



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES

WFP The Gambia Country Brief October – November 2024



In Numbers



151,378 people assisted in October and November 2024

US\$ 480,595 cash-based transfers made from September to November 2024

US\$ 3.6 million six-month (December 2024-May 2025) net funding requirements

Operational Context

The Gambia, the smallest country in mainland Africa, is also one of the most densely populated. Its economy is highly exposed to shocks and relies heavily on remittances, tourism, and agriculture. Agriculture contributes 25 percent of the country's gross domestic product, employs 70 percent of the population, and is the source of livelihoods for 80 percent of the rural population. However, the sector covers less than 50 percent of national food requirements, making the country highly dependent on imports and susceptible to price volatility. As a result, despite improvements over the years, high levels of food insecurity persist. According to the latest Cadre Harmonise analysis (November 2024), during the upcoming lean season (June–August 2025), 244,000 people are expected to face food crisis including 236,000 people in the Crisis phase (IPC 3) and Emergency (IPC 4) phases (8,000 in Emergency phase), requiring food and nutrition assistance.

WFP has been operating in the country since 1970. The current Country Strategic Plan 2024–2028 enshrines WFP's commitment to supporting national institutions in the areas of emergency response, human capital development, climate resilience, and technical assistance to strengthen the national social protection system.



Population: **2.4 million**

2023/2024 Human Development Report: **174 out of 193**

Income Level: **Low**

People in food insecurity (IPC 3 and IPC 4): **9 percent of the population**

Operational Updates

- After the start of the new school year in September 2024, WFP successfully distributed more than US\$ 480,000 to 422 schools across the country's Upper River, Central River North and South, and North Bank Regions through its **Home-Grown School Feeding programme**. The resources will allow schools to procure locally produced commodities and provide children with a nutritious meal a day.
- In November 2024, the Country Office in collaboration with the Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education (MoBSE), WFP Office of Evaluation, and World Bank Development Impact (DIME) Department, held a stakeholder workshop to present the results of the **School Feeding Impact Evaluation**. The study, which covered January to October 2023, collected and analysed data from the country's Upper River and North Bank Regions, to assess the impact of the programme on children's food security, nutrition, health, and education outcomes. The results show that school meals directly translate into **enhanced food security** and **dietary diversity**, and **better mental health** through decreased rates of stress and depression, especially among girls. Furthermore, the programme **increased children's attendance** and **reduced dropouts** during the school year.
- Following the inauguration of the **Fill the Nutrient Gap (FNG) Analysis** in September 2024, WFP in collaboration with the Government implemented a training of 22 data collectors who then conducted fieldwork at 51 markets in all regions of the country in October. The results will help the Government and partners identify context-appropriate interventions that empower people through better access to affordable nutritious food to actively address their requirements.
- The Field Office welcomed a mid-term review mission team of the African Development Bank in the Upper River Region to assess ongoing project activities. The team visited schools, including those where WFP, together with the Government through the Global Agriculture and Food Security Project (GAFSP), is constructing school kitchens. The visit provided valuable insights into the progress of infrastructure development and the impact of the project in enhancing the school feeding programme and improving the learning environment for the students.

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Photo Caption: Presenting the results of the School Feeding Impact Evaluation at a stakeholder workshop

Photo Credit: WFP/Louise Alsan

Country Strategic Plan (2024-2028)

Total Requirements (US\$)	Total Received (US\$)
95.2 million	21.7 million
2024 Requirements (US\$)	Six-Month Net Funding Requirements (in US\$) (December 2024–May 2025)
18.7 million	3.6 million

SO1: People are better able to meet their urgent food and nutrition needs

Strategic Outcome 1: Crisis-affected populations in the Gambia, including those affected by seasonal shocks, can meet their basic food and nutrition requirements during and in the aftermath of shocks.

Focus area: *Crisis Response*

Activities:

- Provide a food and nutrition assistance package to crisis-affected populations mainly through the social protection system.

SO2: People have better nutrition, health & education outcomes

Strategic Outcome 2: Children, PBW/G, vulnerable populations, and people at risk of malnutrition in the Gambia benefit from better access to healthy diets and essential services that improve their health, nutritional, and educational status by 2028.

Focus area: *Resilience Building*

Activities:

- Provide nutritious school meals and foster complementary health and nutrition interventions for improved health, nutrition, and education outcomes.

SO3: People have improved & sustainable livelihoods

Strategic Outcome 3: Communities whose livelihoods are at risk in the Gambia, including smallholder farmers and other actors in nutrition-sensitive value-chains, have improved livelihoods and increased resilience to the impacts of climate change and other socioeconomic shocks by 2028.

Focus area: *Resilience Building*

Activities:

- Provide integrated nutrition-sensitive value chain support, including risk transfer and community asset creation, to smallholder farmers and other value chain actors.

SO4: National programmes & systems are strengthened

Strategic Outcome 4: National systems, institutions, and actors have strengthened capacities to achieve zero hunger, tackle vulnerability and increase the human capital of the Gambia by 2028.

Focus area: *Resilience Building*

Activities:

- Provide technical support to government institutions to strengthen national social protection systems that integrate shock responsiveness and nutrition.

- As part of ongoing efforts to support rural communities and improve their adaptive capacities in the face of climate change, WFP identified 14 women from 3 farmers organisations in the Upper River and Central River North and South Regions to participate in the Gambia Women's Chamber of Commerce (GWCC) International Trade Fair. This provided them with the opportunity to showcase and sell their agricultural produce and improve their marketing abilities.

- WFP in collaboration with the Government trained 50 members of local government entities, of which 42 men and 8 women, on **climate change** and **systematic adaptation planning**.
- To establish a transparent **community feedback mechanism**, pursuant of its accountability and social safeguarding goals, WFP and its partners acquired a toll-free beneficiary line. This will provide a convenient and reliable channel for all stakeholders to engage with WFP on all aspects of its activities.
- WFP in collaboration with the Government planted 2,246 climate resilient assorted seedlings in 9 communities (5 in the Central River Region North and 4 in the Upper River Region) with the participation of 644 community members (446 men and 198 women).
- WFP recently concluded the **National Food Security Survey and National Nutrition Sentinel Surveillance** conducted in **October** and **November 2024** in collaboration with the Government to assess the food security and nutrition situation in The Gambia. The findings show that 24 percent of the population is food insecure, of which 2 percent severe. This represents a slight decrease from 29 percent in 2023 and 27 percent in 2022. Meanwhile, the prevalence of Global Acute Malnutrition among children aged 6-59 months in the country shows a slight increase from 8.5 percent in 2023 to 8.8 percent in 2024. Finally, the results indicate Global Stunting in the country at 17.8 percent, after decreasing slightly from 18.3 percent in 2023.
- In November 2024, WFP in collaboration with the Government through GAFSP promoted the processing and utilization of biofortified crops such as orange-fleshed sweet potato, maize, millet, and cassava in 20 communities for 400 farmers and processors across the country. The training provided them with the necessary skills and tools to process and utilize these nutrient-rich crops and will thus directly enhance their livelihoods.

Challenges

- School Feeding – The country office requires about US\$ 2.2 million for the next 6 months to enable WFP to provide school meals to children located in the most vulnerable parts of the country.
- Nutrition Assistance – The country office requires approximately US\$ 1.3 million for the next six months to support smallholder farmers increase their resilience to the impacts of climate change and other shocks.

Donors

Donors to WFP Gambia Country Strategic Plan in 2024 include Climate Adaptation Fund, France, Global Agriculture and Food Security Program, Government of The Gambia, Japan, Latter-day Saints Charity, and Mastercard Foundation.