



World Food Programme

SAVING
LIVES
CHANGING
LIVES

WFP Nepal Country Brief March 2024



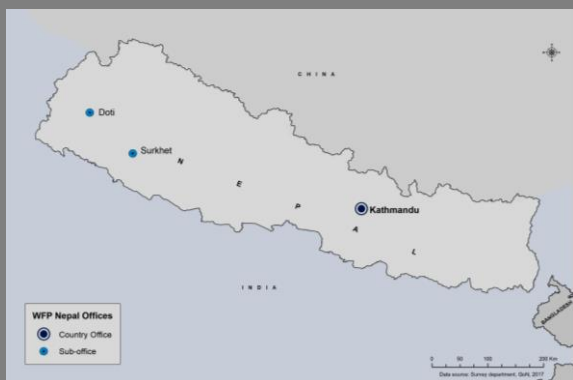
School meals with WFP fortified rice. WFP/Samantha Reinders

Operational Context

Nepal has undergone significant changes since the promulgation of its constitution in 2015, which transformed the country into a federal democratic republic. This constitutional shift has presented a promising opportunity for Nepal to focus on economic growth, poverty reduction, and the pursuit of the 2030 Agenda.

In 2023, the GDP growth rate dropped to 1.9 percent, the lowest since 2020, and well below the 10-year average growth rate. This decline was primarily due to economic measures to curb inflation. The industry and services sectors experienced sluggish economic activity, whereas agriculture remained relatively stable. According to the World Bank, growth is set to rise to 3.9 percent in 2024 and five percent in 2025, driven by the delayed effects of lifted import restrictions and gradual monetary policy relaxation.

WFP has been operating in Nepal since 1963, supporting the Government to achieve greater food security and nutrition among vulnerable communities and respond to disasters while also strengthening resilience.



Population: **29.1 million (2022)**

2022 Human Development Index:
143 out of 191 countries

Income Level: **Least developed**

Chronic malnutrition: **25% of children between 6-59 months**

In Numbers

223 mt of food distributed

US\$ 8.9 million net funding requirements (April–September 2024)

97,263 people assisted



Operational Updates

- Through the **rice fortification programme**, WFP procured and handed over 66 mt of fortified rice kernel to the Food Management and Trading Company (FMTC) for blending with ordinary rice. Three sets of blending equipment were also delivered to the FMTC rice mill located in Janakpur, Madhesh Province. Installation of one blender has begun and two more will be installed at private rice mills in coordination with FMTC.
- Under the **Local Infrastructure Support Programme (LISP)** being implemented in 15 local governments of Karnali Province, construction and/or rehabilitation of 21 of the 144 planned schemes have been completed. An additional 119 schemes are under construction and feasibility assessments and design estimates for the remaining schemes are underway. In March, the programme has generated 57,400 employment days for 5,213 vulnerable households.
- WFP conducted joint monitoring visits with local government representatives, farmers, teachers, cooperatives and other stakeholders in Sudurpaschim Province, as part of the **Women in Value Chain** project which aims to help farmers increase their production.
- WFP released the **February market update** where prices of most food commodities showed a declining trend as a result of improved supply and stable functioning of markets across the country. On average, the cost of the food basket was 15.7 percent higher in February 2024 than the reference month of April 2022 but down from 17.7 percent in January. The cost of the food basket in Karnali Province was 21.8 percent higher than the national average.
- The **Joint Project for Rural Women's Economic Empowerment**, implemented by WFP, FAO, IFAD and UN Women, delivered trainings on agriculture information management systems nutrition and insurance to 1,170 participants to enhance their digital literacy, entrepreneurship and risk management skills.

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Country Strategic Plan (2024-2028)		
Total Requirement (US\$)	Allocated Contributions	Net Funding Requirements
139.29 m	54.79 m*	8.9 m
* Balance transfer ongoing from the previous strategic plan and thus this figure is likely to change soon.		

Strategic Result 1: Access to food

Strategic Outcome 1: Affected and at-risk populations in Nepal meet their food, nutrition and other essential needs before, during and after shocks and other stressors.

Focus area: Crisis Response

Activities:

- Provide assistance to meet the immediate essential needs of crisis-affected populations, including food, nutrition and livelihood recovery, before, during and after shocks and other stressors.
- Provide capacity strengthening and coordination support to the Government, communities and humanitarian actors for evidence-based emergency preparedness and effective response.

Strategic Result 2: End Malnutrition

Strategic Outcome 2: School-age children and adolescents and nutritionally deprived groups in Nepal have improved education and nutrition outcomes and greater access to affordable, nutritious and safe diets, including through social protection programmes, by 2028.

Focus area: Root Causes

- Provide nutrition-sensitive school meals in targeted food-insecure areas and technical and operational assistance to strengthen the Government's capacity to implement the national school meals programme as part of the national social protection framework.
- Assist national institutions and the private sector to strengthen and deliver effective and sustainable health and nutrition-focused social protection programmes to meet the needs of vulnerable populations.

Strategic Result 4: Sustainable Food Systems

Strategic Outcome 3: Smallholder farmers and climate vulnerable populations in Nepal benefit from climate-resilient and equitable food systems, sustainable livelihoods and climate-proof assets and services by 2028.

Focus area: Resilience Building

Activities:

- Provide technical assistance to national institutions and an integrated package of livelihood support activities, skills, services and assets to communities vulnerable to climate and other risks to build resilience to shocks and stressors.

Strategic Result 5: Enhance Global Partnerships

Strategic Outcome 4: Communities vulnerable to and affected by crises in Nepal benefit from improved common services and enhanced capacities of the Government and humanitarian and development actors by 2028.

Focus area: Resilience Building

Activities:

- Provide on-demand services, including supply chain, cash-based transfers, engineering, analysis and evidence generation to the Government and humanitarian and development partners.

Operational Updates (continuation)

- Additionally, 23 women farmers groups and 23 schools established forward contracts to supply food commodities for home-grown school feeding under the national midday meals programme, providing a stable market for the farmers' produce.
- The construction of the Humanitarian Staging Area (HSA) at the Pokhara International Old Airport premises in Gandaki

Province, commenced following a groundbreaking ceremony attended by provincial and local government officials. WFP establishing the HSA in Pokhara will enhance the province's emergency logistics capabilities by ensuring prompt and effective support during emergencies.

Food Systems Transformation: A National Priority

On March 18, the Office of the Prime Minister and Council of Ministers in Nepal convened a meeting on **food systems transformation** in collaboration with relevant ministries and UN agencies. As Nepal transitions from a least developed country to a developing country by 2026, the Prime Minister emphasized the importance of allocating resources and implementing the Food Systems Transformation Strategic Plan 2023-2030, with a focus on localizing food system actions at the municipality level.

One critical aspect highlighted during the meeting was the role of the school meals programme, which not only promotes students' health and academic performance but also strengthens local smallholder farming. Through the home-grown school meals initiative, farmers supply produces directly to schools, ensuring accessible, fortified, and highly nutritious meals.

On March 21, the Council of Ministers approved the Bylaws related to the Right to Food and Food Sovereignty Act. This decision is a significant milestone, as it sets the stage for implementing the constitutional provision that guarantees every citizen's right to food and food sovereignty. At the request of the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development, WFP provided crucial technical support during the formulation of these Bylaws.

Notably, this represents a significant instance where the Government entrusted a development partner with the formulation of a crucial legal provision.

Donors

Adaptation Fund, Australia, Canada, China, ECHO, France, Germany, Ireland, Japan, Joint SDG Fund, Nepal, Norway, United Kingdom, United Nations, Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), United States of America, World Bank, and private donors.