



World Food Programme

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WFP Timor-Leste Country Brief August 2023



WFP signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the President's Office to strengthen advocacy for nutrition and food security @WFP/Photo Library

Operational Context

High rates of child malnutrition remain a persistent problem. Timor-Leste has the highest rate of stunting (47 percent) in Southeast Asia. Twenty-two percent of the population face acute food insecurity.

In response to these challenges, WFP is shifting programmatic focus to be an enabler and strengthen the country's capacity to reduce hunger, with a nutrition- and climate-sensitive food systems approach. This emphasizes putting people at the centre in line with the Road Map for Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including ending hunger, combating all forms of malnutrition, and establishing sustainable and climate-resilient food systems.

WFP's Country Strategic Plan (CSP 2023-2025) supports the Government of Timor-Leste's vision for zero hunger and contributes to the National Strategic Development Plan 2011-2030. The overall goal of CSP is to improve food security and nutrition through strengthening the existing social protection programmes (*Bolsa da Mãe Jerosaun Foun*, *Merenda Escolar*), food value chain (*Cadeia de Valor*, supply chain management, and home-grown school feeding), and emergency shock response.

The CSP will support the Government in achieving their goals under SDG 2: Zero Hunger to ensure that no one is left behind with a gender and disability inclusion lens.



Population: **1.36 million**

2021/22 Human Development Index:
141 out of 191

Income Level: **Lower middle**

Chronic malnutrition: **47% of children**
(6-59 months old)

Highlights

- WFP signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the President's Office to progress high-level advocacy for nutrition and food security in Timor-Leste.
- WFP met with representatives from the Civil Protection Authority (CPA) to review El Niño preparedness and corresponding key stakeholder responses.
- WFP coordinated 13 high-level meetings for WFP's visiting Senior Director of Strategic Partnerships, strengthening relations with Timor-Leste's President, the Prime Minister, Vice Prime Ministers, relevant ministers, and donors.

Operational Updates

Nutrition

- WFP signed a MoU with the President's Office to progress high-level advocacy for nutrition and food security, to raise awareness, highlight policy and advocacy issues and accentuate links between social behaviour change, nutrition, and health behaviours.
- WFP enhanced government dissemination of the World Breastfeeding week messaging, producing 20 banners for the Ministry of Health and Community Health Centers, and promoting a video message by the President to encourage breastfeeding.
- WFP met with the Vice Minister and high-level officials from the Ministry of Health to progress reactivation of a locally produced supplementary nutritious food-food for vulnerable pregnant and breastfeeding women and girls and children.
- WFP supported local rice millers to finalise a rice blending trial and produce 71 mt of fortified rice ready for distribution to schools in Baucau and Bobonaro in support of the Government's national school feeding programme objectives.

Social Protection / School Feeding

- WFP facilitated a visit by the United Nations Resident Coordinator for Timor-Leste to oversee the progress of the school feeding programme at a school in Dili.
- WFP provided financial support to the State Administration's refresher training on the school feeding manual for 65 participants. This helped ensure high quality provision of school feeding across 35 schools in Baucau municipality.
- WFP coordinated with the Minister of Education in preparation for its participation in the Asia-Pacific Social Protection week hosted by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) in Manila, the Philippines in September. The delegation will showcase Timor-Leste's progress with the national school feeding programme.

Contact info: Imogen Wilson (Imogen.Wilson@wfp.org)
Country Director: Cecilia Garzon (cecilia.garzon@wfp.org)
Further information: www.wfp.org/countries/timor-leste

Country Strategic Plan (2023-2025)

Total Requirement (in US\$)	Allocated Contributions (in US\$)	Six-Month Net Funding Requirements (in US\$)
13.9 m	6.9 m	0

Strategic Outcome 1: People are better able to meet their urgent food and nutrition needs

CSP Outcome 1: Crisis-affected populations in Timor-Leste have equitable access to adequate nutritious foods that meet their basic nutritional needs during and in the aftermath of shocks.

Focus area: Crisis response

Activities:

1. Provide food and nutrition assistance to crisis-affected populations.

Strategic Outcome 2: People have better nutrition, health and education outcomes.

CSP Outcome 2: People vulnerable to nutrition insecurity, in particular women, adolescent girls, and school-age children, in Timor-Leste have equitable access to enhanced nutrition-sensitive programmes that promote and enable healthy diets by 2025.

Focus area: Root causes

Activities:

2. Provide technical assistance to national institutions working to enhance the quality and nutrition integration of school-based programmes and other social assistance programmes by improving the availability, affordability, equitable access to and consumption of nutritious and safe food.

Strategic Outcome 3: National programmes and systems are strengthened

CSP Outcome 3: People vulnerable to shocks in Timor-Leste benefit from enhanced national capacity for disaster preparedness and response and supply chain management by 2025

Focus area: Resilience building

Activities:

3. Provide technical assistance to national institutions in strengthening disaster risk and supply chain management

Donors

Government of Timor-Leste, Australia, China, Japan, Republic of Korea, Joint SDG fund, SIDS.



Emergencies

- WFP staff participated in a two-week health simulation exercise in Malawi to strengthen country office knowledge of emergency preparedness and response to floods and health emergencies.
- WFP met with the CPA to review El Niño preparedness, update humanitarian information, and plan a future meeting to engage key stakeholders in preparedness activities.

Logistics and Supply Chain

- WFP transported 5 mt of fortified rice kernels to two rice millers for fortifying rice for emergency preparedness stocks and for the school feeding programme.
- WFP provided technical assistance on warehouse management and stacking of rice to a rice miller in Bobonaro. This support facilitated loading and unloading, efficient space utilization, and the prevention of moisture from re-entering the grain after drying.

Research, Assessment, and Monitoring

- WFP produced a Food Security Alert Bulletin to highlight urgent preparation and response actions needed to mitigate the impact of the 2023-24 El Niño event, in the context of rice shortages and food price increases.
- WFP and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) co-chaired the first Food Security Cluster meeting with government stakeholders, UN agencies and civil society organisations, to agree on roles and responsibilities in the event of an emergency outbreak.
- WFP provided technical assistance to the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Forestry to strengthen market price data collection by their Food Security Officers (FSOs). The assistance enabled FSOs to increase their monthly data submissions from an average of six to ten municipalities, enhancing the availability of comparative food price data.

Partnerships

- WFP coordinated 13 high-level meetings and a field visit to Baucau with the ADB for WFP's visiting Senior Director of Strategic Partnerships, to strengthen collaboration and future programme support with key government representatives, including the President, the Prime Minister, Vice Prime Ministers, relevant ministers, International Finance Institutions, and the Ambassadors.

Challenges

- Food inflation remains high due to ongoing global economic uncertainties, climate shocks and conflict. In response, WFP continues to constantly monitor the costs of food and non-food goods and is preparing its El Niño response in cooperation with the Government of Timor-Leste.