

Regional Bureau for **Eastern Africa**

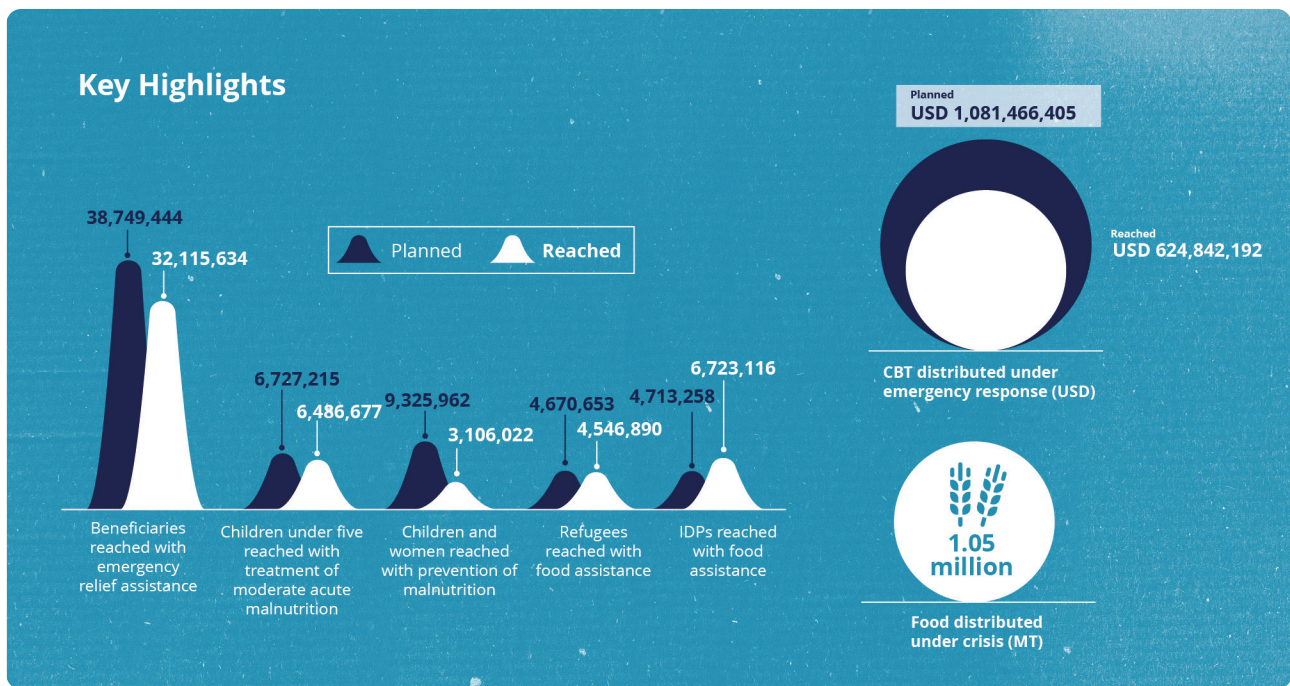


World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES

LEADING in Emergency Response





Delivering at Scale

WFP continued the provision of humanitarian assistance in Eastern Africa, including in response to the effects of the Horn of Africa drought earlier in the year and El-Nino-enhanced flooding later in the year, against a backdrop of widespread insecurity and conflict in the region. All enabled by the generous contributions from our donors, crisis response accounted for 85 percent of WFP resources in the region.

WFP together with its cooperating partners, reached 32 million people with emergency food assistance including 4.5 million refugees, people affected by crisis and IDPs. The use of cash-based transfers (CBT) was scaled up including in emergency contexts where markets and conditions were feasible. Cash-based transfers not only ensured timely assistance to the affected populations but also empowered beneficiaries to make choices on the use of resources. Furthermore, it supported the local economies by injecting resources into local markets.¹ WFP disbursed a substantial sum of USD 624.8 million through CBT, in addition to distributing 1.05 million MT of in-kind food transfers for crisis response. Somalia distributed the largest amount of CBT in the region, USD 395.2 million, for crisis response. The in-kind food distributed by WFP included 261,000 MT procured from local procurement, thereby injecting approximately USD 212 million into local economies.

WFP monitoring assessments indicated drought response in affected countries helped avert worsening food insecurity. There was a moderate increase in the proportion of households with acceptable levels of food consumption, from 42 percent in 2022 to 49 percent in 2023. This indicates improvements in food consumption frequency and dietary diversity among the targeted population recovering from drought-induced food insecurity. Subsequently, the proportion of households resorting to emergency coping mechanisms decreased from 38 percent in 2022 to 20 percent in 2023. Reductions in negative coping measures correlated with a decrease in the consumption-based coping strategy index (rCSI) from 13 in 2022 to 10 in 2023, indicating slight reductions in the level of stress faced by households due to food shortages.

¹ WFP Economic Impact Assessment _ expenditures in Eastern Africa_ 2022

Levels of acute malnutrition remained a concern. WFP reached, 6.5 million women and children with the treatment of moderate acute malnutrition, representing only 50 percent of those requiring nutrition support. Compared to 2022, this is an increase of 2 million children, indicating the increased needs and WFP's capacity to respond and scale up its Moderate Acute Malnutrition (MAM) management programmes in fragile contexts where malnutrition rates tend to be higher due to various factors such as conflict, displacement, or economic instability. Prevention approaches must be scaled up to avoid a recurring nutrition crisis.

Funding Challenges and its Impact on Food Security

The gap between humanitarian needs and funding continued to increase. While WFP pursued efficiencies (including increased use of cash-based transfers and Anticipatory Action) and strengthened its systems to ensure the assistance reached the right people, extensive reduction in assistance was unavoidable. WFP was forced to scale down assistance to populations in need due to funding, including in Somalia, where the number of people assisted was reduced by 74 percent. In South Sudan, one of the countries with the highest proportion of food insecurity in the region², due to funding constraints and poor infrastructure, WFP was forced to shorten the duration of the emergency lean season response and restricted her geographical reach. WFP also reduced ration sizes by up to 70 percent of the minimum food basket, affecting all refugees in the region.

Reductions and delays in the provision of food assistance in the context of worsening economic situation resulted in large unmet basic needs, made self-reliance gains more difficult to achieve, and households resorted to negative coping strategies to meet their food needs and increased in protection risks. There is currently a risk of catastrophic food security and nutrition outcomes in Sudan and South Sudan and serious deterioration in many other parts of the region.



For instance, the food security status of the crisis-affected people in South Sudan slightly deteriorated with the proportion of households with poor food consumption levels increasing from 26 percent in 2022 to 28 percent in 2023.



In Burundi, only 46 percent of refugees reported to be consuming adequate food, a reduction from 92 percent in 2022, and households at risk of food insecurity increased from 7.8 percent in 2022 to 44 percent in 2023.



In Rwanda, food consumption levels for refugees deteriorated from 61 percent in 2022 to 50 percent in 2023, their adoption of food-based coping strategies slightly improved to 12.4 percent in 2023 down from 13.6 percent in 2022.

Despite overall reductions in food assistance, WFP was able to fully sustain nutrition support and school feeding programmes crucially benefiting the vulnerable populations. **Adequate and sustained funding and improved humanitarian access are however urgently needed to address the food security crises in Eastern Africa.**

² WFP_FAO_hunger-hotspots-fao-wfp-early-warnings-acute-food-insecurity-november-2023-april-2024



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Beating all Odds to Reach People Affected by Sudan Regional Crisis

The outbreak of conflict in Sudan in April 2023 resulted in an unprecedented humanitarian crisis, leading to a rise in the levels of acute food insecurity among the Sudanese people. The Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) showed that 20.3 million individuals, a record high³ of 42 percent of the country's population, were acutely food insecure. Nearly 5 million people are in emergency levels of hunger, and over 8.5 million people have been displaced internally and into neighboring countries, including South Sudan, Chad, Egypt, Ethiopia, and the Central African Republic (CAR), since the war began.

The insecurity led to a two-week operational pause at the onset of the crisis. When WFP resumed operations in May, substantial humanitarian access challenges were faced. WFP then invested in access capacities and worked closely with OCHA and other partners to expand the accessible network of roads and facilitate an effective emergency response. WFP activated a 6-month corporate scale-up for Sudan in June and a corporate scale-up for the Sudan Regional Crisis in November 2023. This enabled focusing whole-organization support on the operation.

In addition to the 5.8 million people receiving General Food Assistance, WFP also reached more than 240,000 children (6-59 months) pregnant and breastfeeding women and girls for the prevention and treatment of moderate acute malnutrition. This is a significant reduction compared to previous years due to limited access and non-functionality of health institutions in conflict areas. In South Sudan, WFP reached 363,000 people⁴ while in Chad, WFP assisted over 600,000 new refugees, returnees, and the most vulnerable among the host population – all affected by the Sudan crisis. Major achievements included breakthroughs in reaching people in West and Central Darfur through the Chad-Sudan Border and Khartoum with life-saving assistance.

³ IPC Sudan Acute Food Insecurity Jun2023-Feb2024_report.pdf (ipcinfo.org). <https://www.ipcinfo.org/ipc-country-analysis/details-map/en/c/1156730/?iso3=SDN>

⁴ South Sudan Annual Country Report | World Food Programme (wfp.org)

STORIES FROM THE FIELD

Uprooted dreams: One girl's story of struggle and hope

Nineteen-year-old Aziza Mohammed Izak was about to start her final year of secondary school in Khartoum, eager to move on to university. She loved English, but she especially wanted to get a degree in Psychology to help troubled kids overcome trauma.

Instead, Aziza has been faced with her own anguish after Sudan's war upended her life, forcing her to leave her home in the capital and everything she knew. "We cannot return but we can't stay living like this," Aziza told WFP staff from Port Sudan where she's seeking refuge from the fighting that rages on in Khartoum, "yet there's nowhere else for us to go."

When the clashes broke out in the capital on 15 April, she and her mother sold everything they owned to buy a bus ticket to Port Sudan hundreds of kilometres away; a place where they knew nobody. "We have nothing to our name – no house, no food, no money... our life's memories have been destroyed." Now she and her mother sleep in an overcrowded dormitory with several other women, caught in between holding on to and letting go of a life that has been shattered by war.

Aziza's profound loss is echoed in the experiences of millions of her fellow citizens. Since the outbreak of conflict in Sudan it is estimated that over 8.5 million people have been displaced, forcing them to leave behind their lives and livelihoods in search of refuge from the risk of violence.

In Khartoum, generational homes have been lost to the fighting; the memories of entire families turned to rubble. Violence has wreaked havoc across the country and the trauma caused will similarly take generations to heal for all those in Sudan who have been impacted.

It has now been months since Aziza left her old life behind. Slowly she and her mother have been starting to adjust. Aziza still remembers happier times from before the war: dancing with her friends to hip-hop videos on YouTube or sitting on the banks of the Nile River that cuts through Khartoum.



WFP/Leni Kinzli

"I love Khartoum and I would kiss the ground if I could go back to a country in peace," Aziza says, describing dreams of returning to "a warm house filled with love." Then she describes her last memories of the city: helplessly watching people die in the streets as she fled; the impact of the conflict on Aziza and others like her and the depths of its effects are hard to imagine.

Despite this, when WFP spoke with Aziza, she told staff of the joyful atmosphere in the camp that day. WFP had been distributing food assistance, including Sudan's main staple, sorghum, along with lentils and oil. She was especially excited that the kids were laughing and playing, knowing their bellies would soon be full.

"We are so happy to receive this food from WFP," Aziza says, describing traditional dishes she and others will make with WFP provisions. "Now we can have a home-cooked meal with our favourite dishes and don't need to go sleep hungry."

WFP's priority since the crisis has been to reach the most at-risk displaced and conflict-affected communities with life-saving food assistance. This helps ensure that those like Aziza and her mother do not go hungry or risk slipping into fatal levels of malnutrition as they grapple with the uncertainty of life away from their homes, not knowing if or when they would ever be able to return.

Following the conflict, WFP supported 6.2 million displaced/conflict affected people with life-saving supplies. Each one of these people have their own unique story of how their lives and memories have been upended. WFP emergency support helps reduce the impact that conflict-affected communities are facing and, hopefully, will help them find the strength to rebuild their futures.



WFP/Leni Kinzli

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