



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES  
CHANGING LIVES

## WFP at a Glance

A guide to the facts, figures and frontline work of the World Food Programme

### About WFP

The World Food Programme (WFP) is among the first on the scene in an emergency, providing food and other assistance to people affected by conflict, drought, floods, earthquakes, hurricanes and crop failures, as well as pandemics such as COVID-19. At the same time, we keep a sharp focus on sustainable and development, providing governments with the support and skills to manage food security in the long term. **We reached an estimated 150 million people with food, cash and commodity vouchers in 2023**, with a presence in over 120 countries and territories. WFP aims to reach the same number in 2024.

### Quick facts



WFP is funded entirely by voluntary donations, with **US\$8.3BN** raised in 2023



More than **50%** of the people WFP serves are **WOMEN AND GIRLS**



WFP has over **23,000** staff, of whom **87%** are field based



## Funding shortfall and ration cuts

Total contributions in 2023: **US\$8.3 billion**. Total budgetary needs: **US\$22.8 billion** (record shortfall of 64 percent). WFP is in the midst of a **crippling and historic funding crisis** that is forcing the organization to scale back life-saving assistance at a time when acute hunger is at record levels. Almost half of WFP country operations have already cut the size and scope of food, cash and nutrition assistance because of a major drop in funding. Cutting assistance at this moment will have **untold consequences for millions of people and jeopardize years of work fighting hunger and malnutrition**. These tough decisions are not unique to WFP. They reflect the new and more challenging financial landscape that the entire humanitarian sector is navigating.

## A global hunger crisis

Global food insecurity remains higher than pre-pandemic levels, with an **increase of 160 million people** compared to early 2020. Up to **309 million people are facing acute levels of food insecurity in 2024** in the 72 countries with WFP operations and where data is available. An estimated 42.3 million people across 45 countries will be in Emergency or worse levels of acute food insecurity. Without urgent life-saving action, these populations will be at risk of falling into even worse conditions that could even bring famine.

A deadly combination of **conflict, economic shocks and climate** extremes is at the root of the hunger crisis. The economic fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the **war in Ukraine**, have pushed prices up and put **food out of reach for millions of people across the world**.

These rising costs are also affecting WFP's work. **Inflation, supply chain disruption and other factors have increased WFP's operating costs**, compounding funding shortfalls and affecting our ability to assist people when they need it most.

# Main areas of work

## EMERGENCY RESPONSE\* AND PREPAREDNESS

WFP is the frontline agency responding to emergencies caused by **conflict, climate shocks, pandemics and other disasters**. We also coordinate responses to large-scale emergencies on behalf of the wider humanitarian community, as lead agency of the [Logistics Cluster](#) and [the Emergency Telecommunications Cluster](#). Our focus is also on emergency preparedness, working with partners to provide **early warning and helping communities lessen the impact of looming disasters**.

Each day WFP has up to 6,500 trucks, 140 aircraft and 20 ships on the move, delivering food and other assistance. (\*See also 'Current emergencies' section below)

## CLIMATE ACTION

Climate shocks such as droughts and floods can **wipe out crops, disrupt markets and destroy roads and bridges**. WFP is working with governments and humanitarian partners on the frontlines of [the climate emergency](#), responding to an increasing number of disasters. At the same time, we take pre-emptive action to reduce the number of people needing humanitarian assistance.

**WFP deploys Forecast-based Financing** to provide cash to vulnerable families, allowing them to buy food, reinforce their homes and take other steps to build resilience ahead of climate disasters. This approach was used ahead of [torrential rains in Bangladesh](#).

21 fragile and conflict-affected countries rank among the 30 countries most vulnerable to the climate emergency.

## NUTRITION

Sustainable development is only possible in communities where malnutrition is eradicated and future generations can flourish. WFP has broadened its focus in recent years from

emergency interventions to [addressing all forms of malnutrition](#) including **vitamin and mineral deficiencies, and overweight and obesity**.

WFP addresses malnutrition from the earliest stages, through programmes targeting the **first 1,000 days from conception to a child's second birthday**. We provide access to healthy diets, targeting young children, pregnant and breastfeeding women, and people living with HIV.

WFP assisted 11.3 million children aged under 5, and pregnant and breastfeeding mothers and girls, with nutrition supplements between January and September 2023.

## SCHOOL-MEAL PROGRAMMES

WFP is the largest humanitarian organization providing school-meal programmes. School meals **improve children's nutrition and health, while also increasing access to a potentially life-changing education**. Home-grown school feeding sources food from millions of smallholder farmers, increasing their incomes and boosting local economies.

WFP serves as secretariat of the [School Meals Coalition](#), comprising over 90 governments and more than 100 organizations working to ensure that **every child has the opportunity to receive a healthy, nutritious meal by 2030**. Among its goals has been restoring access to school-meal programmes after the COVID-19 pandemic, which virtually halted programmes in 2020.

A total 418 million children enjoy school meals worldwide, 30 million more than in early 2020 prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.

## SMALLHOLDER FARMERS

[Smallholder farmers](#) produce most of the **world's food** and are critical in achieving a zero-hunger world. WFP's support to farmers spans a range of activities to help build sustainable food systems, from business-skills training to post-

harvest management, to opening up access to finance and roads to markets. Of the food that WFP bought locally and regionally in 2022, **123,000 metric tons, worth US\$71 million, could be traced back to smallholder farmers in 24 countries.**

**WFP and partners supported more than 1.2 million smallholder farmers in 50 countries in 2022.**

## RESILIENCE

WFP's **early-warning and preparedness systems** – including supply chain management, logistics and emergency communications – allow governments to prevent crises or respond quickly when they happen. We are helping to develop national capacities to manage disaster risk through finance and risk-transfer tools, such as weather risk insurance. Our expertise includes **vulnerability analysis and mapping**, as well as support to governments' social protection systems such as cash transfers – by developing national payment systems for example.

WFP's [Food Assistance for Assets](#) programme forms a core element of WFP's resilience work, improving **long-term food security while helping create conditions for peace**. People receive food or cash to meet immediate food needs, which frees up their time for working on community assets or livelihood resources that can **increase resilience to climate change and improve access to markets**.

**WFP and partners assisted over 4 million people between 2018 and 2023 in Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania and Niger, under the [Sahel Integrated Resilience Programme](#).**

## CASH ASSISTANCE

WFP is [the largest cash provider](#) in the **humanitarian community**. Cash allows people increased choice and diet diversity, while boosting local smallholder production, retail and

the financial sector through increased spending and trade. It is also an effective means of giving more economic power to food-insecure women.

**WFP has distributed over US\$550 million to people in Ukraine since April 2022, helping them meet their basic needs while also supporting the country's economic recovery.**

## CAPACITY BUILDING

WFP **transfers its skills and knowledge to a range of public, private and civil society groups** who are pivotal to sustaining national policies and programmes. We are [building governments' and other partners' capacities](#) to manage disaster risk and improve food security, while also investing in the aforementioned **early-warning and preparedness systems** for climate and other threats.

**WFP's Livelihood Assets Resilience Academy supports a network of 16 African universities, creating a [critical mass of national and regional experts](#) in resilience and complementing the capacities of WFP, government institutions and NGOs.**

## NOBEL PEACE PRIZE

The award of the [Nobel Peace Prize](#) to WFP in October 2020 reflects our strong advocacy for the critical role of peace in ending hunger, and for the use of food as a tool for peace. Conflict and insecurity are key drivers of hunger. **Many of the people WFP supports are fleeing conflict**, and have been forced to abandon their land, homes and jobs. This award increases WFP's opportunity to provide a stronger voice to hungry people in the world, and to mobilize support for the food assistance that they need.

## DIGITAL INNOVATION

New technologies and innovation help drive WFP's work to achieve zero hunger by 2030.

WFP's Munich-based [Innovation Accelerator](#) identifies new ideas, pilots projects and scales up high-impact innovations. It has supported more than **125 projects globally, with 22 of these scaling up** through WFP's field operations. A total of [37 million people in 88 countries benefited from innovative solutions in 2022](#).

- [Building Blocks](#)

The world's largest implementation of blockchain technology. In Bangladesh and Jordan, it has processed US\$529 million worth of transfers via 23 million transactions, saving US\$3 million in bank fees. In Ukraine, it has coordinated US\$337 million of assistance from 18 humanitarian organizations, saving US\$35 million.

- [HungerMap LIVE](#)

Enables internet monitoring of food security in vulnerable, hard-to-reach communities, in near real-time, in up to 60 countries. Collates publicly available macroeconomic data and information on food security, nutrition, conflict, hazards and weather.

- [Optimus](#)

Applies advanced analytics that allows field staff to quickly compare operational plans and identify the most cost-effective means to assist people. Used in over 44 country offices, resulting in over US\$50 million of savings since 2015.

In conjunction with the Innovation Accelerator, WFP's country offices, regional bureaux and business units have established regional innovation hubs in Eastern Africa (Kenya), and Latin America and the Caribbean (Colombia), and innovation units within the Jordan, Kenya, Tanzania and South Sudan country offices.



# Current emergencies

## HIGHEST LEVEL

**State of Palestine:** Famine is coming to the north of Gaza and children are already dying of hunger. The number of people in Gaza facing Catastrophe levels of hunger has doubled in less than three months, from 570,000 in December to 1.1 million today. [Read more](#)

**Sudan:** Conflict in Sudan is risking the world's largest hunger crisis across the region, with nearly 18 million people facing acute hunger and over 9 million displaced. WFP is doing everything possible to deliver emergency food and malnutrition support in Sudan and neighbouring countries, with access restricted by the conflict. [Read more](#)

## OTHER

**Afghanistan:** One in three Afghans do not know where their next meal will come from, reeling from a battered economy, devastating earthquakes and the return of thousands of Afghans from Pakistan. [Read more](#)

**The Democratic Republic of the Congo:** Eastern DRC is one of the world's most complex and forgotten crises, with conflict and climate shocks among the primary drivers. Around 2.9 million people are projected to face Emergency levels of acute food insecurity up to June 2024. [Read more](#)



**Haiti** is experiencing a dramatic escalation in violence and protests as armed groups battle for territory and civilians come under attack.

[Read more](#)

**Ethiopia:** Since operations resumed in mid-November, WFP convoys have carried thousands of tons of food into the conflict-affected Tigray region, allowing us to reach those most in need of our assistance. WFP is scaling up in an effort to reach up to 3 million people in the country.

[Read more](#)

**Myanmar:** Conflict and political turmoil persist in Myanmar, with over 18.6 million people in need of humanitarian assistance. [Read more](#)

**North Eastern Nigeria:** Conflict, population displacement and climate extremes, alongside rising inflation and food prices, continue to drive hunger in Nigeria, with 26.5 million people facing acute hunger in the June-August 2024 lean season. [Read more](#)



**Syria** remains among the ten countries with the highest number of hungry people globally, but a funding crunch has forced WFP to end its food assistance programme. [Read more](#)

**Sahel:** Rising armed conflict, deteriorating security, widespread poverty and the impact of climate change are posing a huge hunger threat to countries in the Central Sahel, namely Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger. [Read more](#)

**Somalia:** Deadly floods have compounded the impact of conflict and other factors, in a country where seven out of ten people live on less than US\$1.90 a day. [Read more](#)

**South Sudan:** South Sudan is simultaneously drowning and drying as the climate crisis tightens its grip. An unprecedented flooding crisis has

swallowed large swathes of the country while other parts are grappling with devastating drought. [Read more](#)

**Ukraine:** The war in Ukraine continues to displace people, damage infrastructure, disrupt supply chains and hold back the country's economy. One in five families is estimated to be food insecure. [Read more](#)

**Yemen:** Nearly a decade of conflict in Yemen has created one of the world's worst humanitarian crises, with 18.6 million people needing humanitarian assistance. [Read more](#)

## UNHAS

WFP manages the only UN-mandated air transport service, the United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS). The service **connects the entire humanitarian and development community to people in need, reaching the most remote and dangerous locations on earth.** It also ensures an uninterrupted delivery of supplies when other transport is disrupted by insecurity or damaged roads or other infrastructure, and where almost no other commercial airline is flying. UNHAS moved over 7,000 metric tons of cargo and carried 395,000 passengers in 2022, serving 540 destinations with 74 aircraft.

**Further information:** [History](#) / [Who we are](#) / [Our work](#) / [Where we work](#) / [Governance and leadership](#)



**World Food Programme**  
Via Cesare Giulio Viola 68/70,  
00148 Rome, Italy - T +39 06 65131  
[wfp.org](http://wfp.org)

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