



# WFP Timor-Leste

COUNTRY BRIEF  
FEBRUARY 2026

## KEY HIGHLIGHT

- The Government of Timor-Leste, with support from WFP, launched a data-driven initiative using machine learning and a national registry to strengthen social protection and improve maternal and child nutrition.

## IN NUMBERS



**279** people trained on school feeding and social protection in January 2026



**60%**  
Male



**40%**  
Female



**USD 1.6M** (FEB – JUL 2026) net funding requirements

**Photo Caption & Credit:** WFP, MSSl, and INETL signed a tripartite agreement to launch a national registry initiative. ©WFP/ Isabel Pereira.

## SITUATION OVERVIEW

- Timor-Leste, a least-developed small island state of 1.3 million people, has made notable progress in reconstruction, human rights, and development since independence in 2002, yet it still faces major nutrition and food security challenges, exacerbated by natural hazards.
- Stunting among children under five remains among the world's highest. The 2024 IPC analysis shows 27 percent of households are acutely food-insecure, while the 2023 cost-of-diet study found that 75 percent cannot afford a nutritious diet, with food prices up 78 percent since 2019. Low agricultural productivity, poor maternal and child nutrition practices, high poverty rates, limited safety nets, and frequent climatic shocks further weaken food systems and household resilience.
- WFP's country strategic plan (CSP 2026-2030) 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 by strengthening existing social protection programmes (Bolsa da Mãe Kondisionál, Merenda Eskolár), the food value chain, supply chain management, and emergency shock preparedness and response.

## OPERATIONAL UPDATES

### Nutrition

- In February, WFP, together with UNICEF, ILO, and the European Union, carried out the first Steering Committee meeting for the EU-funded project Strengthening Social Inclusion and Nutrition in Timor-Leste in Dili. The meeting reviewed progress, strengthened coordination, and aligned partners on priorities and next steps. It brought together representatives from partner ministries, national and municipal authorities, civil society organizations, development partners, and key stakeholders in the nutrition and social inclusion sectors.

The initiative aims to reduce malnutrition and promote social inclusion, reaching approximately 120,000 people across four municipalities through school feeding, sustainable agriculture, improved WASH and nutritional practices, and strengthened social protection systems.

- From 14–20 January 2026, WFP hosted a delegation from Fujian Agriculture and Forestry University (FAFU) in Timor-Leste, with the support of the Chinese Government. The visit explored opportunities for collaboration with government institutions and academia to advance agricultural development through Juncao technology, with a particular focus on mushroom cultivation and vocational training.

The mission visited Aileu, Ainaro, Ermera, and Dili, engaging government counterparts and farmer groups to exchange knowledge and skills that support sustainable livelihoods, stronger local food systems, and improved national food security. Juncao technology is an innovative, sustainable approach that uses specifically developed grass species to grow edible mushrooms and produce livestock feed, both with high protein content, thereby supporting improved nutrition and sustainable rural development.



FAFU field visit to exchange knowledge with farmer groups and municipal government authorities. ©WFP/Isabel Pereira

### Social Protection

- WFP, in support of the Ministry of Social Solidarity and Inclusion (MSSI) and the Ministry of Health, rolled out Bolsa da Mãe Kondisionál ba Saúde Nutrisaun Inan no Oan ([BdMK SANUTRIO](#)) programme's orientation sessions were held in the three targeted municipalities (Covalima, Ermera, and Oecusse), reaching 199 participants, including 9 Post Administrators, 76 Suco Chiefs, and 114 MSSI municipal staff.

To strengthen municipal stakeholder coordination, participants learned how BdMK SANUTRIO will support pregnant and breastfeeding women and children aged 6–35 months through conditional cash transfers, specialized nutritious foods, and improved access to essential health and social services planned for this year. The goal is to improve maternity and child nutrition, promote healthier pregnancies, reduce low birth weight, and prevent stunting among young children.

- On 11 February 2026, the MSSI, the National Institute of Statistics of Timor-Leste (INETL), and WFP launched a data-driven initiative to strengthen and modernize Timor-Leste's social protection system, focusing on maternal and child nutrition. Starting March 2026, INETL will conduct a household census in Covalima, Ermera, and Oecusse, collecting socio-economic and vulnerability data from nearly 60,000 households. The results will support the creation of a national social registry and improve targeting for the BdMK-SANUTRIO programme.

A key innovation is the introduction of a machine-learning-enhanced Proxy Means Test, developed with support from the Asian Development Bank. This digital model assesses household vulnerability using standardized data, improving transparency, efficiency, and the country's ability to respond to shocks.

## FUNDING OVERVIEW

### Country Strategic Plan (2026-2030)



### Donors:

Government of Timor-Leste, Asian Development Bank (ADB), Agence Française de Développement (AFD), Nordic Development Fund (NDF), UK International Development, China Aid, European Union, Government of France, Government of Ireland, Government of Japan, Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA).