



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES

WFP Timor-Leste Country Brief

November 2024 - January 2025



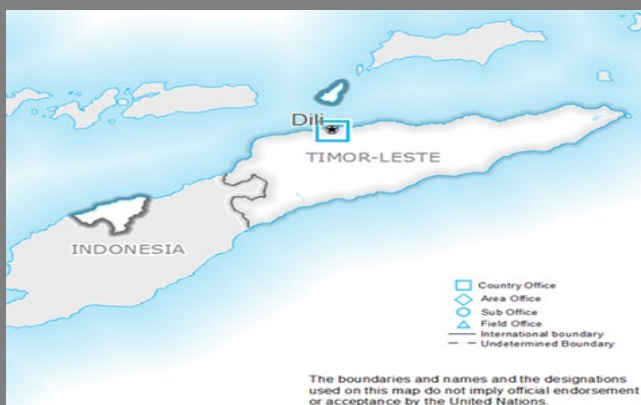
WFP supported the Government in strengthening emergency preparedness through the Humanitarian Simulation Exercise (SIMEX). ©Manuel Pestana

Operational Context

Almost one in two children are stunted in Timor-Leste, which is one of the highest rates in Southeast Asia. Twenty-six percent of the population face acute food insecurity.

In response, the World Food Programme (WFP) is shifting programmatic focus to be an enabler and strengthen the country's capacity to reduce hunger, with a nutrition- and climate-sensitive food systems approach. This emphasizes putting people at the centre in line with the road map for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including ending hunger, combating all forms of malnutrition, and establishing sustainable and climate-resilient food systems.

WFP's country strategic plan (CSP 2023-2025) supports the Government of Timor-Leste's vision for zero hunger and contributes to the National Strategic Development Plan 2011-2030. The overall goal of the CSP is to improve food security and nutrition through strengthening the existing social protection programmes (*Bolsa da Mãe Condicional*, *Merenda Escolar*), food value chain, supply chain management, and home-grown school feeding, and emergency shock response.



The boundaries and names and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

Population: **1.36 million**

2021/22 Human Development Index: **141 out of 191**

Income Level: **Lower middle**

Chronic malnutrition: **47% of children (6-59 months old)**

Highlights

Timor-Leste's government and WFP bolstered disaster preparedness through workshops and a Simulation Exercise (SIMEX), enhancing coordination, response capacity, and operational efficiency nationwide.

In 2024, Timor-Leste, supported by WFP, improved nutrition and infrastructure in 400 schools, fostering healthier habits through innovative tools and fortified meals.

Operational Updates

Nutrition and Food Security

- In December, WFP and WHO, alongside the Government of Timor-Leste, presented the 2024 results for the *Say No to 5S* (SN5S) Programme, addressing childhood diseases and malnutrition in 400 schools across Baucau, Bobonaro, and Manufahi municipalities. The initiative has improved school infrastructure and has supported the Government in enabling the introduction of fortified rice into the school meals of 68,800 students, has trained school staff on food procurement and safety, and promoted healthier habits through innovative tools like podcasts and a [nutrition song](#).
- As part of WFP's support for the SN5S, a Formative Research Report on schoolchildren's nutrition was launched, based on implementation in the project's three active municipalities. The research highlighted barriers to adopting healthy habits, such as poor school meal kitchen conditions and handwashing practices, and reduced portions of animal protein and vegetables in school meals. These insights will enable WFP to support the Government and improve the school meals programme.
- WFP presented research findings and recommendations on high return-on-investment (ROI) interventions for improving agriculture, food security, and nutrition in Timor-Leste, to over 40 representatives from Government, UN Agencies and Development Partners in the country. The research engaged more than 100 stakeholders such as farmers, government officials, retailers, and processors, resulting in a recommended package of nine interventions across the agri-food-nutrition value chain, which when interlinked, will increase the ROI considerably.

These activities are part of a long-term holistic "changing lives" agenda that WFP is implementing with the Government to address poverty, food security and nutrition. This "production-to-consumption" local development model intends to strengthen local value chains by bringing farmers and cooperatives closer to its most direct clients (i.e. school management committee procurement). It also aims to consequently boost the economic "trickle-down effect" of the Government's investments in school meals, and other priority value chains such as fortified rice, vegetables or sorghum, as diversified opportunities for local economic return.

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Country Strategic Plan (2023-2025)

Total Requirement (In US\$)	Allocated Contributions (in US\$)	Six-Month Net Funding Requirements (in US\$)
21.2 m	10.9 m	1.97 m

Strategic Outcome 1: People are better able to meet their urgent food and nutrition needs

CSP Outcome 1: Crisis-affected populations in Timor-Leste have equitable access to adequate nutritious foods that meet their basic nutritional needs during and in the aftermath of shocks.

Focus area: Crisis response

Activities:

1. Provide food and nutrition assistance to crisis-affected populations.

Strategic Outcome 2: People have better nutrition, health and education outcomes.

CSP Outcome 2: People vulnerable to nutrition insecurity, in particular women, adolescent girls, and school-age children, in Timor-Leste have equitable access to enhanced nutrition-sensitive programmes that promote and enable healthy diets by 2025.

Focus area: Root causes

Activities:

2. Provide technical assistance to national institutions working to enhance the quality and nutrition integration of school-based programmes and other social assistance programmes by improving the availability, affordability, equitable access to and consumption of nutritious and safe food.

Strategic Outcome 3: National programmes and systems are strengthened

CSP Outcome 3: People vulnerable to shocks in Timor-Leste benefit from enhanced national capacity for disaster preparedness and response and supply chain management by 2025

Focus area: Resilience building

Activities:

3. Provide technical assistance to national institutions in strengthening disaster risk and supply chain management

Strategic Outcome 4: Humanitarian & development actors are more efficient & effective.

CSP Outcome 4: Communities vulnerable to and affected by crises in Timor-Leste benefit from improved services and enhanced capacities of Government and humanitarian and development actors to prepare and respond to crises by 2025.

Focus area: Service Delivery

Activities:

4. Provide on-demand services including food and non-food procurement, and logistics supply chain capacity to the government and humanitarian and development partners.

Social Protection

- Timor-Leste, as chair of the Global Task Force on Social Protection for Nutrition (GTF), with support from WFP as the GTF Secretariat, joined the Global Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty last November as a founding member. This initiative, led by Brazil, integrates 89 countries and represents Timor-Leste's expansion into new scenarios for advocacy for improved food security and nutrition to reduce inequality through social protection systems.
- As the co-lead of the GTF, Timor-Leste's President José Ramos-Horta shared his vision for leveraging social protection to end malnutrition, in a foreword of the November edition of *Policy in Focus* facilitated by WFP. The publication offers insights for policymakers globally, synthesizes policy discussions and raises awareness on key social protection and development themes.

Emergency, Preparedness and Response

- Situated in the high-risk Ring of Fire, Timor-Leste faces significant vulnerability to disasters such as earthquakes, landslides, and flash floods. The Government and WFP are prioritizing efforts to strengthen the country's emergency response capacity. In Dili, the Civil Protection Authority (CPA), with WFP's support, launched the Humanitarian Logistics Preparedness Inception Workshop, in November, uniting key stakeholders to improve disaster response coordination and efficiency.
- In Same, Manufahi municipality, the CPA and WFP conducted the Humanitarian Simulation Exercise (SIMEX), testing and enhancing Timor-Leste's emergency operational capacity through real-time scenario simulations, emphasizing collaboration, preparedness, and rapid decision-making between national and municipal counterparts. Participants and donor members acknowledged the effectiveness and practicality of the SIMEX hands-on model in identifying gaps and addressing them in a more straightforward and efficient way.

Country Strategic Plan 2026-2030

- Aligned with Timor-Leste's priorities, WFP held a preliminary workshop in Dili in January to develop its new Country Strategic Plan (CSP) for 2026-2030. This strategy will guide WFP's support to the Government over the next five years. The workshop brought together the WFP team in Timor-Leste, experts from the Regional Bureau in Bangkok and Headquarters in Rome. Through group discussions, experience-sharing, lessons learned, and in-depth context analysis, participants shaped the foundation of the new CSP. Government representatives also joined to provide valuable insights on key focus areas, including food security, nutrition, and social protection. Further consultations with government, development partners and UN agencies are foreseen in the coming period

Donors

Government of Timor-Leste, Central Emergency Response Fund, China Aid, FAO, France, KOICA, USAID BHA.

