



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES

WFP ESWATINI Country Brief December 2024



Operational Context

In the Kingdom of Eswatini, the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) is playing a crucial role in addressing food security and nutrition despite multiple socio-economic and environmental challenges the country is facing. Poverty remains the driver of food insecurity vulnerabilities and increasing gender-based violence incidents in the country.

Eswatini is highly susceptible to climate shocks, the country suffered severe heatwaves the last couple of months in 2024. Currently the country is affected by the Tropical Cyclone DIKELEDI happening in Madagascar and Mozambique bringing heavy rains into the country. These rainy spells further exacerbate the country's existing challenges of food insecurity.

The country struggles with increasing gender-based violence, statistics as of December show that 170 cases were recorded. Latest studies also suggest that one in three women have been sexually abused by the age of 18, and 48 percent of women reporting to have experienced some form of sexual violence in their lifetime. As a result of poverty and food insecurity in Eswatini, women and children are the most vulnerable, increasing the risk of exploitation.

To address these afore-mentioned challenges, WFP continues to collaborate with the Government of Eswatini and other organizations to enhance social safety nets, including food assistance to NCPs and schools, establishing livelihoods programmes and cash-based transfers, for vulnerable population.



Population: **1.2 million**

2023 Human Development Index: **142 out of 193**

Income Level: **Lower-Middle**

Chronic malnutrition; **25 percent of children under 5**

In Numbers

156.875 MT of food assistance distributed to **526** Neighbourhood Care Points

USD 2.5 million six months net funding requirements, representing 57 percent of total requirement (January - May 2025)

51,312 people assisted in December 2024



Operational Updates

Home-Grown School Feeding

- In December 2024, the 'Eggs and Vegetables program' improved the nutrition of 24,615 school children while supporting 669 local smallholder farmers, including 410 women. This initiative prioritizes empowerment and sustainable income generation for the farmers, fostering long-term community development. Some of the smallholder farmer beneficiaries were provided training by WFP and partners in business and financial literacy.

Children Social Food Safety Net

- In December, WFP provided support to approximately 14,347 orphaned and vulnerable children (OVCs) in 526 neighbourhood care points (NCPs).

Mozambique Asylum Seekers/ Refugees

- Eswatini experienced an influx of asylum seekers and refugees entering the country from Mozambique. The latest statistics for December are a total of 1,104 refugees, accommodated at the Malindza refugee camp yet some have made way to live amongst the host community. WFP has been participating in the National Disaster Management-coordinated meetings and the result of these meetings was the national response plan. The country supports the refugees residing in the camp with two meals, breakfast and lunch. However, there is still a gap in providing dinner for the refugees residing at the camp.

Livelihood Projects

- WFP supported the livelihood strengthening project aimed at enhancing food security of people living with HIV (PLHIV) and people living with disability (PLWD) in partnership with Membatsise. In December, the project conducted trainings for gender-based violence attended by 28 beneficiaries doing gardening and poultry. All 28 beneficiaries have been visited for monitoring, and providing guide on their successfully established livelihood activities.

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Country Strategic Plan (2020-2025)

Total Requirement (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)	Six Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
76.83 m	38.1m	2.5m

Strategic Result 01: Everyone has access to food

Strategic Outcome 01: Vulnerable populations in shock-affected areas can meet their basic food and nutrition needs during times of crisis.
Focus area: *Crisis Response*

Activities 1: Provide food and/or cash-based transfers to food insecure populations, including children affected by shocks

Strategic Result 03: Smallholders have improved food security and nutrition through improved productivity and incomes

Strategic Outcome 02: Smallholder farmers, particularly women, have enhanced capacities to supply structured markets with nutritious food by 2024
Focus area: *Resilience Building*

Activities 2: Strengthen the capacities of smallholder farmers, particularly women, to supply nutritious foods to structured markets, including schools

Strategic Result 05: Developing countries have strengthened capacity to implement the SDGs

Strategic Outcome 03: Vulnerable populations, particularly women, children, adolescent girls and people living with HIV, have access to integrated and shock-responsive social protection systems by 2030
Focus area: *Resilience Building*

Activities 3: Provide evidence and strengthen national systems and capacities for designing and implementing, nutrition-sensitive and shock-responsive social protection programmes, including school feeding.

Challenges

- **Funding Constraints:** Due to lack of funding, the Eswatini Country Office is currently short-staffed and is strained on performing all duties in full capacity. This has disrupted daily operations and delayed programme implementation.
- **Operational Challenges:** WFP is expected to reduce direct implementation and to use CPs as well as capacitate the national government.
 - The country has received heavy rainfall throughout the month of December resulting in damage of some national roads and bridges affecting accessibility to FDPs.
- **Segregation of duties:** Due to shortage of staff, the CO had to request an extension of time in submitting the 2024 ACR. CO relies on casual labour recruitment to facilitate work and ensure there is segregation of duty in the Country Office operations.

Monitoring and Assessments

- The monitoring of the 'Eggs and Vegetable Programme' in schools, under the Home-Grown School Feeding has been ongoing with the help of ADRA supported by WFP. Under this project in December, there was a provision of post-delivery monitoring services of eggs and vegetables in the Manzini and Lubombo regions, covering both primary and high schools. This project also provided onsite trainings to school's staff on proper handling, storage and preparation of vegetables and eggs to ensure nutritious and well-balanced meals served to pupils.

Economic Forecast

- A recent Central Bank of Eswatini's Economic Forecast Outlook and Inflation Report of December 2024, states that Eswatini's gross domestic product is expected to increase by 3.6 percent following a notable growth of 5.0 percent in 2023. The country's annual consumer price inflation declined for the third consecutive month to record 3.6 percent in November 2024 as compared to 4.1 percent in October. A price Index report from the Food Agriculture Organization (FAO) which tracks monthly changes in the international prices of a set globally-traded food commodities, averaged 127.0 points in December, down 0.5 percent from November.
- **Food Insecurity:** Prolonged droughts have led to acute food insecurity for 29 percent of the population. The worsening situation has further pushed up the IPC figures to 34,000 from about 33,000 as captured in November.
- **Crop Production:** Production of sugarcane and maize (key crops) in Eswatini has declined due to adverse weather. The Central Bank of Eswatini's food inflation forecast stipulates Eswatini's maize production in 2023/2024 was 74,947 metric tons, a 12 percent decrease from the previous year. This is below the country's annual target of 140,000 metric tons.
- **Smallholder Farmers:** Smallholder farmers face challenges such as low productivity, high post-harvest losses and limited access to finance.

Donors: Japan