



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES

WFP Benin Country Brief June 2022



Operational Context

The Republic of Benin is a low-income West African country ranked 158 out of 189 countries on the 2020 Human Development Index report. The estimated population of 11.8 million is predominantly rural and juvenile, with an average age of 21 years old. The quality of education and the school environment are poor, and in many rural districts the primary school enrolment rate remains below 50 percent, particularly for girls.

The agricultural sector, predominantly small-fragmented farms with low productivity, employs around 70 percent of the population and contributes to 33 percent of the national gross domestic product.

Households spend on average 63 percent of their budget on food. Food insecurity mostly affects impoverished rural households; worsens during the lean season and increases after natural disasters, such as the heavy floods that affect the country every rainy season. Benin is classified by RISK INFORM as the 36th nation most vulnerable to climate change out of 190.

In Benin, as of 9 June 2022, there have been 26,605 confirmed cases of COVID-19 and 163 deaths. As of 29 May 2022, a total of 3,621,913 vaccine doses have been administered and 22.4 percent of the population was vaccinated (covid19.who.int/region/afro/country/bj).

WFP has been present in Benin since 1964.



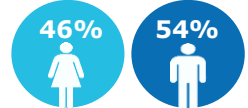
Population: 11.8 million
Income level: lower
2020 Human Development Index: 158 out of 189
Gender inequality index 2020: 158 out of 189

In Numbers

1,206* mt of food distributed in 5,332 schools in May 2022

USD 3.4 m six months net funding requirements (June-November 2022)

667,329* beneficiaries assisted in May 2022
***figures are being finalized.**



Operational Updates

- As of May 2022, WFP supported school canteens operations in 5,332 schools. Due to the year-end national examinations, school canteens did not function as usual in June. Teachers were involved in examination-related activities, and some schools were examination centres.
- On behalf of the President, champion of the Global School Meals Coalition, the Vice-President of the Republic of Benin, Her Excellency Ms. Mariam Chabi Talata Zime, was a guest of honour at the WFP June annual session of the Executive Board in Rome. In her address, she reaffirmed the Government's firm commitment to making Benin's school canteens an essential social safety net to improve access to primary education and increase the school retention rate. She also engaged with FAO Executive Director and the School Meals Coalition members.
- WFP signed an MoU with UNICEF in 2021 for joint activities on the school meals and nutrition activities. Within this framework, they developed the "Integrated approach to school feeding" project aiming to use the school as an entry point for converging development initiatives such as education, nutrition, health, agriculture, and social mobilisation. It will be implemented until December 2023 in 100 schools of Alibori, Atakora, Borgou, and Zou departments. In June 2022, WFP and UNICEF organized a capacity strengthening session for thirty-six (36) cooks from Agbangnizoun (Zou department) to increase the participants' skills in nutrition and hygiene. Cooks learned culinary methods of new recipes based on yellow peas adapted to the food habits of the region, as well as techniques for making concentrated tomatoes and preserving green leafy vegetables. The same training will be conducted in the remaining communities by December 2022.
- Within the framework of the ongoing partnership between WFP and IFAD through the Market Garden Development Support Project, from 15 to 17 June 2022, WFP participated in the preparation meeting of its forthcoming extension. WFP identified entry points of school gardens with the national school feeding programme. The Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries is validating the project document.
- Since 2021, WFP Benin, supported by the Centre of Excellence for the Fight against Hunger in Brazil, has been implementing the "Beyond Cotton" project, which aims to strengthen the capacities of smallholder farmers and facilitate the supply of food to school canteens. In June, WFP finalized training modules to produce maize, beans, and rice. The trainings will start in July with the collaboration of the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, and Fisheries.

Contact: Koffi K. BABALIMSOGA (koffi.babalimsoga@wfp.org)
Country Director: Ali OUATTARA
Further information: www.wfp.org/countries/benin
Photo: The Vice President of the Republic of Benin and the Executive Director.
Credit: WFP Benin

Country Strategic Plan (2019-2023)

2022 Total Requirement (in USD)	2022 Available Contributions (in USD)	Six Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
34 m	47.8 m	3.4 m

Strategic Result 1: Everyone has access to food

Strategic Outcome 1: Vulnerable population including school-aged children in Benin have adequate access to safe, nutritious food and basic social services all year-round

Focus area: Root causes

Activity:

- Provide integrated and inclusive school meals programmes in targeted communities in a way that relies on and stimulates local production.

Strategic Result 2: No one suffers from malnutrition

Strategic Outcome 2: Vulnerable population including children under 5, adolescents and pregnant and lactating women and girls (PLW/G) in targeted areas have improved their nutritional status in line with national target by 2023

Focus area: Root causes

Activity:

- Provide specialised nutritious food to children and PLWG to treat malnutrition and prevent risk of stunting and support Benin health services on nutrition education and gender-sensitive behaviour-change.

Strategic Result 3: Institutional capacity-strengthening

Strategic Outcome 3: National and local institutions in Benin have increased capacity and improved inclusive systems to achieve SDG 2 including for integrated school meals and food security by 2023.

Focus area: Root causes

Activity:

- Provide technical assistance and policy support, including through South-South cooperation, to local and national institutions in the areas of gender-sensitive school feeding, food security, and emergency food preparedness and response.

Strategic Result 4: Everyone has access to food

Strategic Outcome 4: Crisis-affected populations in Benin can meet their basic food and nutrition requirements in the aftermath of shocks.

Focus area: Crisis response

Activity:

- Provide food and nutrition assistance to crisis-affected populations and strengthen the capacity of national partners on emergency response and coordination.

- Since 2015, in line with the community-based approach of its school feeding Programme, WFP has received contributions from Choithrams Foundation in twenty communities. In 2021, the two organizations renewed their partnership for 2022-2024. Twenty additional schools in the departments of Couffo, Atlantique, Collines, Borgou, and Alibori will benefit from the construction of canteen infrastructure, school gardens, income-generating activities, installation, and management of grain mills. In May and June 2022, WFP organised information and awareness-raising activities for these beneficiary communities and NGOs partners on their specific tasks and responsibilities. Eight (08) schools will begin the implementation of the package of activities in the coming months.
- On 29 June 2022, at Adjohoun, WFP and the Embassy of China organized the launching ceremony of the food distribution as part of the “Emergency food assistance to Benin in response to COVID-19 and natural disaster” project, aiming to support 50,000 beneficiaries. As of June, WFP assisted 85 percent of the target.



Photo: Beneficiaries expressing their gratitude at the launching ceremony at Adjohoun.

Credit: WFP Benin

Monitoring

- In June, WFP visited 5,245 primary schools out of 5,332 (99 percent). The main issue identified was the weak commitment of the parents of pupils in supporting the canteen in most of the new schools. Hence, WFP carried out awareness-raising actions with parents' committees, canteen management committees, and local authorities for their full involvement in supporting the canteen operations.

Challenges

- The security situation has not improved. In June 2022, the country recorded terrorism-related incidents in the departments of Atacora and Borgou in the north. This situation may restrict WFP's monitoring activities. The Country Office is hiring a Security Officer to support its operations in these areas.

Donors

The top five donors to WFP Benin Country Strategic Plan (2019-2023) are the Government of Benin, the Netherlands, Germany, Switzerland, and China.