Operational Context

Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) continues to face challenging political and socioeconomic situation, due to a protracted crisis which was further exacerbated by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and global supply chain challenges due to the Ukraine crisis and global food price inflation. Some economic improvements helped curb the hyperinflation in 2021, when the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) contracted at a rate of -3 percent, compared to -30 percent in 2020. Moreover, the Venezuelan economy is expected to grow by 12 percent in 2022, according to the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean. However, the food security situation in the country remains of concern. According to the Humanitarian Response Plan 2022-2023, overall, more than five million people are in need of humanitarian assistance.

Venezuela imports more than 70 percent of the consumed processed foods and is extremely vulnerable to international price fluctuations. In August 2022, food prices increased by 30 percent (World Bank), making access to nutritious food and a diversified diet difficult for most families.

To respond to these needs, WFP reaches most vulnerable children, their families, and their communities through a school-based food assistance. The programme was launched in July 2021. As of November, WFP has presence in the states of Falcon, Trujillo, Yaracuy, Barinas, Anzoátegui, Monagas, Sucre and Delta Amacuro, aiming to further expand to additional states.

WFP's operations in the country are focused on school meals, nutrition activities, school kitchen refurbishment, coordination and information sharing through the Food Security Cluster and the Logistics Cluster, and capacity-strengthening activities.

In Numbers

- **4,200 mt** of food assistance distributed
- **USD 25.9 m** six months (December 2022 – May 2023) net funding requirements, representing 37 percent of total needs
- **458,000 people** assisted

*Preliminary figures

Operational Updates

- In November, WFP distributed food assistance to 458,000 beneficiaries. Of these, 440,000 are beneficiaries of WFP’s school meals programme and 18,000 were assisted under the emergency response due to floods and landslides caused by tropical waves.

- WFP distributed double food rations to cover food needs from November to December 2022. Distributions will resume in January 2023 after the school closure.

- Among the total beneficiaries, 230,000 are children under 6 enrolled in pre-primary schools and 17 percent of these received fortified food served directly at the schools.

- WFP delivered food assistance to 4,500 households affected by floods and landslides in Trujillo, Zulia, Táchira and Mérida. WFP carried out direct distributions with the Venezuelan Civil Protection and other local authorities. As of mid-December 2022, WFP is implementing the second cycle of distributions to flood-affected households and will complete the third cycle in January 2023.

- In November, WFP and its cooperating partner Caritas Venezuela refurbished the kitchens of 15 schools in the state of Falcon while continuing to implement school kitchen rehabilitation in 39 schools. Overall, WFP is refurbishing 276 school kitchens in the state of Falcón with the support of Caritas and World Vision to provide the conditions for onsite school meals in early 2023.

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Population: 28.3 million (ECLAC, 2022)
Human Development Index: 120 out of 191 (UNDP, 2021)
People in Need of Humanitarian Assistance: 5.2 million (HRP 2022-2023)
GDP (Annual Growth rate): -3 (ECLAC, 2021)
Monitoring

- In November, WFP assisted 860 people through its helpline. Of these, 36 percent of users inquired about food distributions during the holidays in December, as well as the continuity of the assistance in 2023; 13 percent offered suggestions about the programme; 10 percent expressed concerns related to constraints accessing assistance and 41 percent of users gave positive feedback, including beneficiaries assisted during the emergency response to the heavy rains in Trujillo, Mérida, Táchira and Zulia.

- WFP’s monitoring price data showed that the market cost of WFP’s food basket increased by 17 percent between August and October 2022, contributing to more challenging access to food for vulnerable households.

Challenges

- WFP rescheduled food distributions in the first half of November due to access constraints and logistics limitations in the states of Falcon, Sucre and Barinas.

- To mitigate the impact of global supply chain disruptions affecting WFP’s operation in Venezuela, WFP is purchasing food commodities in advance.

- WFP continues to advocate for timely funding confirmation from partners to ensure adequate prepositioning of food and to mitigate the risk of pipeline breaks and ration cuts.

Donors

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

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