

Highlights

WFP estimates that 271.8 million people in countries where it operates are acutely food insecure or directly at risk of becoming so due to the aggravating effect of the COVID-19 crisis. At a regional level, increases in food insecurity are observed in the Middle East, Asia, and in particular, Latin America and the Caribbean where hunger has quadrupled in the countries where WFP operates.

WFP has published a [November update](#) to its [Global Response to COVID-19 plan](#). WFP has scaled up to reach 97 million people in the first nine months of 2020 – almost the same amount of people as all of 2019. This is an increase of 14 million people compared to the middle of 2020, demonstrating WFP's ability to adapt its programmes in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic and other complex emergencies.

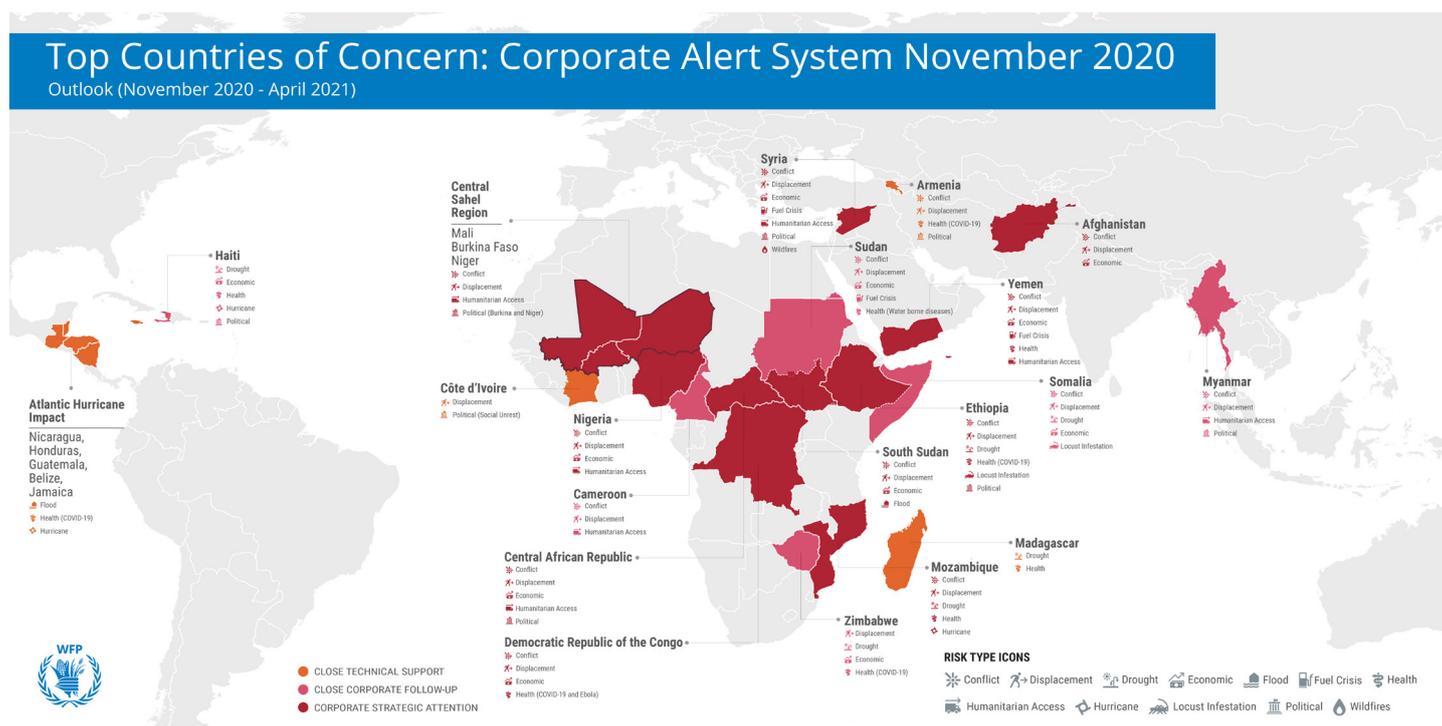
A record 235 million people will need humanitarian assistance and protection in 2021, a near-40 percent increase on 2020 which is almost entirely from COVID-19, according to the newly published [Global Humanitarian Overview \(GHO\) 2021](#). The overview sets out plans to reach 160 million of the most vulnerable people in 56 countries and if fully financed, will cost US\$ 35 billion. The fourth [Progress Report for the Global Humanitarian Response Plan \(GHRP\)](#) for COVID-19 has also been published; going forward, COVID-19 and non-COVID-19 humanitarian responses are reflected together in the GHO 2021.

WFP's Corporate Alert System has been updated, highlighting countries and sub-regions where low resource levels, important life-saving needs, and COVID-19 intersect with compounding risks in the next six months. The **Democratic Republic of the Congo, Nigeria, South Sudan and Ethiopia** – especially now with the exacerbated tensions in the Tigray region – have been elevated to corporate strategic attention. Other countries that continue to be featured at the highest level are **Yemen, Afghanistan, Syria, Central Sahel, Mozambique** and the **Central African Republic**.

A joint [WFP-IOM report](#) has found global hunger and population displacement - both already at record levels when COVID-19 struck - could surge as people on the move and those reliant on a dwindling flow of remittances desperately seek work to support their families. The study explores the impact of the pandemic on the livelihoods, food security and protection of migrant workers households dependent on remittances and the forcibly displaced.

Since the onset of the pandemic, WFP's needs have grown considerably and are outpacing available funding. To meet needs until April 2021, **US\$ 3.7 billion is required**; against this appeal, **US\$ 395 million has been confirmed to date**. Funding gaps and shortfalls are forcing WFP to implement ration cuts and/or reduce the number of people it reaches. For example, in the **Democratic Republic of the Congo**, the country with the world's largest burden of hunger, refugees have been receiving only 75 percent of their food needs due to shortfalls.

Top Countries of Concern per November's Corporate Alert System



Asia and the Pacific: The number of COVID-19 cases in Asia and the Pacific countries of WFP operation (including oversight countries) now exceeds 11.4 million, making it the WFP region with the highest number of cases. Significant scale-up is underway in **Afghanistan** and **Bangladesh**; in Bangladesh, WFP is increasing its operation to support 1.1 million more people through safety nets in at-risk, low-income urban slums and has so far reached more than 570,000 people affected by COVID-19 in the host community in Cox’s Bazar; in Afghanistan, WFP has begun scaling up to reach an additional 3 million people impacted by COVID-19 with food and cash transfers, having already reached over 803,500 people in urban areas.

East Africa: An estimated 27 million people are facing crisis level (IPC3) or worse food insecurity in the region, an increase from 25.9 million recorded in same period in 2019; this uptick has been attributed to the COVID-19 prevention measures, an increase in food prices, decline in remittances and loss of employment opportunities. WFP is working with governments to set up safety measures as schools re-open in the region. In **Somalia**, WFP provided daily hot meals to approximately 40,400 children attending school in October, and in **Burundi**, WFP is providing school meals to cover 279,000 school children in five provinces.

Latin America and the Caribbean: The impact of COVID-19 and devastating effects of Hurricanes Eta and Iota in **Belize**, **Cuba**, **Colombia**, **Guatemala**, **Honduras**, and **Nicaragua** are further complicating a situation already marked by socio-political unrest, widespread violence, migration and multidimensional poverty. Eight months into the pandemic, 3.1 million COVID-19 cases have been reported, hunger has quadrupled in countries where WFP operates, and the region is experiencing its worst recession in 100 years. WFP continues to support national efforts by providing food assistance to people affected by COVID-19; in **Guatemala**, food procured by WFP has benefitted over 1 million families affected by the economic impacts of COVID-19.

Middle East, Central Asia and North Africa: The region has passed 3.9 million confirmed COVID-19 cases; due to the compounding effects of the pandemic, WFP estimates that 54.5 million people are acutely food insecure in the region, up 2.8 percent from June estimates. WFP has been targeting over 10 million additional people in the region affected by the impacts of COVID-19, intensifying its use of cash-based transfers and providing short-term assistance to people in isolation; for example, in **Syria**, WFP has provided food assistance to some 11,800 people in 10 quarantine and seven isolation centres in six governorates.

Southern Africa: The region has reported nearly 897,000 confirmed COVID-19 cases. As of October, some 51 million people were estimated to be food insecure in Southern Africa, compared to 45 million in July, nearly double pre-COVID-19 projections. In response to growing food insecurity and socioeconomic challenges, WFP is sustaining and scaling up its assistance and supporting governments implementing social protection programmes.

For example, in **Zimbabwe**, WFP's COVID-19 response plan envisages a more than fivefold scale up of its urban assistance to reach some 550,000 people through April 2021.

West and Central Africa: The region has reported over 211,000 confirmed COVID-19 cases; preliminary analysis results suggest that over 19.4 million people are food insecure across the region, a number projected to increase to over 25.9 million people during the June-August 2021 period. In response to the socio-economic impacts of COVID-19 and other compounding risks, WFP has significantly scaled up its operations. In **Sierra Leone**, WFP is targeting over 51,000 severely food insecure people to offset the socio-economic effects of the pandemic.

Resource Mobilization and Partnerships

Since the June Global Response to COVID-19 plan, **US\$ 3 billion has been received from more than 60 donors and funding sources**. The generous support of donors has been critical in enabling WFP to sustain vital operations, scale up to meet new needs and support governments and partners to deliver a collective response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

While the pace of contributions has increased compared to the same period last year, **insufficient funding has left WFP unable to implement the full scale-up required** to respond to and mitigate the projected deterioration of food security resulting from the compounded impact of COVID-19. This is particularly concerning given the protracted nature of the pandemic and the numerous, overlapping, factors that may aggravate and lead to greater deterioration in food security across several countries in which WFP operates over the coming months. For example, in **Colombia**, insufficient funding constrained efforts to fully reach all additional targeted beneficiaries, and similarly in **Madagascar** only 37 percent of targeted beneficiaries will be reached until December 2020.

Conditionality and earmarking of contributions continue to lead to uneven resourcing across WFP operations and several country offices continue to face significant shortfalls, forcing WFP to implement ration cuts and reduce coverage. For example, refugees in the **Democratic Republic of the Congo** have been receiving only 75 percent of their food needs due to shortfalls. Elsewhere, in **Burkina Faso**, one of the fastest growing displacement crises globally, WFP has been forced to intermittently reduce rations to internally displaced populations since July. Similar situations are reported in **Cameroon**, the **Central African Republic** and across East African operations responding to the needs of internally displaced persons and refugees.

As described in the November update of the Global Response to COVID-19 plan, to meet needs until April 2021, US\$ 3.7 billion is urgently required. Against this appeal, US\$ 395 million has been confirmed to date.

WFP Operations

Despite the challenging resourcing environment, between March and November 2020 WFP and partners managed to sustain operations, scale up to meet new needs, and extend support to governments and partners to deliver an unprecedented humanitarian response. **WFP scaled up to reach 97 million people across 73 countries in the first nine months of 2020** – nearly as many people reached in all of 2019.



For the next six months, WFP needs US\$ 7.7 billion to deliver food assistance, provide supply chain services and support institutional capacity strengthening.

GLOBAL PLAN UPDATE ON COVID-19
November 2020

[November 2020 Global Plan Update on COVID-19](#)

Eight months into the pandemic WFP estimates that 271.8 million people in 79 countries are acutely food insecure – or directly at-risk – due to the compounding effects of COVID-19. The November update to WFP's Global Response to COVID-19 plan takes stock of efforts by regional bureaux and country offices to continue to sustain and scale-up operations to assist vulnerable communities and to support governments in their health and hunger response.

The impact of COVID-19 on livelihoods and on vulnerable people's access to food has required WFP to expand into **urban areas** at an unprecedented scale in more than half of its countries of operation. In the city of Tahoua, **Niger**, WFP reached more than 8,700 urban households affected by the socioeconomic impact of COVID-19 with cash assistance by the end of October. As 2021 plans foreshadow, urban food insecurity is expected to continue to influence operations in 2021; increased coordination will be required to ensure efficient and effective use of resources.

Travel restrictions and partial lockdowns to contain the spread of COVID-19 have dealt devastating blows to economies around the world. In response, WFP scaled up its **cash-based transfer** capacities, transferring US\$ 1.7 billion in cash assistance to vulnerable people in 67 countries from January to October – up from 61 countries in the same period last year. For example, WFP provided cash-based transfers for the first time in 2020 in **Algeria, Libya and Tunisia**. WFP is now supporting 34 governments in their cash-based responses to mitigate the socio-economic impacts of the COVID-19 crisis.

Nine months since WFP began adjusting its **school-based safety nets** amidst COVID-19 closures, the situation is still of concern for schoolchildren. In 83 countries, school systems have not yet fully resumed. 244 million schoolchildren remain deprived of the school meal they relied on. As a result of the crisis, between 16 and 24 million students from pre-primary to secondary, including 7.6 million girls, are at risk of dropping out of school this year.

WFP's priority now is to enhance its support to governments to reopen their schools safely and restore access to meals as soon as they can safely do so, and to scale up school feeding programmes where they are needed the most and reach the 73 million vulnerable children who did not access meals before the pandemic. For example, in the Asia-Pacific region, WFP has adjusted its programmes to reach over 1.1 million children with take-home rations or cash-based transfers in **Cambodia, Laos, Bangladesh, Afghanistan, Nepal, Myanmar and Sri Lanka**.



[Parents and pupils raring to go as schools gradually reopen in Kenya](#)

In preparation for schools reopening in Kenya in January 2021, WFP is working with the government to train 1,400 school heads, school board chairs and teachers in charge of school meals in the last quarter of 2020.

Social protection has been a vital part of country responses to the socio-economic impact of COVID-19. As of September 2020, some [1,407 measures](#) have been adopted by 208 countries and territories across the world. Owing to WFP's long-standing contributions to the extension of social protection in most of the countries where we operate, governments in close to 50 countries have called upon WFP to support as they introduce new, strengthen and/or adapt their existing social protection measures in response to the socio-economic impacts of COVID-19.

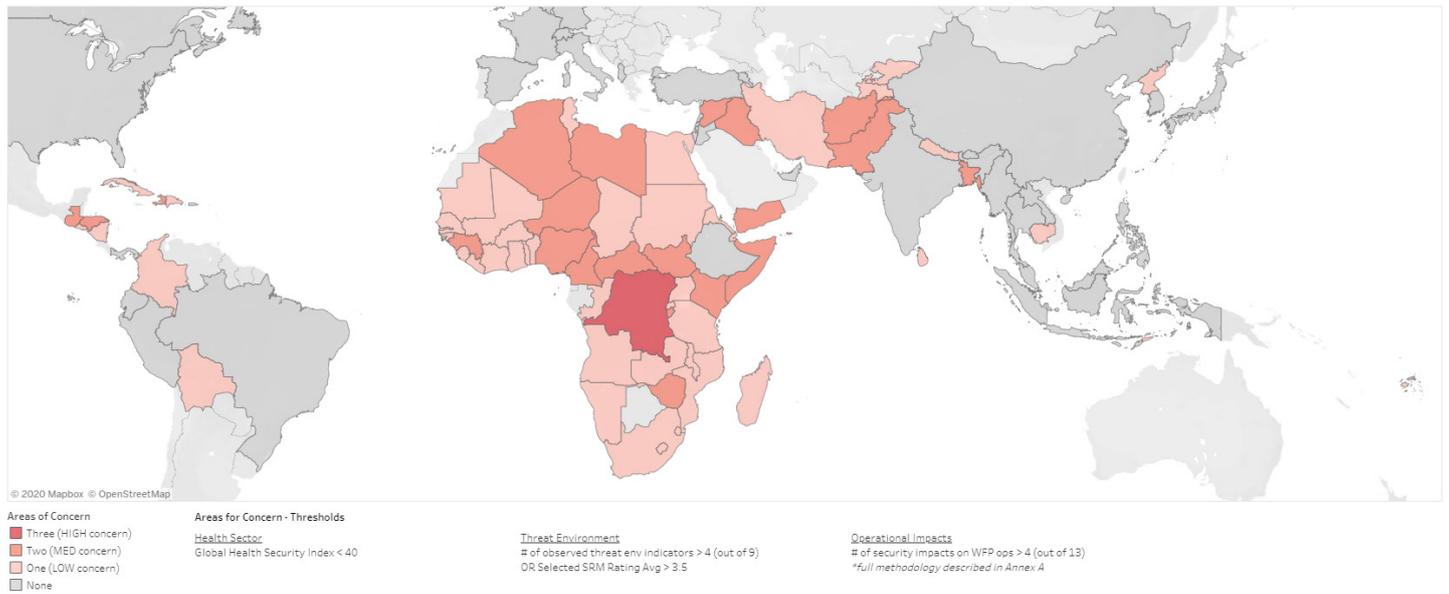
A notable feature of WFP's response has been to **provide food assistance to populations in COVID-19 isolation and quarantine centres**, including returning migrants. In Sierra Leone, WFP has now reached 100 percent of its target to assist 9,800 people in the country under COVID-19 quarantine or treatment. WFP is extending this support into 2021 in many countries, including **Laos, Nepal and Ethiopia** as migrant workers continue to return at a significant rate.



[Behind the Frontlines: Hunger and the Confluence of Conflict and COVID-19](#)

World Food Program USA will host a discussion on 2 December from 12:00 – 13:00 EST exploring the connection between hunger and conflict, with the added threat posed by COVID-19. The discussion with WFP Assistant Executive Director Valerie Guarnieri will show how WFP's more than 19,000 staff feed the most vulnerable people in the most challenging conflict zones, including the Sahel, Yemen and Syria. The discussion will explore how the world is actually facing two intersecting pandemics – COVID-19 and extreme hunger – and the challenges and opportunities forecasted for these immense challenges in 2021.

Countries of Security Concern in the COVID-19 Context



As a second wave of COVID-19 affects more nations, WFP operations continue to be impacted by the pandemic both directly – mainly by movement restrictions – and indirectly. Civil unrest endures in countries with high levels of public discontent, often linked to loss of livelihoods due to economic downturns exacerbated by COVID-19. These same factors are also driving opportunistic criminality and creating space for non-state armed groups and criminal organizations to increase recruitment in their ranks and plan activities, which will very likely translate into greater threats to humanitarians. Meanwhile, with recent and upcoming contentious elections further driving political instability in some countries, bearing the potential for disruptions in several WFP operating environments.

Common Services

When countries clamped down on international arrivals in a bid to prevent the arrival of new infections, international commercial capacity between April and June dropped by a catastrophic 92 percent, severely impacting the ability for health and humanitarian responders to deploy. On 1 May, WFP launched its air passenger service to provide a lifeline for health and humanitarian workers. Since then, WFP has reached a total of **68 destinations** across Africa, Asia, the Middle East, Latin America and the Commonwealth of Independent States countries over the course of **1,444 flights**. This has meant that **25,782 passengers from 415 organizations** were still able to get where they needed to go when commercial options were no longer available.

As airspace restrictions have slowly relaxed in some countries and commercial carriers have returned to the skies, WFP has accordingly discontinued flights to over 50 destinations but still maintains services to 10 locations around the world that remain without safe and reliable commercial options. Given the unpredictable nature of the pandemic, WFP is ready to stand up discontinued services once again if needed.

With COVID-19 significantly impacting the global movement of cargo, WFP as a leader in humanitarian logistics, immediately stepped up to provide cargo movement services on behalf of the humanitarian community. WFP has now dispatched **over 100,000 m3 of critical cargo to 171 countries** on behalf of **67 organizations** – a key milestone in this first-ever global response.

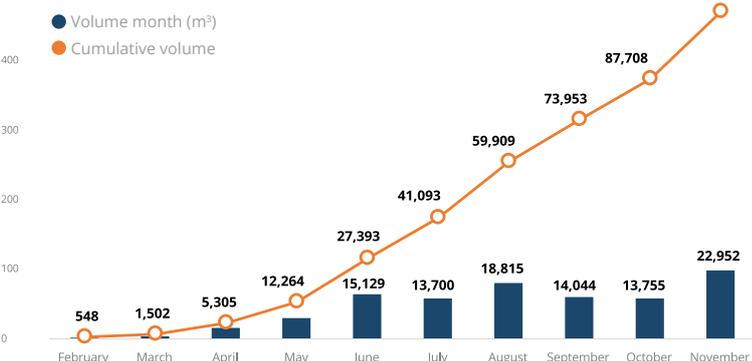
Monthly Passenger Trend, 1 May - 30 November 2020



Monthly Cargo Dispatch Trend

1 February - 31 October 2020

(BSP, UNHRD, Free-to-User)



94,333 m³ of this cargo has been transported via WFP's free-to-user cargo services under the Global Humanitarian Response Plan. In line with improvements in the commercial market and a reduction in the pipeline of items requiring transport, WFP is now phasing down its free-to-user cargo services in close coordination with partners. The final requests for cargo movement have now been submitted and the dispatch of remaining cargo is expected to be complete by the end of 2020. However, given the unpredictable nature of the pandemic, WFP will retain the infrastructure to step up these services again if needed. Meanwhile, support to partners will continue via existing in-country mandated services, alongside services provided through UNHRD and WFP's bilateral service offering.

To support all humanitarian and health staff on the frontlines and ensure their ability to "stay and deliver", the UN Secretary-General activated a common COVID-19 Medical Evacuation (medevac) System on 22 May, and a medevac cell was established, leveraging assets from WFP, WHO and the Department of Operational Support (DOS). As co-lead with DOS of the aviation arm of the medevac cell, WFP continues to provide medical evacuations on behalf of the response. The cell has now completed a total of **94 medevacs** – 58 carried out by WFP and 36 by UNDOCS - since the unified system was activated.

To learn more about WFP's common services in support of the health and humanitarian response to COVID-19, read the latest publications [here](#).

WFP-led and co-led Clusters

Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC)

The ETS continues to provide data connectivity in Severe Acute Respiratory Infection treatment sites in Cox's Bazar, **Bangladesh** to support the response to COVID-19.

The ETC is supporting the reopening of the dedicated COVID-19 call centre in Bangui, **Central African Republic**. The team has installed equipment in a prefabricated structure which has been set up in the premises of the Ministry of Health.

The ETS-managed call centre in Tripoli, **Libya** in February, continues to serve as the national humanitarian and COVID-19 hotline. To date, more than 14,400 calls have been addressed with approximately a third of calls related to COVID-19. Operators continue to share official health guidelines and referred suspected COVID-19 cases to the National Centre for Disease Control.

In the **Pacific**, the ETC Coordinator is working with regional partner, Flinders University, to plan the development of a data project in **Tuvalu** that will assist the National Disaster Management Office to collect and extrapolate data in support of the COVID-19 response.

Global Food Security Cluster (gFSC)

The gFSC celebrated its tenth anniversary at its virtual [Global Partners Meeting](#) from 11-12 November. The two-day virtual meeting covered a variety of topics, including the current compounded threats of conflict, COVID-19 and climate shocks.

The Food Security Sector (FSS) Joint Monitoring Framework has published a summary [report](#) and [factsheet](#) from its risk evaluation workshop on COVID-19's impact on food security in Cox's Bazar, **Bangladesh**. Key issues highlighted were disruption to livelihoods and self-reliance activities resulting in depletion of savings and the suspension of non-life saving activities resulting in economic vulnerability of affected populations.

In **Myanmar**, restrictions due to COVID-19 are preventing FSS partners from implementing projects in many areas. The provision of water, sanitation and hygiene kits are seen as food security partners' entry point to access communities to deliver food security assistance, as was the case during the first COVID-19 wave.

In the **Occupied Palestinian Territories**, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic FSS coordinated with its partners and the government to provide food assistance inside quarantine centers in Gaza. Around 1,500 meals are to be distributed daily for 90 days at 16 quarantine/isolation centers in the Gaza Strip governorates until the end of January.



[Stand and deliver: 10 years of the global Food Security Cluster](#)

WFP and FAO join their partners to mark a decade of collaboration

Spearheaded by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the World Food Programme (WFP), the Food Security Cluster (FSC) enables a range of partners, globally and at country level, to deliver life-saving food and livelihoods assistance in more than 30 countries.

Global Logistics Cluster

The Logistics Cluster continues to consolidate Cargo Entry Point Updates, with an updated version published every month. The last issue, published on 30 November, can be found here with an online map version also available. The monthly COVID-19 Situation Update can also be found [here](#).

In **Bangladesh**, the Logistics Sector, through common services provided by HI-Atlas, facilitated the transport of 5352 m3 (1618 mt) of relief items within Cox Bazar city and to Ukhiya and Teknaf for 19 organisations including UN agencies, INGOs and NGOs, using 544 trucks.

In **South Sudan**, during the first three weeks of November, the Logistics Cluster facilitated the allocation of more than 700,000 items of personal protective equipment from the common pool created by WHO, WFP, and IOM to 13 organisations, who had submitted their requests through the PPE Common Request System, approved by the Inter-Agency Technical Team.

In the **Democratic Republic of Congo**, the Logistics Cluster continues to facilitate free warehousing and intra-urban transport services to partners working on the COVID-19 crisis via the logistics platform set up since mid-July in the cities of Kinshasa and Goma. Since September, the Logistics Cluster facilitated the transport of 2,373 m3 of COVID-19 relief items and storage of 2,812 m3 of COVID-19 relief items in Kinshasa and Goma (about 85 percent for Kinshasa).

Regional Updates

Regional Bureau Bangkok

WFP is supporting governments to address the impact of COVID-19 through **national social protection systems; basic service delivery; analysis of food systems, food security and nutrition; emergency relief; and humanitarian common services**. COVID-19 is compounding the risks already faced in many parts of the region due to escalating conflict and extreme weather events. In the current monsoon season, several countries have already been hit with floods and landslides. Preparations for heavy rain and the upcoming winter are even more difficult than usual and funding remains stretched for critical operations such as **Myanmar** and **Afghanistan**.

WFP activities in Asia-Pacific have been modified to continue lifesaving relief assistance while avoiding unnecessary exposure to risks of infection. This includes serving over 170,000 people with general food assistance to support government quarantine measures in **Myanmar, Laos, Nepal** and **Bangladesh**. In Cox's Bazar, **Bangladesh**, WFP and partners are continuing to engage refugees in mask production, with 580,000 masks produced for the refugee population. While thousands of schools across the region are closed, WFP has adjusted its programmes to reach over 1.1 million children with take-home rations or cash-based transfers in **Cambodia, Laos, Bangladesh, Afghanistan, Nepal, Myanmar** and **Sri Lanka**.

Regional Bureau Bangkok

Significant scale-up is under way for Afghanistan and Bangladesh. In **Bangladesh**, WFP is increasing its operation to support 1.1 million more people through the development of urban safety nets in at-risk, low-income urban slums in Dhaka and Chittagong Hill Tracts, and through expansion of in-kind food and cash transfers to vulnerable host communities in Cox's Bazaar. WFP has so far extended this support to more than 570,000 people affected by COVID-19 in the host community in Cox's Bazar, and a further 37,000 individuals in urban areas of Dhaka. In **Afghanistan**, WFP has begun its scale-up to an additional 3 million people impacted by COVID-19 with food and cash transfers, having reached now over 803,500 people in urban areas. The COVID-response focuses on urban poor households to complement WFP's regular programming which primarily targets households in rural areas.

Elsewhere, WFP is also scaling up its COVID-19 response; in **Pakistan**, WFP has so far reached an additional 60,000 people affected by the compounding shocks of COVID-19, drought and locust outbreaks. Meanwhile, in **Nepal**, WFP has launched several vocational projects for unemployed women, youth and returnee migrants affected by COVID-19.

In the Pacific, **WFP is assisting governments and national stakeholders to capture trends and data to improve monitoring and coordination** through mobile vulnerability analysis and mapping (mVAM). WFP has recently launched mVAM in **Kiribati** and **Vanuatu**, while data collection is ongoing in **Fiji**, **Samoa** and **Tonga**.



[Street vendor uses WFP cash assistance to restart trade interrupted by COVID-19](#)

When the coronavirus struck in March in Afghanistan, Mohammad Omid lost his income source overnight — now he is earning again.

Regional Bureau Cairo

WFP has been targeting over 10 million additional people in the region affected by the impacts of COVID-19. From the onset of the pandemic, WFP country offices have been adapting their operations to safely continue reaching people. **WFP has intensified the use of cash-based platforms, cash-based transfer top-ups, emergency cash assistance and cashless payments in twelve countries**, including **Algeria, Libya** and **Tunisia**, where WFP provided cash-based transfers for the first time in 2020. Moreover, WFP has modified its response in countries such as **Lebanon, Palestine** and **Sudan**, where cash-based transfer values have been adjusted in line with rising food prices and currency devaluation.

Due to the compounding effects of COVID-19, in November, WFP estimates that 54.5 million people are acutely food insecure in the region, up 2.8 percent from June estimates. In five countries in the region (**Iraq, Jordan, Syria, Turkey, Yemen**), WFP is reaching people in quarantine and isolation facilities by providing short-term food or cash assistance to people in isolation. In **Syria**, as part of the Health Sector-led response to COVID-19, WFP, in cooperation with the World Health Organization had by the end of September provided food assistance to some 11,800 people in 10 quarantine and seven isolation centres in six governorates. The project is funded through the Syria Country-Based Pooled Fund.

Regional Bureau Dakar

Conflict, climate change and the socio-economic impact of COVID-19 remain the main drivers of growing food insecurity in the region. The preliminary results of the 2020/21 Cadre Harmonisé analysis conducted in November 2020 suggest that **over 19.4 million people are food insecure across the region between October and December 2020.** The number of food insecure populations is **projected to increase to over 25.9 million people during the June-August 2021 period.** Overall, these figures are significantly higher for the current period (October-December) compared to 2019, when an estimated 10.8 million people were estimated to be food insecure (80 percent increase).

In response to socio-economic impacts of COVID-19 and other compounding risks in West Africa, WFP significantly scaled up its operations in the region.

**Regional Bureau
Dakar**

In **Sierra Leone**, WFP and partners are **targeting over 51,000 severely food insecure people** to offset the socio-economic effects of the outbreak. In addition, WFP is planning to provide a one-off nutritional support with the National Aids Secretariat in the form of cash-based transfers to the 540 most vulnerable people living with HIV to meet their food needs during the COVID-19 outbreak. Furthermore, **WFP reached its 100 percent target of assisting 9,800 people in the country under COVID-19 quarantine or treatment**. In **Burkina Faso**, the country office has been reinforcing prevention measures against COVID-19 by providing protective hygiene kits to assisted schools and to regional health authorities. WFP aims to increase cash-based transfer assistance from 100,000 internal displaced people to more than 350,000 in the country. In **Niger**, as part of the government-led COVID-19 response, WFP is supporting the scale up of the national adaptive social protection programme, which provides cash assistance to households affected by the socio-economic impact of COVID-19. The response in urban areas of Tahoua was completed in October, with more than 8,700 households (60,000 people) reached. The response in the country, in partnership with the Government, World Bank, and UNICEF is expected to reach a total of 672,000 people in urban and rural areas.

COVID-19 related food and cash assistance are also ongoing or were recently completed in **Cameroon, the Central African Republic (CAR), Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Nigeria, Senegal, and The Gambia**, while preparations are ongoing to roll-out cash-based transfers to COVID-19 affected people in epicentres in **Ghana** in collaboration with the Government. In **Togo**, in-kind distributions as part of the Limited Emergency Operation are expected to start early December, while cash-based transfers are being considered as a possible approach according to market conditions and access.

Schools continue to further reopen in the region, and are now open in **Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea Bissau, Mali, Liberia, Mauritania, Niger, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone and The Gambia**, to either complete the 2019/2020 academic year, or to start the new 2020/2021 academic year. WFP and partners supported national efforts throughout this process, and WFP started to gradually resume school feeding activities in these countries, along with distribution of COVID-19 protective hygiene materials in some schools.



[How climate and coronavirus forced people into debt and hunger in Mauritania](#)

An early onset of the lean season and measures to mitigate the spread of the coronavirus have affected food security in parts of Mauritania.

**Regional Bureau
Johannesburg**

Southern Africa is facing **rising levels of acute food insecurity resulting from several factors including extreme natural shocks (such as cyclones, droughts and floods) combined with pockets of armed conflicts and violence**. The compounding socio-economic impacts of COVID-19 restriction measures continue to severely erode vulnerable households' vital remittances and livelihoods, particularly in urban areas and poor rural communities, even as countries ease lockdowns and progressively re-open air, maritime and land traffic. As of October, some 51 million people were estimated to be food insecure in Southern Africa, compared to 45 million in July, which is nearly the double of pre-COVID-19 projections.

Hunger and malnutrition levels in the region are particularly alarming in the drought-affected areas of **Zimbabwe, Mozambique and Madagascar**, and conflict zones in the **Democratic Republic of Congo and Mozambique**. The **Democratic Republic of Congo** is hosting the highest number of food insecure people worldwide (around 22 million). In **Mozambique**, widespread insecurity in the northern province of Cabo Delgado has forced over 340,000 people to flee their homes contributing to increased humanitarian needs. Further, an atypically severe lean season is unfolding in Southern **Madagascar** where some 1.5 million people need emergency life-saving food assistance. In **Zimbabwe**, some 8.6 million people are expected to be food insecure by the end of this year.

**Regional Bureau
Johannesburg**

In response to food security deterioration and socio-economic challenges in the region, WFP is sustaining and **scaling up its life-saving food assistance** through a hybrid modality of in-kind and cash-based transfers to the most affected populations. WFP also **supports national governments** in implementing **social protection programmes and safety nets**. In **Zambia**, WFP has reached over 181,500 people residing in high-density and low-income urban and peri-urban areas through cash-based transfers to cover their food and essential needs for four months (July – October 2020). In **Zimbabwe**, WFP's COVID-19 response plan envisages a more than fivefold scale up of its urban assistance to reach some 550,000 people through April 2021. In addition, WFP continues to integrate **nutrition** in its COVID-19 response. In the **Democratic Republic of Congo**, WFP, in collaboration with the National Nutrition Programme (PRONANUT), UNICEF and the Nutrition Cluster, has contributed to the development of the nutrition operational action plan for COVID-19 management. This plan aims to integrate nutrition into the COVID-19 response and to help improve the management of patients affected by COVID-19 through improved nutrition.

Moreover, WFP sustains its **assistance to refugees and internally displaced persons**, coupled with sensitization efforts on COVID-19 prevention and nutrition. In **Mozambique**, WFP increased its food assistance to internally displaced persons in Cabo Delgado, Nampula and Niassa provinces from some 18,500 internally displaced persons to some 349,800 conflict affected people from January to October. Food distributions have been adjusted to minimize the risk of COVID-19 spreading through distributions of double/triple rations, such as in **Malawi** where WFP finalized cash distributions to some 41,000 refugees covering October – December needs. Further, following school closures due to COVID-19, WFP adapted its **school feeding programme** in the **Democratic Republic of Congo** to provide take-home rations in North Kivu, Kasai Oriental and Tanganyika provinces. Meanwhile, in **Madagascar**, WFP plans to set up emergency school canteens for some 150,000 children in public primary schools.



[Drought and COVID-19 push 1.5 million people to the brink in Madagascar](#)

WFP is calling for funds as pandemic worsens problems caused by premature dry season in the south.

**Regional Bureau
Nairobi**

In the East African region, conflict, insecurity, floods, locusts and the socio-economic impact of the pandemic are the main drivers of food insecurity. An estimated 27 million people are facing crisis level (IPC3) or worse food insecurity, an increase from 25.9 million recorded in same period in 2019. This uptick has been attributed to the COVID-19 prevention measures, which impacted food availability and access especially in the urban areas. Further, an increase in food prices, decline in remittances and loss of employment opportunities have also compounded food insecurity.

WFP continues to support national governments COVID-19 safety nets and scale urban response in informal settlements. In **Kenya**, WFP is providing cash transfers to approximately 70,500 targeted households in Nairobi and 24,000 households in Mombasa who have lost their incomes and livelihoods. The cash-based transfers cover at least 50 percent of the minimum food basket for urban populations, aligned to the transfers provided by the government in the same areas. In **Djibouti**, WFP in partnership with the government distributed paper vouchers to 6,000 households affected by COVID-19 in Djibouti City for the fourth month in November. In addition, WFP worked in collaboration with the Ministry of Health to support 500 households including people living with HIV with vouchers.

In **Uganda** WFP continues to support urban refugees with cash assistance to enable them to meet their basic needs and cope with the negative effects of COVID-19. In October, WFP reached 35 per cent of its target to reach over 14,700 Kampala-based refugee households out of 35,000 households. Each person received a cash-based transfer covering three-months of assistance worth USD 18 representing 70 percent of the reduced general food assistance basket. In addition, 1,000 urban refugees received a three-month cash assistance through the mobile money approach.

**Regional Bureau
Nairobi**

Meanwhile, in **Somalia** more than 56,000 households have received cash-based transfers during the third quarter (October-December) under the government-led shock responsive safety net.

In the region, the governments of **Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Ethiopia, South Sudan** and **Somalia** have adopted a phased approach to school re-opening with only candidate classes resuming school. WFP has continued to support the governments to set up safety measures in schools. In **Somalia**, WFP provided daily hot meals to approximately 40,400 children attending school in October. In **Rwanda**, the home-grown school feeding programme resumed in four districts covered by WFP. Plans are underway to implement a take-home ration for lower primary levels in the four districts in late November 2020. In **Uganda**, WFP and the government have resumed provision of hot meals in schools through the Karamoja school feeding programme. WFP plans to reach over 12,400 candidates in 228 primary and secondary schools. In **Burundi**, WFP is providing school meals to cover 279,000 school children in five provinces (Bubanza, Cibitoke, Bujumbura, Muyinga and Kirundo).



Finding a silver-lining

Women in South Sudan are cushioning their families from economic hardships brought on by the pandemic.

**Regional Bureau
Panama**

The impact of COVID-19, coupled with the devastating effects of Hurricanes Eta and Iota in **Belize, Cuba, Colombia, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua**, further complicates a situation marked by socio-political unrest, widespread violence, migration and multidimensional poverty. Eight months into the pandemic, hunger has quadrupled in countries where WFP operates, and the region is experiencing the worst recession in 100 year according to WFP's estimates of the economic impacts of the COVID-19 crisis and food security assessments in Latin America and the Caribbean.

In the framework of the COVID-19 response, WFP scaled up its programmes to respond to new and emerging needs. WFP continues to support national efforts by providing food assistance to people affected by COVID-19, as well as capacity strengthening services to Governments. In **Guatemala**, the food procured by WFP on behalf of the Government has benefitted over 1 million families affected by the economic impacts of COVID-19. In **Nicaragua**, support for the national school-feeding system has already benefitted 183,000 children in 2020. In 2021, WFP will scale up to reach 120,000 additional school children with an additional meal through the national school feeding programme in the Dry Corridor (shock-responsive social protection). WFP has also confirmed with its regular food suppliers on their capacity to supply the commodities required for the entirety of WFP's response, even after the impact of both hurricanes.

In **Bolivia**, where the impact of COVID-19 has been witnessed in urban and rural areas, particularly among informal sector workers and smallholders unable to access markets during the pandemic, WFP is assisting over 1,200 vulnerable people through Food for Assets and providing take-home rations during school closures to some 4,400 girls and boys. Additional over 29,200 people are expected to be assisted in the coming months. WFP will continue to provide technical assistance to the Government to enable national response. In **El Salvador**, WFP is ramping up cash-based transfers in coordination with government institutions, NGOs and UN partners, with planned support to over 200,000 of the most vulnerable people impacted by COVID-19 containment measures – a scale-up from the 120,000 people targeted in the June plan. WFP leads the Food Security & Nutrition, Logistics and Telecommunications Sectors and has supported with the set-up of quarantine centres and evacuation shelters during the storms. WFP is also facing increased funding needs to implement the full scale-up required to respond to and mitigate the projected deterioration of food security resulting from the compounded impact of COVID-19.

**Regional Bureau
Panama**

In **Colombia**, WFP provided emergency food assistance to nearly 470,000 people in October, including Venezuelan migrants, victims of internal violence, people affected by the socioeconomic impact of COVID-19, including indigenous groups, and children. This reflects WFP's significant scale-up in the second half of 2020 in response to higher needs due to COVID-19.

Haiti is highlighted among the countries of concern in a [joint FAO-WFP Early Warning Analysis of acute food insecurity hotspots](#) as COVID-19 economic impacts have partially contributed to a decreased availability of food, persistent economic crisis and instability. Further civil unrest and gang violence may limit WFP's ability to carry out distributions at the increased rate required to rapidly meet the scaled-up target of 900,000 people in food insecurity, IPC4 (out of a projected 1.2 million).

The climate shocks-related environment as of November is requiring WFP to scale-up even beyond the needs articulated in the COVID-19 response plan due to the recent impact on Hurricanes Eta and Iota.

Protests were reported in **Bolivia, Colombia, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, and Peru**, with demands ranging from the lifting of lockdown measures and restrictions to politico-economic issues. Thus far, protests have had no significant impact over WFP operations, causing, just in a few cases, some delays and temporary movement restrictions. The economic depression hitting several countries is expected to increase criminality and civil unrest in the coming months.