



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES

WFP Philippines Country Brief January 2024



Participants of the pilot implementation of *Walang Gutom* 2027 in Tondo, Manila receive their digital voucher cards loaded with food credits worth US\$55 (PHP 3,000). © WFP/Dante Dionisa

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 22.4 percent (first semester of 2023), which translates into 25 million Filipinos living 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 has the highest disaster risk worldwide due to its exposure and vulnerability to natural hazards according to the 2023 World Risk Report.

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 percent**
(National Nutrition Survey, 2021)

Income Level: **Lower middle**

In Numbers

70 mt of iron-fortified rice distributed

US\$90,494 worth of food vouchers distributed

US\$8.75 million six-month (February–July 2024) net funding requirements

13,135 people assisted in January 2024



Operational Updates

Government Food e-Voucher Programme

- WFP continued to provide capacity strengthening support to the Department of Social Welfare and Development in the pilot implementation of **Walang Gutom (No Hunger) 2027: Government Food e-Voucher Programme**. A total of 1,227 families in Tondo, Manila and Dapa, Surigao del Norte each received PHP 3,000 (US\$55) of food credits through digital voucher cards that they can use to purchase nutritious and locally sourced food. Families also participated in nutrition education sessions promoting healthy dietary habits.

Logistics Support

- WFP provided 15 trucks to transport 25,500 family food packs from the Department of Social Welfare and Development to support the Government-led response in reaching 127,500 people affected by the **severe flooding in Mindanao**. Heavy rains, landslides, and floods brought by the shear line affected more than 1.1 million people, most of whom are in the Caraga Region, Davao Region, and Northern Mindanao. WFP continues to coordinate with the Department of Social Welfare and Development to provide support.

Nutrition

- WFP participated in a government-led workshop to develop the **Philippine Plan of Action for Nutrition (PPAN) 2023-2028 Implementation Plan**, a detailed roadmap to execute nutrition-related programmes. The Plan will guide government agencies, non-governmental organizations, development partners, the academe, and the private sector in enhancing joint efforts to address nutrition challenges in the country.
- WFP participated in the **Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Movement Philippines Joint Annual Assessment Workshop** held in Cebu City. The SUN Network in the Philippines identified its priorities for 2024 which include: i) ensuring effective implementation, monitoring, and localization of the PPAN 2023-2028 with adequate funding; ii) supporting local government units in crafting their Local Nutrition Action Plans in 34 PPAN priority provinces; iii) strengthening collaborations within the SUN Network and with external partners; and iv) enhancing advocacy and resource mobilization efforts for SUN activities.

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* This operational brief is based on the best available information at the time of drafting. Figures may vary if unique beneficiaries are considered.

Country Strategic Plan (2018-2023)

Total Requirement (in US\$)	Allocated Contributions (in US\$)	Six-month Net Funding Requirements (in US\$)
115.86 m	78.12 m	8.75 m

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 (ARMM) 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, Australia, France, Germany, Japan, Japan Association for WFP, Luxembourg, the Philippines, Private Sector, United States of America, and the United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund.

School Meals

- To assess schools' readiness for the pilot implementation of the national school-based feeding programme integrating the home-grown school feeding approach, WFP met with local government officials, school representatives, Parent-Teacher Associations, and community agricultural cooperatives in Maguindanao. Recommendations to bolster schools' capacities based on on-site assessments focused on providing food handling and safety training for kitchen staff, enhancing water and sanitation facilities, and procuring kitchen equipment.

Emergency Preparedness

- WFP conducted a **workshop on Emergency Preparedness and Response (EPR) Capacity Needs and Priorities Mapping** with Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRRM) Council members of Dinagat Islands and Surigao Del Norte. Using the Emergency Preparedness Capacity Indicator tool, the workshop mapped out the existing EPR capacity and needs of the provinces to improve their DRRM capacities.
- The evaluation team from WFP headquarters conducted an **initial assessment on WFP's emergency preparedness policy** in the Philippines. The team engaged with government partners and other United Nations agencies to learn more about EPR initiatives carried out by WFP. Results of the evaluation, to be finalized by February 2025, will inform the eventual development and implementation of new EPR policies and/or strategies.

Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM)

- WFP reached 1,400 families in BARMM through **food assistance for assets (FFA)** projects. Each family received 50 kg of iron-fortified rice as they participated in community gardening and rehabilitation of farm-to-market roads, communal irrigation facilities, and flood control structures.
- WFP facilitated **community dialogues on food and nutrition practices (Kwentuhan)** with about 250 pregnant and breastfeeding women to improve dietary behaviours. These dialogues were co-led by rural health units who received interpersonal communication skills training from WFP.
- WFP published a **case study on the United Nations Joint Programme (UNJP)** on Conflict Transformation in BARMM which highlighted the project's impact on peacebuilding and economic empowerment in Bangsamoro communities through FFA activities. Under the UNJP, two community-based organizations were established through the collaboration between decommissioned combatants and the *Tedurays*, one of the Indigenous Peoples in BARMM.

Monitoring

- According to the [latest Social Weather Station survey results](#), the number of families who experienced involuntary hunger (being hungry and not having anything to eat at least once in the past three months) increased to 12.6 percent in December 2023, from 9.8 percent in September 2023. This brings the annual hunger rate to 10.7 percent in 2023, lower than the 11.7 percent average in 2022.