

Building resilient communities and strengthening food systems reduces humanitarian needs and improves food security. Resilience programmes are crucial in helping people withstand crises and in fostering a sustainable future.



CHANGING LIVES

Resilience & Food Systems



THE CONTEXT

Today, our food systems are failing to deliver food security, good nutrition and equitable livelihoods for millions of people. Conflict, ecosystem degradation, weather extremes, economic shocks, and social and gender inequalities are some of the main drivers of food insecurity.

Humanitarian and development partners need to focus on increasing the resilience of people, communities and systems. By combining emergency assistance with this approach, we can reduce humanitarian needs and improve food security and nutrition.

Building the resilience of food systems – the paths on which food travels, from the farm to the plate – is particularly important, as these systems determine people’s access to food, its availability and price, as well as consumption behaviour and livelihood opportunities.

Resilience interventions can reduce humanitarian needs and sustain development gains during a crisis. A USAID study, focussed on droughts in the Horn of Africa, **estimates that every US\$1 invested in resilience saves US\$3 in humanitarian emergency response.**

WHY WFP?

WFP works across the nexus spanning humanitarian interventions, development and peace. We work on the frontlines of conflicts and environmental and climate crises – particularly in the most fragile settings and remote locations, where there is a scarcity of development partners to support national longer-term objectives. In 2022, we reached almost 160 million people and had a presence in over 120 countries and territories.

WFP’s resilience expertise sees us using approaches including Food Assistance for Assets (FFA) and Food Assistance for Training (FFT). This is often the entry point for improving the lives of people in fragile contexts, combining food assistance with activities that help people prevent or adapt to shocks, improve agricultural productivity and create new livelihoods.

In addition to FFA, support to smallholder farmers and local food procurement are two further entry points in making food systems more resilient. WFP uses its purchasing power to connect farmers to markets and to buyers such as governments or the private sector. Our local procurement supports WFP’s emergency

responses and injects resources into local food systems. In 2022, we procured more than 2.2 million metric tons of food locally – 50 percent of the amount we bought globally.

MOVING FORWARD

Promote an integrated approach to resilience building

WFP's integrated resilience programmes often combine land restoration – to increase food production potential – with school meals, social protection or support to farmers in boosting their incomes. WFP's Integrated Resilience Programme in the Sahel stabilized or improved the food security of 3 million people in Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania and Niger. Activities improved crop production, protected against climate shocks, strengthened social cohesion and increased school attendance. In Niger, 500,000 people previously assisted by WFP's resilience programmes did not require emergency food assistance support to withstand the effects of severe drought in 2022.

Place people and landscapes at the centre of programming

Asset creation through FFA and FFT improves food security while helping to rehabilitate degraded ecosystems. Activities include: increasing water absorption in soil, through conservation measures and composting which helps replenish aquifers and improve access to water; reducing the risks and effects of shocks through flood and drought-protection measures such as rainwater harvesting; building flood-protection walls and tree planting; and building roads to improve access to markets. In 2022, these programmes reached almost 10 million people in 52 countries.

Protect and promote the Smallholders Agricultural Market Support (SAMS)

The SAMS programme focuses on supporting smallholder farmers (particularly women) and developing food value chains, to contribute to more resilient food systems. We use local and regional food procurement, connecting farmers to markets (or schools to develop home-grown

school meals), combined with capacity building and post-harvest loss training for farmers, as well as equipment such as hermetic bags and silos, to maintain quality and quantity.



In the **Sahel**, 230,000 hectares of land have been rehabilitated by WFP since 2018, while 3 million people have been assisted in five countries. The programme has reduced humanitarian needs in Niger, improved diets in Chad, Mali and Mauritania, and increased social cohesion and women's empowerment in Burkina Faso.



In **Malawi** in 2022, WFP supported 530,000 people with land resource management, crop and livestock production, and reforestation. As a result, farmers are now growing cassava and maize, and have access to water and roads, along with protection against floods. A total of 16,000 farmers have an income from selling their produce to schools. Humanitarian needs have been reduced by 60 percent.



In **Honduras**, WFP connects smallholder farmer organizations to procurement opportunities in both the public and private sector. Within the Local and Regional Food Procurement Policy framework, WFP promotes smallholder farmers' nutritious products and links them to supermarkets and other buyers.