

WFP Namibia Country Brief

May 2025



World Food Programme

SAVING
LIVES
CHANGING
LIVES



Operational Context

Namibia is an upper-middle-income country with a population of 3.02 million people. The country has experienced recurrent floods and drought, insect and worm invasions, and the COVID-19 pandemic, all impacting profoundly the country's food security, health, and nutrition. Notably, the El Niño phenomenon has led to severe drought conditions, resulting in crop failures and increased food insecurity, this coupled with insufficient food production and over-reliance on poorly adapted rain-fed agriculture and external markets for food, results in poor households being highly vulnerable to shocks and food price inflation.

In this context, the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP), provides food assistance to people at-risk affected by shocks, ensures capacity strengthening to the Government, and facilitates effective policies. In addition, WFP strives to strengthen the country's food systems and increase the production-capacity of smallholder farmers.

WFP has been present in Namibia since 1990 as a technical partner to the Government, facilitating the development and transfer of knowledge, maintaining capacities to supplement food security and nutrition programmes.



Population: **3.02 million**

Income Level: **Upper-middle income**

2022 Human Development Index: **142 out of 193 countries**

2024 Global Hunger Index: **86 out of 127 countries**

In Numbers

USD 0.5 million net funding requirements for the next six months (June '25 – November '25), representing 16 percent of funding requirements

12,038 school children reached through the Home-Grown School Feeding Programme (Tier 2)

20,640 people assisted through food vouchers

22,063 children served warm meals at soup kitchens

54,741 Total people assisted in May 2025

Operational Updates

Multi-regional Lifesaving Food Assistance

In May 2025, WFP's lifesaving Food Assistance provided commodity vouchers valued at N\$550 per household to 3,440 households (equivalent to 20,640 people) in Kunene, Hardap, and Ohangwena regions. This effort marked the successful completion of five distribution cycles in Kunene and Ohangwena regions. The programme's market-based approach onboarded 35 local retailers, creating sustainable demand for essential commodities in benefitting communities. This retailer network, despite facing capacity constraints related to stock levels, has been instrumental in ensuring last-mile delivery.

WFP maintains close operational alignment with government initiatives, including the programmes under the Office of the Vice President and the Office of the Prime Minister's Drought Relief Programme. UNICEF and the Ministry of Health and Social Services provides critical technical support for outreach related services inclusive of nutritional assessments and referral systems.

Strengthening Children Resilience Through Supplementary Wet feeding

WFP's supplementary wet feeding programme, which targets children aged 6 months to 11 years across five drought affected regions in Namibia, reached a total of 25,585 children with 6,500 children reached in Kavango East, 6,250 in Kavango West, 2,296 in Zambezi, 1,226 in Hardap and 9,313 in Omaheke.

This Programme is effective at preventing malnutrition during critical developmental periods by serving meals three times a week at community-based soup kitchens and at early childhood centers and orphanages which are supported by the Ministry of Gender, Equality, Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare through a field level implementation agreement with Catholic Aids Action (CAA).

Implementation to date has recorded significant increase in the community needs for this intervention, demonstrating a 10% increase in the coverage compared to target (total registered 23,012, total redeemed 25,585). This demonstrates both the severity of food insecurity and the critical support that this intervention provides to vulnerable food insecure communities.

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Country Strategic Plan (2025-2029)

Total Requirements (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)	Six-Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
51 m	23.3 m	3.1 m

Strategic Result 01: People are better able to meet their urgent food and nutrition needs.

Strategic Outcome 01: Crisis-affected populations in Namibia are able to meet their food, nutrition needs in times of crises.

Focus Area: Crisis response

Strategic Result 04: National programmes & systems are strengthened

Strategic Outcome 02: By 2030, national social protection systems in Namibia are strengthened to more effectively benefit the most at-risk people and promote human capital development.

Focus Area: Root causes

Activities: Provide technical assistance, facilitate coordination, and generate evidence for Government institutions aimed at strengthening inclusive and gender-responsive safety nets and social protection and promoting diversified household food consumption.

Strategic Result 04: National programmes & systems are strengthened

Strategic Outcome 03: By 2030, national food systems in Namibia are strengthened to improve the livelihoods of smallholder farmers, ensuring the most at-risk communities have access to affordable healthy diets.

Focus Area: Resilience building

Activities: Enhance partnerships, policies and technical assistance to the Government, other actors, and communities to build inclusive, sustainable, and resilient local food systems to improve access to healthy diets.

Strategic Result 05: Humanitarian & development actors are more efficient & effective

Strategic Outcome 04: By 2030, the Government and other actors in Namibia, especially those focusing on food systems, have leveraged WFP services and expertise in supply chains, enabling them to effectively support the people most at-risk.

Focus Area: Resilience Building

Activities: Provide on-demand services and supply chain solutions to the Government and other partners working on the food-energy-water nexus.

Photo: UN-CERF Funded Soup Kitchen beneficiary in the Kavango East Region © Visit to WFP/Theodor Uukongo

To ensure quality service delivery, WFP conducted refresher trainings for 82 soup kitchen cooks across 101 soup kitchens. These trainings emphasized essential skills including hand washing hygiene, proper food preparation and storage techniques, and accurate maintenance of inventory and attendance records.

Early monitoring results are promising, according to CAA in the Kavango region, "Majority of children show positive progress on weight gained and MUAC compared to the recording done at the inception of feeding – the results show within three weeks of feeding" – CAA, Kavango Region

Food Systems

WFP partnered with the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Water and Land Reform and the Ministry of Urban and Rural Development to train 26 (20 female; 6 male) likokola community project beneficiaries on agricultural practices and food preservation. The British-funded initiative promotes nutritious crop production through backyard gardens and supports the local school in this community with poultry for improved learner retention and nutrition.

Monitoring

WFP conducted a site closure assessment and evaluation for the UN Central Emergency Response Fund in Kavango East Region. Discussions with community leaders and government partners highlighted the need for improved training on processes, alongside recommendations to broaden the targeting and selection criteria. Key insights gained include protecting beneficiaries' confidentiality by ensuring personal details are disclosed solely to authorized people through appropriate channels.

WFP's assistance to Mbora Primary School through a Food Systems Project has proven to be an essential safety net for children in Kavango East Region. The garden project involves 15 parent volunteers (5 men and 10 women) who manage vegetable production to support the school's soup kitchen. This effort augments the existing mid-morning meal provided by the national school feeding programme with an additional nutritious afternoon meal, allowing 216 learners (117 boys and 99 girls) to enjoy two meals daily, five days a week, before returning home.

WFP and DAPP Namibia are implementing a Capricorn Foundation-funded project to strengthen food accessibility in Omusati Region through backyard gardens and trainings. The initiative targets 950 vulnerable people, including children, pregnant women, and people living with HIV/AIDS and TB. A baseline assessment revealed that 77% of beneficiaries have acceptable Food Consumption Scores, indicating adequate dietary diversity, while 21% remain in the borderline category, showing ongoing vulnerability.

Donors:

Brazil, British High Commission, Capricorn Foundation, CERF, Government of the Republic of Namibia, Japan, NAMIBRE, NAMDIA Foundation, The Republic of Korea, UNAIDS UBRAF, USA