In Numbers

- USD 356,550 cash-based transfers made
- USD 8.6 m six months (July-December 2023) net funding requirements, representing 54 percent of the total
- 2,959 people assisted in JUNE 2023

Operational Updates

- On 26 June, WFP launched the regional report for the sixth round of the WFP and CARICOM Food Security and Livelihoods Survey. The report showed that 3.7 million people (52 percent of the population) in the English-speaking Caribbean are food insecure. This resulted in a 10 percent decrease compared to August 2022. It also underlined growing financial hardship and challenges due to the rising cost of living in the pandemic aftermath.
- In June, the second phase of the Hurricane Lisa Recovery Assistance Programme with the Belize Ministry of Agriculture, Food Security and Enterprise was rolled-out. Under the programme, smallholder farmers impacted by Hurricane Lisa received digital cash assistance via the mobile wallet provider DiGiWallet to meet food and other essential needs. 2,959 farmers and their families received USD 356,550 in digital cash and vouchers to meet food and nutrition needs and ensure food security and livelihoods.
- Furthermore, in Belize, WFP launched a Digital Payment Ecosystem study to comprehensively review digital payment platform experiences. This results from successfully piloting digital payments to deliver the first round of cash assistance to people impacted by the hurricane.
- WFP continued to support governments and regional institutions like the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA) in emergency preparedness for the 2023 Atlantic hurricane season, including critical training on emergency logistics and advancing discussions on disaster risk finance and anticipatory action in Dominica, Saint Lucia, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.
- In June, works to establish the Caribbean Regional Logistics Hub and Centre of Excellence in Barbados continued to advance. The project’s first phase allowing the site to be used for surges in an emergency will be completed by the end of August 2023.

Operational Context

The WFP Caribbean Multi-Country Office covers 22 countries and territories in the English- and Dutch-speaking Caribbean. As a collection of Small Islands Developing States and coastal countries (SIDS), climate change, economic and other shocks are significant threats to the region owing to their size, location, and openness to other countries. Already weakened by high indebtedness and limited fiscal space, these compounded impacts have created significant challenges to national economies in protecting people, livelihoods, and infrastructure. The pandemic and the cost-of-living-crisis have led to increased vulnerability in the Caribbean, negatively affecting food security, livelihoods, and incomes, especially of the poorest populations. As of May 2023, WFP estimates that 4.1 million people are food insecure in the region. The pandemic renewed focus on the need for more resilient systems in the region and discussions on Caribbean resilience currently includes the resilience of food systems, including the ability to withstand shocks related to climate change.

The Multi-Country Office was established in 2018 and assists governments and regional institutions in strengthening their emergency preparedness and resilience capacity in the face of shocks, including through social protection, disaster risk management and building food systems.

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Monitoring

- WFP has been conducting the post-distribution monitoring for Dominica and Belize while onsite monitoring was compiled in Belize following cash and voucher distributions. Key findings include:
  - 86 percent of beneficiaries rated their experience of collecting assistance very clear or clear;
  - 91 percent of beneficiaries had previously received information on their enrolment into the programme;
  - 55 percent of beneficiaries reported that they will mainly spend their entitlement on agricultural inputs.

Challenges

- Forecasted funding for the Regional Logistics Hub and Centre of Excellence has not yet advanced, challenging the ability to meet the proposed timelines of the established warehousing component of the facility by the end of 2023. The Multi-Country Office continues to explore additional resources to meet funding needs.

Partnerships

- Building on the series of food security and livelihoods surveys conducted since the onset of the pandemic, WFP and the CARICOM Secretariat undertook a sixth round of surveys assessing the impact of price increases on food security and livelihoods. The surveys have played a critical role in informing analysis and decision-making for governments and regional partners and have contributed to the current prioritization of the food security agenda.

- WFP continued to engage in discussions with international financial institutions such as the World Bank and other United Nations agencies such as FAO to align efforts streamlining support to governments in areas such as social protection and school feeding activities ensuring that countries could better leverage the support of both organizations.

Donors

Canada, European Union, Italy (Italian Agency for Development Cooperation), Korea (Republic of), United States of America (USAID’s BHA), Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Additional support has been provided by the United Nations Joint Sustainable Development Goals Fund.