



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES

WFP Philippines Country Brief February 2023



Community partners from Matanog, Maguindanao with their harvests from the Kayud ka Bangsamoro (KBB), supported by WFP to promote food security and nutrition in BARMM. ©WFP/Mamatanto Madidis

Operational Context

A lower middle-income country, the Philippines has been one of the most dynamic economies in the East Asia Pacific region but has struggled to transpose economic growth into tangible human development gains. Poverty incidence is at 18.1 percent (2021), which translates into 20 million Filipinos who live below the poverty threshold. Stunting prevalence is high at 26.7 percent. Natural hazards and man-made conflicts contribute to food insecurity and malnutrition, which are now exacerbated by the impact of COVID-19, as well as the global food and energy crisis. The Philippines ranks 1st in Natural Hazards & Exposure risk according to the 2022 Inform Risk Index.

WFP's Country Strategic Plan focuses on supporting the Government in achieving food security, reducing malnutrition, preparing for disasters and climate change impact, and improving access to income-generating activities for the rural poor, conflict affected population and other vulnerable groups – in line with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 2: Zero Hunger. Specifically, WFP works on a humanitarian-development-peace nexus approach in the Bangsamoro Region during its transition period.



Population: **110 million**

Human Development Index Ranking (2022): **116 out of 191**

Childhood stunting: **27%** (National Nutrition Survey, 2021)

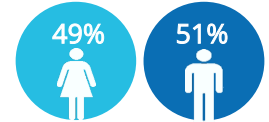
Income Level: **Lower middle**

In Numbers

3,465 people assisted in February 2023

US\$ 51,000 distributed through cash-based transfers

US\$ 4.13 million six-month net funding requirements (March-August 2023)



Operational Updates

Severe Rain and Flooding

- WFP provided 39 trucks to transport over 64,000 family food packs on behalf of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) to support communities affected by flooding in Eastern Visayas and Central Mindanao. The compounded effects of shear line, northeast monsoon, and a series of low pressure areas continued to bring heavy rains and flooding in the country affecting nearly 2.2 million people.

Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM)

- WFP implemented **food assistance for assets (FFA)** activities in four municipalities of Maguindanao (Datu Saudi Ampatuan, Datu Abdullah Sangki, Matanog, and South Upi) which benefitted 8,570 people in three months. Participants produced a total of 75,500 seedlings, cultivated 58 hectares of land, developed 35 fishponds, and rehabilitated 28 km of roads and 3 km of irrigation systems.
- WFP, together with the Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries and Agrarian Reform (MAFAR) was selected as the **Co-Chair of the Economic Development Technical Working Group (EDTWG)**, mandated to review and endorse economic development assistance in BARMM.
- WFP supported a three-day workshop by the Bangsamoro Food Security Task Force to review the implementation of the **Food Security and Nutrition (FSN) Roadmap of BARMM**. The captured experiences, challenges, and lessons learned from the FSN Roadmap implementation will inform future programme implementation in BARMM.

Disaster Preparedness and Response

- To augment the Government's logistics capacity in responding to emergencies, WFP donated approximately USD 183,000 worth of **logistics equipment** including forklifts, portable vacuum sealing machine, hand pallets, and a reach truck to the DSWD National Resource Operations Center and Visayas Disaster Resource Center.

Contact info: wfp.philippines@wfp.org

Country Director: Brenda Barton

Further information: www.wfp.org/countries/Philippines

Country Strategic Plan (2018-2023)

Total Requirement (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)	Six Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
115.8 m	65 m	4.13 m

Strategic Result 1: Everyone has access to food

Strategic Outcome 1: Crisis-affected people in the Philippines are able to meet their food and nutrition needs during and immediately after an emergency.

Focus area: Crisis response

Activities:

- Provide unconditional food and nutrition assistance through the governments' safety net or partners to crisis-affected communities following natural disasters or human-induced shocks and disruptions

Strategic Result 2: End malnutrition

Strategic Outcome 2: Women, boys, and girls in provinces prioritized by the Government have adequate and healthy diets to reduce malnutrition in line with government targets by 2022.

Focus area: Root Cause

Activities:

- Provide direct and technical assistance to boys, girls, women and care providers as well as technical assistance to government, build evidence and advocate to ensure nutrition specific and sensitive multiple sectorial responses lead to adequate and healthy diets during the critical times of development.

Strategic Result 5: Capacity Strengthening

Strategic Outcome 3: Vulnerable communities in Mindanao have improved food security, in support of government targets by 2022.

Focus area: Resilience

Activities:

- Support the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) and local governments to address the Food Security and Nutrition (FSN) needs of all segments of the population (activity category: 9, modality: CS/food/cash) to further consolidate and enhance existing peace and development plans

Strategic Result 5: Capacity Strengthening

Strategic Outcome 4: National and Local Government have enhanced capabilities to reduce vulnerabilities to shocks by 2022.

Focus area: Resilience

Activities:

- Support national and local capacities for disaster risk reduction and management as well as climate change adaptation
- Strengthen and augment government and partners' emergency preparedness and response capacity to include supply chain and ICT

- WFP and DSWD conducted a **Joint Workplan Consultation Workshop** on 21 February to review the vision and strategies of both agencies and establish a joint workplan over the next five years.
- WFP co-facilitated the **Nexus Lab: From Emergency Response to Digital Safety Nets in the Philippines**, a forum with participated by the Government, Cooperating Partners and other United Nations (UN) agencies to discuss key thematic areas on emergency response including social protection, digitalization, and climate change adaptation. WFP moderated the discussion on emergency response during Typhoon Rai operations and discussed anticipatory action as an innovative approach to climate action.

Nutrition

- WFP participated in the **Scaling-Up Nutrition (SUN) Joint Assessment**. The workshop resulted in the identification of SUN Network's five priorities for 2023-2024 towards ending malnutrition, including supporting Philippine Plan of Action for Nutrition 2023-2028, and accelerating actions and investments for nutrition. Findings from this workshop will also be reflected in its Country Assessment Report.
- WFP, together with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the United Nations' Children's Fund, the Finnish Centre of Expertise in Education and Development, and the Finnish Embassy in Manila presented the results of the **Study on the Viability of an Integrated Programme on Home-grown School Feeding in BARMM** and gathered feedback from different stakeholders in the region. Findings showed that institutionalized school feeding programme can create a stable and predictable market for local producers, while contributing to better nutrition and health in communities.
- WFP analysed the social and behavioural change (SBCC) data gathered through the **Feasibility Study for Cash Transfer Program in the Philippines** to inform the design of a possible government pilot voucher programme. The study showed that pregnant and lactating women and adolescent girls and caregivers of young children have high mental and emotional ability to cope with stressors. This suggested that SBCC — which uses a set of communications interventions to positively influence behaviours — can strategically help them overcome the complex barriers in eating well-balanced and nutrient-dense foods. This study was supported by the Asian Development Bank.

Monitoring

- According to the **2023 Inflation Report of the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA)**, headline inflation slightly slowed down for the first time in six months at **8.6 percent in February** from 8.7 percent in January. Lower transportation costs drove the downtrend in the overall inflation rate. Inflation rates for food and non-alcoholic beverages increased to 10.8 percent from 10.7 percent in January.

Donors

Asian Development Bank (ADB), Australia, Brazil, Canada, European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO), France, Germany, Ireland, Japan, Japan Association for WFP, the Philippines, Private Sector, Republic of Korea, United States of America (USAID), United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF).