WFP Philippines
Country Brief
July 2023

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
2022 Human Development Index Ranking: 116 out of 191
Childhood stunting: 27% (National Nutrition Survey, 2021)
Income Level: Lower middle

In Numbers
15,045 people assisted in July 2023
US$42,400 distributed through cash-based transfers
155 mt (metric tonnes) of iron-fortified rice distributed
US$6.7 million six-month (August-December 2023) net funding requirements

Operational Updates
Government Food e-Voucher Programme
- On 18 July, WFP, the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) kicked off Walang Gutom (No Hunger) 2027, a government food e-voucher programme in Tondo, Manila, with President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. and Vice-President Sara Duterte. A total of 3,000 pilot programme participants will receive a food voucher digital card loaded with US$55 (PHP 3,000) each month for 6 months, to purchase food commodities from registered retailers and smallholder farmers’ cooperatives.

Response to Typhoon Doksuri
- The onslaught of Typhoon Doksuri (locally known as Egay) affected more than 28,000 people (7,750 families) across Luzon, Central Visayas, and Central Mindanao in late July. To support the Government’s response to affected communities, WFP mobilized 40 trucks to transport 56,500 family food packs, to reach 282,500 people. One set of WFP-designed Mobile Operations Vehicle for Emergency and two VSATs (Very Small Aperture Terminal, a device that allows communication transmission over satellite communication networks) were deployed to Abra, Northern Luzon, to restore communications supporting the Government’s response.

Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM)
- WFP reached 15,045 people (3,009 households) through food assistance for assets (FFA) activities in the provinces of Maguindanao and Lanao del Sur. Of these, WFP provided 11,250 people with iron-fortified rice and 3,795 people with US$53 (PHP 3,000) cash assistance. FFA participants worked on the rehabilitation of farm-to-market roads, vegetable production, and the construction and clearing of irrigation canals. This initiative aims to support the peace process by providing socioeconomic opportunities to vulnerable and conflict-affected communities.

- WFP conducted a workshop on the lessons learned from the Home-grown School Feeding (HGSF) project, participated by the Ministry of Basic, Higher, and Technical Education and
WFP Country Strategy

Country Strategic Plan (2018-2023)

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<td>115.9 m</td>
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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 (ARMRM) 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

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).

Nutrition

- WFP sensitized 900 FFA participants in Maguindanao with social and behaviour change communication messages through Nutrishow, a 30-minute informative activity conducted before rice distributions. WFP developed Nutrishow to inform the participants about dietary diversity and provide corrective feedback (e.g., benefits of exclusive breastfeeding).
- WFP participated in the National Zero Hunger Summit and presented the global situation of hunger and food security. The summit convened the nationwide network of donors, implementers, volunteers, and researchers working towards the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 2: Zero Hunger in the country.
- WFP supported the Department of Education in the School Meals Coalition Member State Working Group Regular Meeting in presenting the progress on its commitments in the Coalition.

El Niño Preparedness

- WFP supported the DSWD and the Department of Agriculture in the conceptualization and field-level coordination for the project on Local Adaptation to Water Access (LAWA), a government early action project in anticipation of El Niño. LAWA project participants will receive cash assistance while they establish community watershed and small farm reservoir that can be used during dry spell.

Climate Change Adaptation

- As an implementing agency of the Green Climate Fund Project on Multi-Hazard Impact Based Forecasting and Early Warning System, WFP participated in the 2nd Project Technical Working Group Workshop together with key government agencies to finalize the work and financial plan for the first year of implementation.

Supply Chain and Logistics

- WFP supported the Department of Health in a writing workshop to develop its Humanitarian Supply Chain Management Course. DSWD, the Office of Civil Defense, UNICEF, the World Health Organization also provided technical guidance in curriculum development.

Monitoring

- According to the Social Weather Stations survey, one in ten Filipino families (10.4 percent) experienced involuntary hunger or not having anything to eat at least once in the past three months. This is slightly higher than the involuntary hunger prevalence of 9.8 percent in March 2023, due to difficult access to food in Luzon.