



World Food Programme

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## WFP The Gambia Country Brief March 2023



### Operational Context

The Gambia is experiencing a looming food crisis, the worst in a decade. The Cadre Harmonisé (CH) findings of November 2022 indicated that over 207,600 Gambians were experiencing Crisis (Phase 3) and Emergency (Phase 4) levels of food insecurity. This represented an increase of nearly 95,700 people (53 percent) compared to 2021. During the upcoming lean season (June to August 2023), 319,628 people are projected to face high levels of food insecurity and will need emergency assistance. This represents a 64 percent increase from the 2021 figure of 206,712.

Key drivers of the worsening food and nutrition security situation in The Gambia are reportedly high food prices (heavily linked to the Russia - Ukraine crisis), the loss of employment, and climate shocks which led to the decreasing purchasing power of households.

The nutritional status of the population is also alarming in The Gambia, with stunting and wasting affecting 17.1 percent and 10.3 percent of the population respectively (National Nutrition Surveillance 2022), thus reversing the pre-pandemic gains. Stunting and wasting are major public health problems in The Gambia and have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic and more recently by the negative impacts of the Russia-Ukraine crisis.



Population: **2.4 million**

2021 Human Development Index ranking: **174 out of 191**

Income Level: **Low**

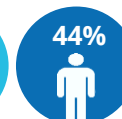
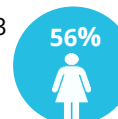
People in food insecurity: **13 percent of the population**

## In Numbers

**USD 702,177** cash-based transfers made

**USD 5.1 million** six-month (April – September 2023) net funding requirements

**131,233 people assisted**  
in February and March 2023



### Operational Updates

#### School feeding

- Following the increase in the number of beneficiary schools supported by the Global Agriculture and Food Security Program, Climate Adaptation Fund- GAFSP project ([GAFSP](#)) (from 87 to 149 schools), WFP is now covering 332 schools, assisting 124,675 children (53 percent girls). The cash-based transfer and local procurement models continue to expand in the local communities.

#### Preparedness for the lean/rainy season 2023

- WFP is in the process of procuring and transporting food commodities locally (rice and beans), regionally, and internationally (vegetable oil, salt, corn soya blend) for the prevention and treatment of malnutrition and disaster response/safety net food assistance that will take place during the lean season. WFP is also working with the National Disaster Management Agency, the National Nutrition Agency, and the National Social Protection Secretariat to support the Government-led coordination of preparedness efforts for the lean season response which will support the national social protection system.

#### Resilience

- WFP received a payout from the African Risk Capacity Limited (ARC Ltd) weather insurance for the failed planting in some regions of The Gambia due to the prolonged dry spell during the 2022 rainy season. This was the first payout from ARC to WFP Gambia since 2019. WFP utilised the payout for food assistance through cash transfers to 1,093 households (6,558 people), with each household receiving GMD 8,100 (approx. USD130) to cater for their food needs for three months.
- In February 2023, WFP, in partnership with Africa GreenTec Senegal, supported the women fish mongers with a "Cooltainer" to preserve fish and reduce losses. The Cooltainer is a mobile cold storage solution for sustainable agriculture and food preservation that is a solar-powered, walk-in refrigerator and can store and preserve fruits, vegetables, fish, and other perishable items. The Cooltainer has a storage capacity of 120 crates which allows for convenient storage and distribution expected to support the fish cold chain.

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**Main photo:** WFP Country Director and Deputy Executive Director of the National Disaster Management Agency with two beneficiaries after receiving their pay-out during the African Risk Capacity (ARC) distribution in North Bank Region.

**Credit:** ©Mamadou Jallow/WFP The Gambia

The National Project Technical Coordination Committee for the Rural Integrated Climate Adaptation and Resilience Building Project (RICAR) was launched in March 2023.

## Country Strategic Plan (2019 - 2024)

2023 Total Requirement (in USD)	2023 Available Contributions (in USD)	Six Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
15.8 m	20.8 m	5.1 m

## Strategic Result 1: Everyone has access to food

**Strategic Outcome 1:** Crisis-affected populations, including those impacted by seasonal shocks, in targeted areas are able to meet their basic food and nutrition needs during and in the aftermath of crisis

**Focus area:** Crisis Response

**Strategic Outcome 2:** Food-insecure populations including school-aged children, in targeted areas have access to adequate and nutritious food all year

**Focus area:** Resilience Building

## Activities:

- Provide food assistance to crisis-affected populations
- Provide school meals to vulnerable pre- and primary school children during the school year, and strengthen capacity of local government to manage school meals programmes as a national safety net

## Strategic Result 2: No one suffers from malnutrition

**Strategic Outcome 3:** Vulnerable populations including children and pregnant and lactating women and girls and other nutritionally vulnerable individuals, in food insecure regions have improved nutritional status by 2023

**Focus area:** Resilience Building

## Activities:

- Provide specialized nutritious foods to pregnant and lactating women and girls and children under five to treat and prevent acute and chronic malnutrition and provide training and technical support to national institutions to manage nutrition programmes

## Strategic Result 3: Countries strengthened capacities

**Strategic Outcome 4:** Food-insecure smallholders including vulnerable households in targeted areas have enhanced livelihoods and resilience to better support food security and nutrition needs by 2023

**Focus area:** Resilience Building

## Activities:

- Provide supply chain and market support including Home-Grown School Feeding (HGSF) to farmers to increase productivity and access to markets, complemented by community asset creation through Food Assistance for Assets (FFA)

## Strategic Result 5: Countries strengthened capacities

**Strategic Outcome 5:** National and subnational institutions have strengthened capacity to meet Zero Hunger Targets by 2023.

**Focus area:** Root causes

## Activities:

- Provide technical assistance to the Government on the implementation of the National Social Protection Policy (NSSP), with focus on the gradual handover of the HGSF.

- The committee shall oversee the programme execution and overall technical guidance aligned with WFP and the Adaptation Fund regulations.

- A cross-border study tour in Senegal was concluded by WFP Gambia and key stakeholders including the Central Bank of The Gambia on micro weather index insurance. The study tour gave the participants a chance to learn practical examples from key stakeholders in the micro-insurance sector for a critical understanding of the policies and legal frameworks guiding the delivery of the Weather Index Insurance Mechanisms.

## Social Protection

- WFP Gambia conducted a workshop with the support from the Regional Bureau for Western Africa and Headquarters on shock-responsive social protection (SRSP) which generated strong interest from the Government and partners. The workshop resulted in open discussions among social protection and emergency response actors and the commitment of stakeholders to sustain their engagement on this matter. Several governmental and UN agencies were represented. A series of recommendations were made by Government and stakeholders including i) incorporating SRSP in the DRR policy currently under review; ii) integrating and strengthening the SRSP component in the social protection policy currently being reviewed; iii) developing a national Standard Operating Procedure or Protocol on SRSP.

## Challenges

- WFP Gambia requires USD 5.2 million for the next six months (April – September 2023) to provide lean season support to households affected by high food prices and poor agricultural production from July to September 2023. During the upcoming lean season (July-August-September 2023), about 319,628 people (representing 13 percent of the population) are likely to be food insecure (in Crisis and Emergency phases), including 19,527 people in Emergency phase. This represents an increase of 55 percent compared to last year and more than 100 percent (162.4 percent) compared to the past five years.

## Partnerships

- To further enhance the WFP – FAO partnership and promote joint planning and implementation of activities, a joint consultation was held in March to discuss possible areas of collaboration. As a result of the consultation, a joint work plan for 2023 is being drafted covering all areas from resource mobilisation to collaboration in the implementation of programme activities and joint assessments.

## Donors

Donors to WFP Gambia in 2023 include the Government of The Gambia, Global Agriculture and Food Security Program, Climate Adaptation Fund, Japan, France, Mastercard Foundation.