



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES

WFP Timor-Leste Country Brief January 2024



WFP Executive Director Cindy McCain and the President of Timor-Leste, José Ramos-Horta meet in Rome to discuss social protection and the SDGs.
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Operational Context

Almost one in two children are stunted in Timor-Leste, which is one of the highest rates in Southeast Asia. Twenty-six percent of the population face acute food insecurity.

In response, the World Food Programme (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 the 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.



Highlights

- WFP secured an allocation of \$1.1m from the United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) to provide essential food to 18,000 people including pregnant and breastfeeding women as part of a \$2 million emergency grant in response to El Niño impacts in Timor-Leste.
- WFP supported the production of fortified rice and prepositioning of 16.5 metric tonnes (mt) of this rice in four municipalities ready for the Civil Protection Authority's (CPA) emergency response.
- WFP Executive Director Cindy McCain met with the President of Timor-Leste, José Ramos-Horta, to discuss the critical role social protection plays in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

Operational Updates

Nutrition

- WFP provided technical inputs to the Unit of Mission to Combat Stunting's (UNMICS) 2024 -2030 Strategic Plan and facilitated a joint annual assessment technical meeting with UNMICS, attended by the Vice Prime Minister, health, agriculture and National Logistics Center government representatives and UN agencies, to prepare for the forthcoming Scaling Up Nutrition movement reporting workshop.
- WFP supported the production of fortified rice (FR) and the prepositioning of 16.5 mt of this FR in Aileu, Baucau, Lautem and Viqueque, ready for the CPA to respond to emergency needs.

Social Protection / School Feeding

- WFP supported the printing and publishing of 140 school feeding menu books and 1,300 posters from Agora Food Studio which will be distributed to schools and relevant entities in February in conjunction with the Ministry of Education and Ministry of State Administration.
- WFP and representatives from the Ministry of Social Solidarity and Inclusion discussed approaches to targeted nutrition sensitive social protection through the 'Bolsa da Mae' conditional, including provision of nutritious food for pregnant and breast-feeding women and children under two, and agreed to establish a technical working group.
- WFP facilitated inter-ministerial co-ordination between the Ministry of Education and Ministry of State Administration to progress implementation of rice fortification in three municipalities for the National School Feeding Programme (SFP) supported by KOICA and conducted municipal-level engagement on the use of fortified rice in the SFP.

Country Strategic Plan (2023-2025)

Total Requirement (in US\$)	Allocated Contributions (in US\$)	Six-Month Net Funding Requirements (in US\$)
16.06m	7.49m	3.03 m

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, Small Island Developing States.



- WFP continued field level data collection via in-depth interviews in eight municipalities to understand the impact of El Niño within communities, and is planning to mobilise 600mt of food assistance, as part of CERF funding in partnership with humanitarian stakeholders to reach affected people in six municipalities.

Logistics and Supply Chain

- WFP field staff, in collaboration with the Secretariat for Cooperatives, conducted a mapping of sorghum farmer groups in eight municipalities. Data from these assessments will inform future linkages with the SFP.
- WFP conducted logistics capacity assessments in the Oecusse/RAEOA region covering local health facility storage, logistics infrastructure, road conditions and the availability of logistics services. Findings will support strengthening of local supply chain interventions.
- WFP staff participated in a regional procurement workshop in Malaysia where insights were shared on WFP's procurement transformation journey.

Research, Assessment, and Monitoring

- WFP supported the Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Centre on the UN Environment Programme's Green Climate Fund Timor-Leste Early Warning System project by providing information for a study on financial mechanisms for anticipatory action to address climate-related disasters.

Partnerships

- The United Nations CERF allocated a \$2 Million (\$2,076,861) emergency grant to respond to El Niño impacts in Timor-Leste. The initiative will be implemented through three UN agencies: WFP (\$1,077,611), FAO (\$499,250), and UNICEF (\$500,000). WFP's share of the grant will support 17,000 people facing acute food insecurity and over 1,000 pregnant and breastfeeding women with special nutritious food.
- WFP Timor-Leste facilitated a meeting in Rome between WFP's Executive Director Cindy McCain and the President of Timor-Leste, José Ramos-Horta, who co-chairs the global task force on social protection. They discussed the critical role social protection plays in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and WFP's continued partnership in this area.

Challenges

- The price of food staples such as rice remain high and continue to be impacted by global food price inflation.
- Dry ground conditions due to El Niño, combined with flash flooding, are reducing crop yields in certain locations leading to a deterioration in food security.
- Heavy rainfall, in between dry spells, has led to flooding and landslides in some areas, resulting in the destruction of homes.