



WFP/Gabrielle Menezes



World Food Programme

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Regional Bureau for **Eastern Africa**

Social Protection

2022 Regional **Achievements and Outlook**

April 2023

Regional Overview

The deteriorating food security situation and increasing humanitarian needs continued to highlight the importance of social protection as a way of meeting essential needs, responding to crises, and building the resilience of households to future shocks and stresses. WFP continued to prioritise social protection, working with national governments and partners to strengthen social protection systems and deliver assistance.

The social protection landscape in the region is diverse, with very nascent systems in countries like Burundi and South Sudan to more established ones in countries like Kenya and Rwanda. Guided by WFP's global Social Protection Strategy, all country offices across the region were engaged in different forms of social protection activities to meet the unique needs of their country.

WFP's work in the region focussed on policy and institutional strengthening, system strengthening, capacity building, and supporting programme delivery on behalf of the government. WFP also supported knowledge and learning through assessments and analysis, and monitoring and evaluation to make informed decisions that improve social protection policy, programme design, and delivery. This work was greatly strengthened by a partnership with the University of Wolverhampton through the Learning Facility where experts supported countries with technical assistance and open conversations to build practical know-how on social protection.



Regional Achievements

Shock Responsive Social Protection

Multiple and concurrent shocks in East Africa have shone a spotlight on the region's need to devise long-term solutions for responding to shocks and crises. As a result, WFP worked to support the development of and leverage the shock-responsive components of national social protection systems to meet immediate needs, while also improving these systems to make them more effective and responsive to future shocks.

For instance, in **Somalia**, to help cope with the drought after five consecutive below-average rainy seasons, WFP supported the Government of Somalia to leverage the shock-responsive component of the National Safety Net for Human Capital Programme-Baxnaano, through a vertical and horizontal expansion. In September 2022, over 1 million people enrolled in the national safety net received top-ups to their monthly entitlements. In December 2022, additional funding from the World Bank allowed for the expansion of Baxnaano to 930,000 drought-affected people outside of the national safety net coverage.

In Ethiopia, with support received from the World Bank towards the end of 2022, WFP plans to provide a complementary safety net to drought and conflict-affected households in the Tigray region to enable them to cope with shocks and improve their food security. In addition, WFP will conduct a capacity strengthening assessment which will strengthen the Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP) structures and implementation of the PSNP in the Tigray region of Ethiopia.

Furthermore, in **Sudan**, food security has been negatively affected by the ongoing economic crisis and the conflict in Ukraine as Sudan is dependent on wheat imports from the Black Sea region. A change of government in October 2021 forced a pause in Sudan's flagship social protection program – the Sudan Family Support Program (SFSP). Recognizing the need for a national safety net to assist food-insecure households, the World Bank and WFP launched the Sudan Emergency Safety Net Project in August 2022 to fill this coverage gap. The intervention targets 2 million people facing IPC 3 (crisis) and 4 (emergency) levels of food insecurity to cover their needs during the lean season. In addition to providing unconditional cash and food transfers, WFP is building delivery systems and conducting monitoring and evaluation activities to help inform future social protection programming.

Strengthening National Social Protection Policies

In 2022, WFP continued to support national social protection system architecture by supporting governments to develop and improve social protection policies, strategies, and frameworks. WFP's support included research, assessments, analysis, and valuation of previous policies, facilitating policy dialogue, and supporting the drafting process.

In **Djibouti**, WFP collaborated with the Ministry of Social Affairs and Solidarity to evaluate the national social protection strategy (2018-2022). Findings from the evaluation will contribute towards the development of the National Social Protection Strategy for 2023-2027. WFP also supported an institutional capacity assessment of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Solidarity to further inform the development of the new strategy. The new strategy once in place will support the development of a robust and agile social protection system that responds better to the changing context and vulnerabilities in Djibouti.

Further, WFP, through strategic partnerships, contributed to financing and coordinating the development of policies **in Kenya**. Two sub-national social protection policies for Baringo and Samburu Counties were finalized and approved. These policies will contribute to the increased and predictable allocation of resources by the county government to support the delivery of and guide the improved design of social protection programmes at the sub-national level.

In Rwanda, following high-level policy dialogue to operationalize shock-responsive social protection in 2021, WFP and partners continued to provide thought leadership to influence policy reformulation. This led to the creation of a national operational framework and guidelines for the delivery of shock-responsive social protection. Through this framework, in 2023 the goal is to implement an emergency cash transfer component in the Government of Rwanda's flagship social protection programme, Vision Umurenge, to prevent negative coping strategies when disaster strikes. WFP also trained 27 government and partner staff on key technical topics and provided technical support on the strengthening of targeting procedures and improvement data systems to enable comprehensive and timely support.

WFP also worked with the Government of **Uganda** to draft the National Social Protection Strategy. This strategy will address recommendations from the 2019 social protection sector review.

Similarly, in **Burundi**, WFP also contributed to the development of the Social Protection Strategy (2023 – 2027) which is currently undergoing an approval process. The new strategy is set to provide a clear vision for social protection in the country and act as a guide to different actors on how to best engage in the sector.

Digitization of Social Protection Systems

WFP collaborates with governments to support management information systems (MIS) and national registries as they are the backbone in the development of strong, nationally owned social protection systems. In 2022, social protection digitization continued to be a key priority in the social protection agenda in the region and remains a critical component of WFP's collaborations with governments, international financial institutions, and other partners.

In Ethiopia, WFP undertook a mission on behalf of the Humanitarian Response Programme, which is managed by the Ethiopian Disaster Risk Management Commission (EDRMC), and the Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP), which is managed by the Ministry of Agriculture. The objective of the mission was to assess the registration process and identify challenges and opportunities for digitization. The mission resulted in the design and development of a digitized registration system that will be piloted in 20 Woredas in the Somali region in 2023.

WFP has also been working with the Government of **Burundi** and other partners to strengthen the social protection system, notably through the operationalization of the social registry. WFP is also supporting capacity strengthening of the national government to provide basic social assistance to its citizens and strengthen its ability to respond appropriately to shocks. In 2022, WFP supported engagement and dialogue on the development of a national social registry and government capacity building on social registers. As part of the social registry intervention, WFP organised a south-to-south peer learning mission to Kenya. Lessons learned from Kenya's experience in developing its Enhanced Single Registry, are expected to further inform the Government's next steps and the development of a single registry roadmap for Burundi.

In Kenya, WFP continued to support the government in strengthening the national Enhanced Single Registry (ESR). This assistance included financing data collection in 16 counties and identifying the most vulnerable households for inclusion in the national ESR. This undertaking ensured inclusion of the most vulnerable households into national and county social protection programming. Additionally, WFP collaborated with the national government to use the data in the ESR to support the delivery of shock-responsive programming to target vulnerable drought-affected households through the "*Lisha Jamii*" drought response campaign.



For Uganda, WFP assisted the Ministry of Gender, Labour, and Social Development to enhance the MIS of the Social Assistance Grants for Empowerment Programme through MIS decentralization, installation of a data recovery centre in Northern Uganda, and regular operations and upgrades to the National Single Registry (NSR). WFP supported application programming interfaces (APIs) between four national social protection programmes and the NSR as well as an API with the National ID database. This enhanced interoperability between national social protection programmes will result in more inclusive and complementary programming.

In South Sudan, WFP remained the lead agency in beneficiary registration and transfer management, using WFP's SCOPE (beneficiary information and transfer management platform) MIS. WFP extended the usage of SCOPE to various NGOs and UN agencies, offering a service to check biometric duplication in its registered households under a World Bank project. These digitization activities improved efficiency, increased accountability to people targeted by humanitarian assistance, and supported WFP and humanitarian partners' activities, including capacity strengthening on digital literacy.

In Rwanda, WFP signed a memorandum of understanding with the Local Administrative Entities Development Agency (LODA) to enhance the national social protection system. Technical assistance was provided in the assessment of 'the Complaints and Feedback Management (CFM) system. The assessment aimed to provide recommendations for improvements that would provide a safe and accessible platform for participants, communities, and stakeholders to provide feedback, suggestions, and complaints related to the government's social protection programmes.



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