



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES



WFP The Gambia Country Brief

January – February 2025

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 Harmonisé 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 (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.



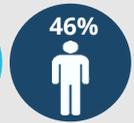
Population: **2.4 million**

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**

In Numbers



150,972 people assisted in January and February 2025

US\$ 549,994 cash-based transfers made from January to February 2025

US\$ 6.3 million six-month (March–August 2025) net funding requirements

Operational Updates

- WFP continues to support **421 schools** across the country's Upper River, Central River North and South, and North Bank Regions through its **Home-Grown School Feeding (HGSF) programme**. The second term of the school year began in January 2025. The Country Office developed a Meal Distribution Plan and school feeding has resumed amidst the children's enthusiasm to the daily meals. A total of **150,972 children**, comprising 54 percent girls, is benefiting from the programme.
- WFP attended the second **Coordination Committee Meeting** of the Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education. The event brought together key stakeholders of the country to review the implementation of education activities and discuss future plans.
- In February 2025, WFP started to conduct consultations to review the **new procurement model for the HGSF** with actors at the regional level. The model, which was launched in February 2024, has been in use for a year. The review will provide insights into progress made and shed light on where improvements are needed.
- The Government has officially endorsed and inaugurated a National Task Force responsible for overseeing the implementation of the national **Systems Approach for Better Education Results (SABER) exercise**, conducted in cooperation with WFP and the World Bank. It will provide technical leadership and facilitate multi-sectoral coordination across health, education, nutrition, and other sectors. Field level consultations started in February 2025.
- The Country Office held **the Presentation of The Gambia Fill the Nutrient Gap (FNG) Findings event** on 26 February to present, discuss, and validate the preliminary results of the analysis. WFP, in partnership with the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, and Food Security, the National Nutrition Agency, and other stakeholders, recently completed the data collection on the cost of diet and affordability of a nutritious diet. The event was attended by around 50 participants. The preliminary results were further presented to the Development Partner Group, whose members commended the study for its thoroughness and insights.

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Photo Caption: *Launching a stakeholder event to present the results of the Fill the Nutrient Gap (FNG) analysis*
Photo Credit: WFP/Louise Alsan

Country Strategic Plan (2024-2028)

Total Requirements (US\$)	Total Received (US\$)
95.2 million	21.7 million
2025 Requirements (US\$)	Six-Month Net Funding Requirements (in US\$) (March–August 2025)
20.6 million	6.3 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.

- WFP in cooperation with the Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education, Ministry of Health, and Forum for African Women Educationalists Gambia Chapter (FAWEGAM), conducted a **two-day training for Mothers' Clubs** in the **Upper River, Central River North, and North Bank Region**. A total of **174 Mothers' Club members** from **87 schools** participated and were trained on nutrition, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), reproductive and child health, gender equality, as well as their role in supporting school feeding.

- WFP conducted the biannual **Deworming and Vitamin A Campaign** in January 2025, targeting all **150,972 children** in **421 schools** in the **Upper River, Central River North and South, and North Bank Regions** to address worm infestation and nutrition deficiency among children. The **preliminary result indicates a 75.5 percent coverage**.
- WFP supported **Maruo Farms** through technical capacity building to locally produce **96.9 metric tons of fortified rice**. The rice was distributed to schools supported by WFP across the country.
- A **Rapid Assessment of the 2024/25 Cropping Season** on Groundnut and Rice Production and Productivity on Seeds, Food and Nutrition Security was successfully conducted by the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Food Security with support from WFP, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), and other national stakeholders. The assessment report highlights that **crop production in the 2024/2025 cropping season was negatively impacted by long dry spells** with 30 percent of the fields failing while flooding affected 8 percent of households in most parts of the country, coupled with infestation by pests.
- WFP participated in the second **Global Shield in-country workshop**, organised by the Global Shield Secretariat, the Ministry of Finance, and the Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Natural Resources. The workshop allowed to present and refine the stock-taking and gap analysis report, gather input from stakeholders, determine priority areas for climate and disaster risk finance and insurance support, and inform related decision-making.
- In collaboration with the Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Natural Resources, Ministry of Finance, and Climate Finance Directorate, WFP conducted a two-day capacity strengthening session for 38 decentralised staff on climate risk management and adaptation planning.
- WFP with the support of the Government awarded a total **US\$ 16,000 in rural resilient entrepreneurship micro-grants** to 9 recipients. The programme aims to build the capacities of women and youth to develop resilience-building and climate adaptation activities in their communities.

Challenges

- **School feeding:** The Country Office requires around US\$ 700,000 for the next six months (24 percent of requirements) to provide school meals to children located in the most vulnerable parts of the country.
- **Nutrition assistance:** The Country Office requires approximately US\$ 1.9 million for the next six months (90 percent of requirements) to provide a nutrition prevention package for population groups at risk of malnutrition.

Donors

Donors to WFP The Gambia Country Strategic Plan in 2025 include the Climate Adaptation Fund, Global Agriculture and Food Security Program, UNAIDS, Peace Building Fund, Government of The Gambia, Green Climate Fund, DSM-Firmenich, Japan, Japan Association for the World Food Programme, Danish Refugee Council, Latter-day Saints Charity, and Mastercard Foundation.