



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES

WFP Lesotho Country Brief July 2022



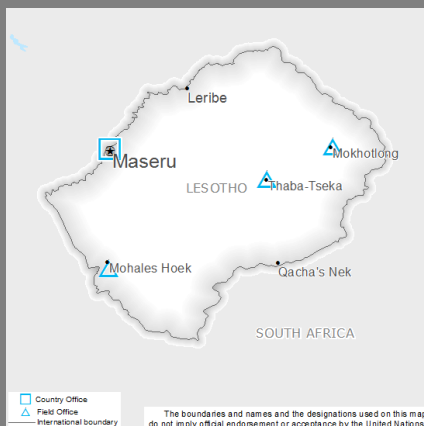
Operational Context

Lesotho is a small mountainous landlocked country with a population of 2.2 million people. About 57 percent of Lesotho's population live on less than one dollar per day.

The population's high vulnerability is exacerbated by a low performing economy and recurring climatic hazards, including droughts, floods and early frost. Twenty-nine percent of people below the age of 35 are unemployed. The country is also characterized by a high HIV prevalence rate (25.6 percent: 30.4 percent for women and 20.8 for men ages 18 - 35), with care needed for more than 250,000 orphaned children, most of whom lost their parents to AIDS. Life expectancy stands at 49 years.

Agriculture, which contributes seven percent of GDP, is a major source of livelihood for 80 percent of the population living in rural areas. WFP supports the Government's efforts in building the resilience of communities frequently affected by climatic hazards, with the view to stimulating agricultural production.

WFP has been present in Lesotho since 1962.



Population: **2.2 million**

2019 Human Development Index: **165 out of 189**

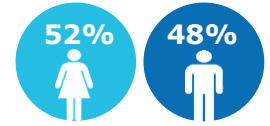
Income Level: **Lower middle**

Chronic malnutrition: **33% of children between 6-59 months**

In Numbers

US\$ 11m six months (August 2022 - January 2023) net funding requirements, representing 60% of total requirements.

426,000 people targeted in 2022



Operational Updates

- **According to the Lesotho Vulnerability Assessment Committee (LVAC) presentation of July 2022**, the food insecure population is likely to increase further due to decreased livelihoods opportunities like remittances, employment, income from livestock as well as increased food and non-food commodities prices. About 25 percent of the Basotho population, estimated at 521,000 (320,000 individuals in rural areas and 201,000 individuals in urban areas) are facing food insecurity, up from the 470,000 people that were food insecure in 2021 and 2022. Poor and very poor households are likely to experience food gaps which will intensify slightly during the lean season period (October 2022-March 2023).

Activity 1: Crisis response

- As part of the preparatory activities for the lean season response, in the areas identified by the LVAC assessment as most impacted by high food insecurity, WFP in collaboration with the Disaster Management Authority has begun community sensitization about the self-targeting exercise and the role of community leaders in the targeting exercise. Through the self-targeting exercise, communities are given the platform to validate the list of vulnerable people identified for humanitarian assistance as per the registration on the Ministry of Social Development wealth ranking. These individuals are then verified by WFP through household interaction. This approach ensures that vulnerable people get the assistance they need.

Activity 2: School Feeding

- Schools have resumed after the winter break and WFP started its fourth quarter food deliveries to ensure that learners have access to safe and nutritious meals while learning. The provision of school meals has proved to be critical in improving access to food and education as well as improving the nutritional status of school learners.
- The stunting rate has slightly increased from 33 percent in 2014 to 34.5 percent in 2018 among children under five years of age. To address high rates of micronutrient deficiencies, specifically among school aged children, WFP continues to sensitize pre-schools to establish vegetable gardens to complement the food basket provided by WFP.

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Photo: A community in Mokhotlong during a crisis response sensitization meeting. *WFP/Aurore Rusiga*

Country Strategic Plan (July 2019-June 2024)

Total Requirement (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)	Six Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
123.6 m	50.8 m	11 m

Strategic Result 1: Everyone has access to food

Strategic Outcome 1: Sock affected people in Lesotho are able to meet their food and nutrition needs during times of crisis.

Focus area: Crisis Response

Activities:

- **Activity 1:** Provide cash and/or food transfers to populations affected by shocks.

Strategic Result 2: Everyone has access to food

Strategic Outcome 2: Vulnerable populations in Lesotho benefit from strengthened social protection systems that ensure access to adequate, safe and nutritious food all year round

Focus area: Root Causes

Activities:

- **Activity 2:** Support the Government in evidence-based planning, design, management and implementation of gender responsive social protection programmes, including by handing over the home-grown school meals programme.
- **Activity 3:** Strengthen technical capacity of the Government in early warning, food and nutrition security monitoring and vulnerability assessment and analysis through forecast-based financing approaches

Strategic Result 3: End Malnutrition

Strategic Outcome 3: Vulnerable populations in Lesotho have improved nutritional status, at each stage of the lifecycle, in line with national targets by 2024.

Focus area: Root Causes

Activities:

- **Activity 4:** Provide capacity strengthening to the Government and other actors with regard to multi-sectoral coordination, planning, evidence-building and implementation of equitable nutrition policies and programmes.

Strategic Result 4: Sustainable Food Systems

Strategic Outcome #: Communities in targeted areas, especially women and youth, have resilient, efficient and inclusive food systems by 2024.

Focus area: Resilience Building

Activities:

- **Activity 5:** Support the design and implementation of assets that are nutritionally relevant to improve and diversify the livelihoods of vulnerable communities and households affected by climate change and land degradation.
- **Activity 6:** Provide technical support to smallholder farmers and other value chain actors, particularly women, in climate-smart agriculture, food quality and safety, marketing of nutritious foods and financial services

Activity 3: Strengthening technical capacity of the Government on early warning systems

- **Lesotho Vulnerability Assessment dashboard** – The Disaster Management Authority, through the Lesotho Vulnerability Assessment Committee (LVAC), launched a dashboard that to visualise and increase access to LVAC information to stakeholders and the public at large in a user-friendly manner. WFP supported

both financially and technically the establishment of the dashboard.

- **FFA Evaluation:** Following 2 years of implementation of the assets creation and public works programme in Lesotho, WFP held a stakeholders' workshop to present finding of the results of the mid-term evaluation report. The evaluation exercise was commissioned by the Ministry of Forestry, Range, and Soil Conservation and WFP. The evaluation assessed and reported on the impact of Food Assistance for Assets activities on environmental, communal and household resilience to shocks and stresses, and identified lessons learned, successes and challenges. One of the key findings of the evaluation indicated that the nutrition training and awareness-raising by government offices contributed to improved food and nutrition security.

Activity 4: Nutrition

- Lesotho, due to its poverty rate, geographical location and features, is highly exposed to the risks of climate change. In efforts to help people adapt and mitigate the effects of climate change, WFP through the adaptation fund project held workshops at district level to disseminate the National Climate Change Communication Strategy developed in 2021. This is a national document developed by WFP in collaboration with the Ministry of Energy, department of Lesotho Meteorological Services (LMS), to guide all stakeholders' efforts aimed at increasing and improving the level of awareness, interest, attitude, behaviour and practices towards climate change adaptation, mitigation and disaster management among the public, particularly vulnerable communities.

Activity 5: Resilience

- WFP continues with the implementation of a shock responsive and results oriented public works programme across 21 project sites in the southern districts of, Mafeteng, Mohale's Hoek and Quthing in support of the Ministry of Forestry, Range and Soil Conservation's efforts to improve livelihoods of people affected by climate shocks. WFP's public works initiative addresses immediate food needs through cash transfers, while at the same time promoting the building or rehabilitation of assets that will improve long-term food security and resilience. The ongoing asset creation activities include gully rehabilitation, range management, removal of shrubs to restore land as well as maintaining household and communal gardens.

Activity 6: Support to smallholder farmers

- Through the Adaptation Fund project, WFP and the Ministry of Agriculture, Food Security and Marketing commissioned a post-harvest loss study. The key finding of the study was presented to stakeholders earlier this month and it will help to identify areas for improvement.
- Through funding support from the Government of Japan, WFP continues to build the capacity of smallholder farmers in post-harvest handling and quality assurance to meet market demands. This will also contribute to increasing agricultural production and improve food security and income of smallholder farmers.

Challenges

- WFP continues to plan lean season emergency food assistance to support vulnerable families affected by climate shocks and the Ukraine crisis. The available funding can only assist 2 percent (14,980 people) of the planned 150,000 people. Over the next 12 months **WFP needs an additional US\$ 7.3 million** to provide lifesaving assistance to the targeted people.

Donors

ECHO, Germany, Japan.