



World Food Programme

SAVING
LIVES
CHANGING
LIVES

WFP Lesotho Country Brief November 2025



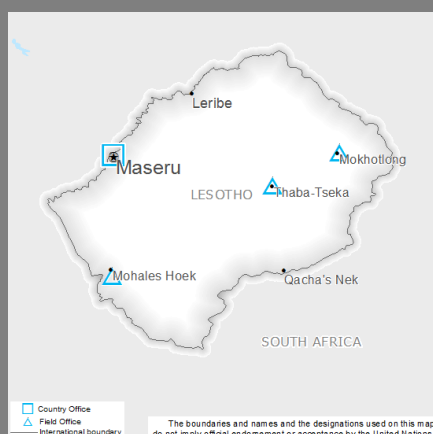
Operational Context

Lesotho is a lower-middle-income country with a population size of about 2 million. Lesotho remains one of the most unequal countries in the world. Poverty is widespread, persistent, and deep, especially in rural areas. Almost half of the population of Lesotho suffers from poverty and almost a quarter (24 percent) suffers from extreme poverty, living below the food poverty line.

Food insecurity remains a chronic challenge, hindering the country's development and progress towards zero hunger. **Over one fifth of the population** faces high levels of acute food insecurity and requires humanitarian action to reduce food gaps, protect and restore livelihoods, and prevent acute malnutrition.

Lesotho struggles with **chronic malnutrition**, particularly among children aged 2-3, where stunting (impaired growth due to malnutrition) rates are as high as 36 percent. Micronutrient deficiencies (mainly iron and vitamin A) also remain a challenge, affecting more than half of children under 5 years.

The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) has been present in Lesotho since 1962.



Population: **2 million**

2025 Human Development Index: **167 out of 193**

Income Level: **Lower middle**

Stunting: **36% of children between 6-59 months**

In Numbers



USD 8.2 million (six months Dec 2025– May 2026) net funding requirements, representing 74 percent of total funding requirements.

1,246 learners supported through home-grown school feeding

Operational Updates

- **Lean season support:** WFP needs **US\$5.9 million** to support 48,000 food insecure people between November 2025 to March 2026. Currently, no donor has pledged funding towards this intervention.
- WFP is currently implementing targeted livelihood and skills training activities for early recovery in Qacha's Nek district, targeting over 2,000 people that received assistance under the 2024/2025 lean season support. In this reporting month, a total of 108 farmers from Sehlabathebe and Qhoalinyane Resource Centres were trained on climate-smart livestock practices and crop management. To complement the trainings, WFP procured non-food items including vegetable seeds, sewing machines, solar driers, and hermetic bags for distribution to these farmers.
- WFP supported the participation of Government (Disaster Management Authority and Lesotho Meteorological Services) at the South African Anticipatory Action After-Action Review Workshop held in Madagascar – Antananarivo from 24-27th November 2025. The aim of the workshop was to extract lessons from the past decade, strengthen regional coordination, and improve the coherence and responsiveness of anticipatory systems at a time when crises are multiplying and intensifying across the region. The platform presented an opportunity for Lesotho to share key achievements and lessons experienced during implementation of the first-ever anticipatory programme in the country.
- **Emergency preparedness:** Following the table-top simulation exercise, the Disaster Management Authority (DMA), through WFP's support under the Regional urban Preparedness project, developed the urban anticipatory action annex as an addition to the flood contingency plan developed for Hlotse urban area in Leribe district. These tools will help Government and key stakeholders to prepare for, mitigate, and respond to flood disasters effectively.
- WFP provided financial and technical support to DMA in updating the Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) Policy in efforts to strengthen disaster preparedness and resilience. The exercise kicked off with a comprehensive document review that engaged DMA and other key stakeholders to assess existing policies and identify DRR-related gaps and opportunities. Subsequently, district-level consultations were conducted to capture localized perspectives and recommendations while national consultations are currently in progress.
- **School feeding:** WFP provided schools meals to 1,246 learners from 88 pre-primary schools through the home-grown school feeding programme that promotes utilization of locally sourced food at schools. As a result, a total of 62 smallholder farmers benefitted from the initiative, delivering fresh food to schools.

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Photo: School gardens demonstration during the school menu testing event in Berea district. Photo: ©External photographer

Country Strategic Plan (July 2024-June 2029)

Total Requirement (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)	Six Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
94.8 m	2.9 m	8.2 m

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

Strategic Outcome 1: Food-insecure and crisis-affected people in Lesotho are able to meet their essential needs before, during and after crises, including through anticipatory actions and shock-responsive national social protection programmes.

Focus area: *Crisis Response*

Activities:

- **Activity 1:** Provide crisis- and shock-affected people and people at risk with packages of assistance that improve their access to safe food and nutrition and/or their ability to meet their own essential needs.
- **Activity 2:** Support the Government in implementing effective, targeted and inclusive early warning systems, anticipatory action, disaster risk reduction, crisis response interventions and shock-responsive social protection.

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

Strategic Outcome 2: By 2029, national systems and programmes for nutrition security and school-based programming in Lesotho are strengthened.

Focus area: *Root Causes*

Activities:

- **Activity 3:** Provide and support inclusive nutritious school meals in pre-primary and primary schools through school-based programming.
- **Activity 4:** Assist the Government in the design, implementation and monitoring of policies and strategies that strengthen nutrition programmes.

Strategic Result 3: People have improved and sustainable livelihoods.

Strategic Outcome 3: By 2029, populations at risk in Lesotho benefit from strengthened, climate-resilient food systems and sustainable livelihoods.

Focus area: *Resilience building*

Activities:

- **Activity 5:** Assist the Government in the design and implementation of diverse livelihood and natural resource management programmes using ecosystem-based and climate change adaptive approaches.
- **Activity 6:** Provide support to value chain and market actors, including the Government, to enable communities at risk to aggregate, add value, access markets, reduce food losses and consume safe and healthy foods.

Strategic Result 4: Sustainable Food Systems

Strategic Outcome 4: The Government, development partners, civil society and private sector organizations in Lesotho have improved access to innovative, effective and cost-efficient on-demand WFP services by 2029

Focus area: *Resilience Building*

Activities:

- **Activity 7:** Provide the Government, development partners, civil society and private sector organizations with on-demand services that promote innovation and expertise in supply chains and other areas.

Operational Updates (Cont.)

- Complementary to this activity, WFP supplied 17 pre-primary schools with solar cookers to promote clean cooking in schools and trained schoolteachers on the use of the solar cookers. Additionally, through funding support from the Government of Japan, WFP provided school meals to 50,738 learners across the country in November, contributing to improved attendance.
- Under the School Health & Nutrition Technical Assistance Facility (TAF) project, WFP supported a technical working group meeting composed of multi-stakeholders to discuss and endorse the project work-plan to undertake activities supporting sustainable financing, costing of the national school feeding policy and implementation plan.
- **Nutrition:** Through coordination of the Ministry of Education and Training and the Ministry of Agriculture, Food Security and Nutrition, the TAF project, piloted the testing of the recently developed localized school menu at one of the primary schools (Sebitia) in Berea district. The aim of the menu testing exercise was to undertake sensory evaluation of learners pertaining to the meals prepared from local products. The results were positive, with children expressing satisfaction and enjoyment of the meals provided. The activity was graced by the presence of Minister of Agriculture and the Minister of Education.
- WFP, in collaboration with Nutrition International, provided financial and technical support to the Food and Nutrition Coordinating Office to undertake stakeholder consultations to inform the formulation of the National Food and Nutrition Framework. Findings from these consultations are scheduled to be presented to stakeholders within the month of December.
- **Resilience building:** Three communities (Ha Hlakane, Ha Maseru, and Ha Malapane) in Mokhotlong district were supported with water harvesting material for construction of water tanks to conserve water for agricultural purposes after the rainy season. This intervention will enhance environmental protection and reduce soil erosion and excessive water runoff.
- Through financial support from WFP, the Ministry of Agriculture, Food Security and Nutrition- department of Nutrition conducted a training for 16 women and 4 men in the sewing of and utilization of wonder bags to reduce the use of firewood and enable women to save on cooking time. The training will be extended to the nutrition clubs and other farming groups.
- **Smallholder support:** With support from WFP, The Ministry of Agriculture supplied 112 farmers from Mokhotlong district with 400 bags of potato seeds to enhance production while 60 famers (35 Males and 25 Females) from Qacha's Nek district were trained on potato and bean production techniques, pests and disease control, and safe use of herbicides, in order to enhance agricultural production and productivity and safe use of agro-chemicals, including integrated pest management.

Donors

Adaptation Fund, ECHO, Japan, Government of Lesotho, Global Partnership for Education, Monaco, *(in alphabetical order)*.