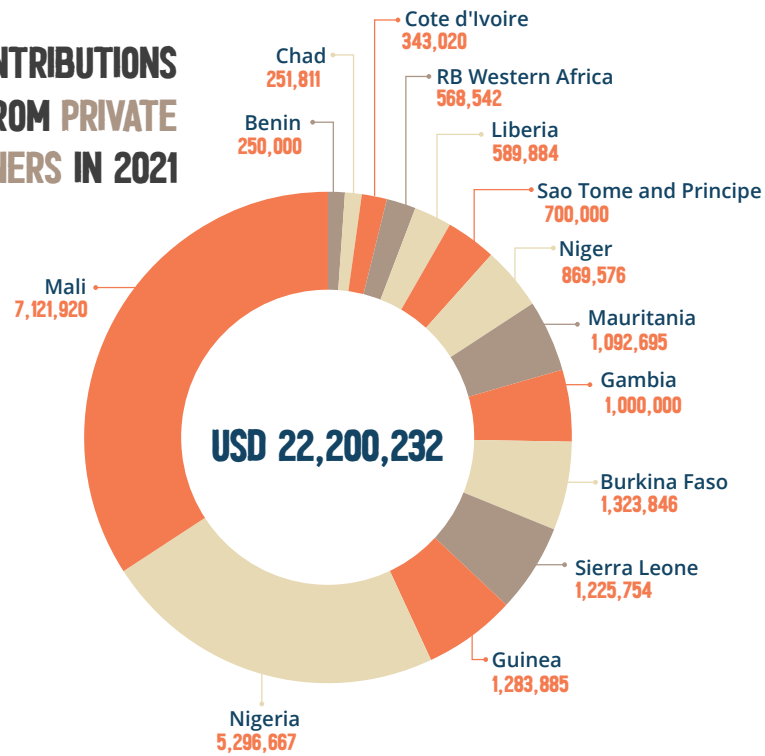
Efforts in strengthening engagement with the national governments continued in 2021; while International Financial Institutions (IFI) and national government contributions are down compared to 2020, WFP increased its investments in this area and engagements are increasing across the region.

In 2021, two debt swap agreements were concluded in the region with the national governments (one agreement with Mauritania and the other with Guinea Bissau), the Government of Spain, and WFP. Through this mechanism, part of the outstanding debt was re-purposed to support the development priorities of these countries, with WFP contributing to the implementation of these priorities. Through this mechanism, WFP will assist the government of Guinea-Bissau to enhance food security and improving nutrition and in Mauritania will assist vulnerable communities adapt to climate change through livelihoods activities, asset creation and rehabilitation of rural infrastructure.

WFP utilized various internal **advance financing mechanisms** in the region to ensure the timely availability of funds and food commodities for emergency operational needs, and to enhance operational efficiency. In 2021, operations under Level 2 and Level 3 response (Corporate Attention) such as Burkina Faso, Central African Republic, Chad, Mali, and Niger, utilized the GCMF emergency response which enabled them to purchase food commodities in advance of the confirmation of contributions, with the objective to reduce food delivery lead-time; shorten emergency response time; purchase food with favourable prices.

WFP **doubled its income from the private sector** between 2020 and 2021 in Western Africa. While in 2020, WFP received close to USD 10 million, in 2021 this amount increased to over USD 20 million in the region.

CONTRIBUTIONS FROM PRIVATE PARTNERS IN 2021



TOP 10 DONORS 2021 CONTRIBUTION (USD)

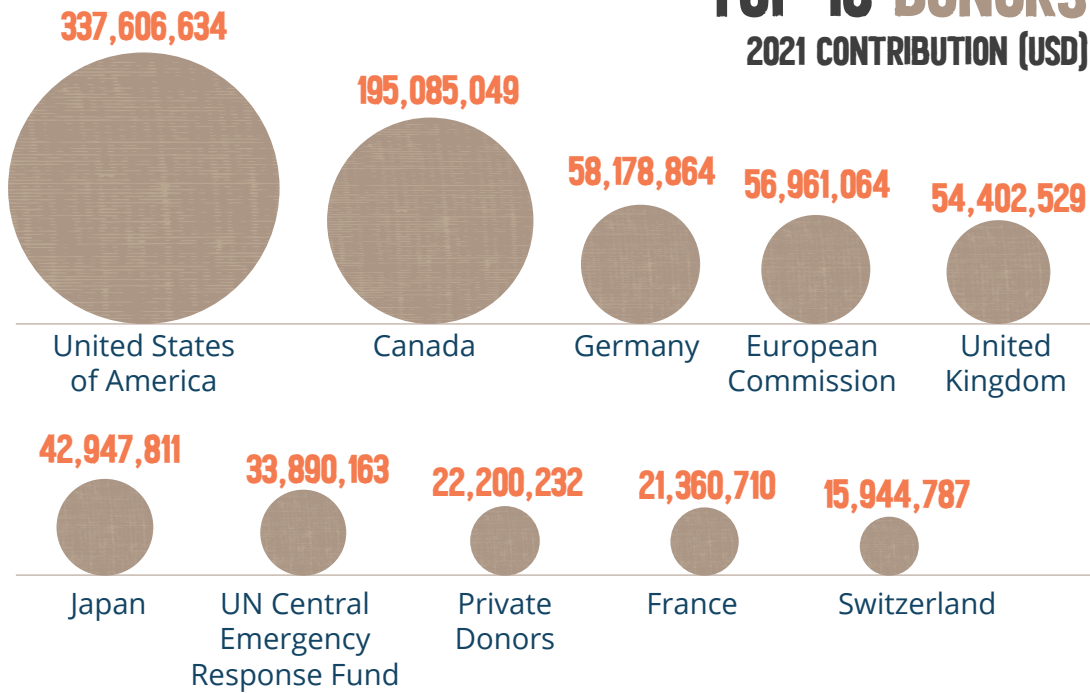


Photo Credits

Cover Photo: WFP/ Evelyn Fey

Burkina Faso. Market garden for improved nutrition, source of income and social cohesion.

Photo page 02-03: WFP/ Drone Africa

Niger. Multifunctional half-moons work in progress by the participants of the FFA activities.

Photo page 09: WFP/ Evelyn Fey

Chad. Mother with child on arm walking through IDP huts at lake Chad basin.

Photo page 12: WFP/Evelyn Fey

Chad. Chad. Registration of beneficiaries at WFP lean season food distribution.

Photo page 15: WFP/ Evelyn Fey

Niger. Nutritional screening during a FARN sensitisation session.

Photo page 18: WFP/ Evelyn Fey

Chad. Farmer working on their rice fields at the shore of the dam.

Photo page 20: WFP/ Evelyn Fey

Senegal. Student eats school lunch provided by WFP

Photo page 21: WFP/ Mariama Ali Souley

Niger. School feeding programs beneficiaries

Photo page 22: WFP/ Evelyn Fey

Chad. Cheerful WFP beneficiaries at FFA site.

Photo page 23: WFP/ Evelyn Fey

Niger. A mother breastfeeds her child at FARN nutritional

Photo page 24: WFP/ Richard Mbouet

Niger. Empowerment of women in Danja (Maradi region) through food fortification in the fight against malnutrition

Photo page 26: WFP/ Bruno Djoyo

Central African Republic. Bernadette Yasseme: 50 years old, mother of 8 children from Kouango village.

Photo page 27: WFP/ Esther Ouoba

Burkina Faso.

- a. *Food commodities being unloaded from the UNHAS helicopter in Mansila.*
- b. *Two women head back home with a donkey-drawn cart loaded with the bags of cereals and cardboard boxes containing oil cans they received.*

Photo page 28: WFP/ Amadou Cisse

Liberia. Solar panels installed at Monrovia

Photo page 29: WFP/ Benoit Lognone

Mali. Dike restoration in rice fields

Photo page 31: WFP/ Arete/Bernard Kalu

Nigeria. Representative of PLAN International registers woman

Photo page 33: WFP/ Esther Ouoba

Burkina Faso. A UNHAS helicopter is parked on a dirt airstrip in Sebba

Photo page 35: WFP/ Blanche Salamatou

Cameroon. Inventory check-up in the WFP Douala Corridor Warehouse

Photo page 37: WFP/ Cheick Omar Bandaogo

Guinea. School girls receive take home ration in the form of oil in Koundara

Photo page 39: WFP/ Arete/Damilola Onafuwa

Nigeria. WFP partner staff briefs Aisha and others before food collection at a food distribution centre in Yobe State.

CONTACT INFORMATION

rbd.oimreporting@wfp.org

World Food Programme

Regional Bureau for Western Africa

wfp.org