WFP Djibouti
Country Brief
July 2023

Operational Context
Djibouti is a low-middle income country and the most food deficit country in the Horn of Africa. An estimated 16 percent of the population lives below the international poverty line of USD 1.90 per day (2017). The most recent official national extreme poverty rate, calculated using a survey conducted in 2017 by the World Bank, stands at 21.1 percent. Life expectancy is 66 years.

The climate is hot and dry, desert-like arid, characterized by less than 200 mm of rainfall per year which hinders agricultural production, the latter accounting for only three percent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). As a result, the country must import 90 percent of its food commodities which makes it highly dependent on international market prices. Any variation in the international prices has a considerable impact on the poorest segment of the population, who spend 77 percent of their household budget on food.

WFP’s operations in Djibouti include life-saving interventions to improve food and nutrition security for the most vulnerable crisis-affected people. WFP helps communities by distributing food including specialized nutritious foods. WFP also works with the Government of Djibouti on the strengthening of the national social registry and to provide vocational training and capacity strengthening in the transport and commodity handling sectors for partners, refugees, and local population. WFP’s operations are aligned with the Vision 2035, the national strategy which promotes food security and nutrition, as well as the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) 2018-2024.

In Numbers

- 503 MT of in-kind food distributed and nutritional assistance (CSB +)
- USD 217,751 cash-based transfers distributed
- USD 4.4 million net funding requirements (August-January 2024)

63,500 people assisted in July.

Operational Updates

- In July, WFP provided food and nutrition assistance to 63,500 beneficiaries (35,000 female and 28,500 male), including refugees, asylum seekers, drought-affected people and counseling mothers (trainers who train breastfeeding and lactating mothers on the best nutritional practices to adopt, during and after pregnancy) in rural and urban areas.

Drought Response:

- WFP provided 497 MT of in-kind food and nutrition assistance to 12,250 drought affected people in the regions of Tadjourah, Obock and Dikhil. Working collaboratively with the Ministry of Social Affairs and Solidarity, WFP also disbursed cash-based transfers (CBT) to 5,900 beneficiaries in Djibouti City, using electronic vouchers. The total amount disbursed was 67,000 USD providing each household with 56 USD per month.
- WFP, USAID, and UNICEF conducted collaborative field missions in the Ali Sabieh and Tadjourah regions, both classified as integrated phase classification (IPC) 4 areas. The purpose of these missions was to assess the situation on-site, engage in discussions with affected communities, and identify their most urgent needs. The findings indicated a significant challenge concerning access to water and food. The community's expressed needs, including access to healthcare, water, and sanitation, were further underscored by the results of the recent multisectoral assessment carried out in May 2023, led by WFP.

Assistance to refugees and asylum seekers:

- In July, WFP provided food assistance to 21,200 refugees across all refugee settlements, accompanied by cash-based transfers amounting to USD 154,600. Additionally, 6 MT of specialized nutritious foods was distributed to the refugee health center for the treatment of moderate acute malnutrition (MAM) among children under five and pregnant and breastfeeding women and girls.

Social Protection:

- Substantial progress has been achieved in the planning and implementation of the fresh food voucher project. The objective of the project is to provide access to fresh and nutritious food to extremely food insecure people with children under the age of two and pregnant breastfeeding and

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Contact Info: Gaia Paradiso (gaia.paradiso@wfp.org)
Country Director ad interim: Abgessi Amewoa (abgessi.amewoa@wfp.org)
Further information: www.wfp.org/countries/djibouti
Photo: Migrants eat a hot meal provided by WFP at a migration center
Multilateral donors, Private Sector donors, Saudi Arabia and USA.

Activities:

Focus area: Crisis Response

1. Provide food assistance and nutrition services, including nutrient rich food and nutrition education and counselling to refugees and asylum seekers living in settlements.

2. Strengthen government capacity and support national responses for shock affected populations through contingency plan.

Focus area: Resilience Building

3. Provide food, cash-based transfers and technical assistance to strengthen a national inclusive, adaptive and nutrition-sensitive social protection system that contributes to enhanced economic integration.

4. Provide malnutrition prevention and treatment, cash-based transfers, nutritious food, counselling nutritional and incentives for targeted populations, while supporting national nutrition programmes.

Focus area: Crisis Response

5. Provide supply chain services to the humanitarian community (on a full cost-recovery basis).

6. Provide vocational training and capacity strengthening in the transport and commodity handling sectors for partners, refugees and local population.

School Meals:
- 50 gardeners received their first transfers in July for their work on the creation and rehabilitation of 50 school gardens (30 existing gardens and 20 newly created) as a teaching tool for food and nutrition education. The gardeners receive an incentive for their work, aligned with the national safety net programme, through SCOPE.

Monitoring:
- The Multisectoral assessment on Drought Impact has been enhanced to comprehensively incorporate analyses from the education and protection sectors. Notably, the analysis revealed that in March 2023, one-fourth of children aged 5 to 17 were not attending school. Additionally, two out of ten children aged 12 to 17 were found to be married. Furthermore, within Djibouti, it was observed that approximately 8 percent of households have at least one child under the age of 12 engaged in labor activities.
- Price increases have been evident in specific regions for certain commodities starting from May 2023. Specifically, there has been an 8 percent to 22 percent rise in the cost of wheat flour compared to the previous month in three regions: Arta, Dikhil, and Tadjourah. In comparison to the previous year, the cost of sugar has experienced a slight uptick in all regions (+7 percent in Tadjourah, Arta, and Obock, and +14 percent in Dikhil), except for Ali Sabieh, where it has decreased by 25 percent.
- WFP is concluding a baseline assessment for the fresh food voucher initiative which aims to determine the initial performance of all outcome indicators related to the activity. Data collection process will involve 232 households located in Balbala, where at least one child under the age of 2 is residing and benefiting from cash transfers.

Supply Chain:
- The Humanitarian Logistics Base (HLB) is a strategic pre-positioning point for humanitarian aid including food and non-food items for operations in Djibouti, Somalia, Yemen, South Sudan, Ethiopia and other countries in the region.
- In July, WFP Djibouti Supply Chain completed the dispatch of 187 MT of pulses, super cereal, vegetable oil, wheat. The commodities were dispatched to the city of Djibouti, Obock, Arta, Ali Sabieh, Dikhil and Tadjourah. In addition, a total of 11,350 MT of food was dispatched to several cities of Ethiopia namely Dire Dawa, Jijiga, Mekele, Nazareth and Semera.
- In the month of July, a total of 1,930 MT assorted food commodities moved to different Hubs in Ethiopia using 66 WFP Fleet. Additional 36 fleet trucks deployed to Djibouti to move 72 containers directly from port to Ethiopia. As Bilateral-service provision service, Médecins sans frontières (MSF) agreed to store their medicines in the temperature sensitive logistics stations located at the WFP HLB. Thanks to the on-demand services unit, UNDP Yemen and UNICEF made use of the services provided by WFP, by storing 150 pallets of buoy equipment as well as 6 pallets of telecommunication equipment were dispatched to UNDP Yemen. Finally, WFP dispatched buckets of water purification (75 boxes) sanitation supplies (42 boxes) and reusable menstrual sanitary pads (262 boxes) in Djibouti, for UNICEF.