



22 April 2020

# COVID-19 L3 Emergency External Situation Report #06

**It is vital that at this time of global crisis, WFP maintains its food assistance programmes which offer a lifeline to almost 100 million vulnerable people around the world, while also using its expertise, experience and capacity in humanitarian logistics to provide the backbone for the global humanitarian and health response to COVID-19.**

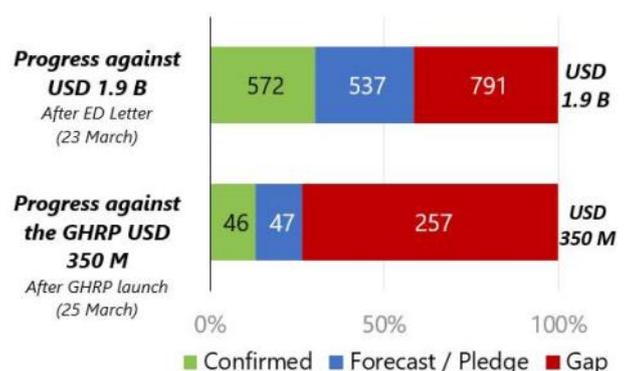
WFP has adopted a **three-step approach (sustain, prioritize, scale-up)** as guidance for regional bureaux and country offices to ensure programme continuity and adjustments whilst minimizing transmission risk. WFP has also started to adjust procedures across its supply chains to meet WHO and national standards for COVID-19 preventative measures. Furthermore, WFP is working to identify regional and local procurement opportunities to mitigate transport-related risks.

**WFP's logistics common services** will play a pivotal role **to enable humanitarian and health workers on the frontlines of the COVID-19 pandemic stay and deliver.** With adequate funding, WFP will establish global and regional humanitarian hubs to facilitate the dispatch of essential cargo, set up air transport links, provide passenger air service from Rome and Geneva to various destinations worldwide and support medical evacuation of humanitarian staff. WFP is also working towards setting up field hospitals in East and West Africa.

**WFP is conducting monitoring** of its global operations, food assistance needs and changes to markets and supply chains. As such, WFP has contributed to the **2020 edition of the Global Report on Food Crises.** The report highlights that 135 million people in 55 countries were facing acute food insecurity in 2019.

According to latest projections and as reported by the WFP Executive Director, David Beasley, in the UN Security Council on 21 April 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic may affect an additional 130 million people with acute hunger, thus suggesting that up to **265 million people in low and middle-income countries — a quarter of a billion people — may be under severe threat** by the end of 2020, unless swift action is taken. Lives and livelihoods are at risk due to escalating socio-economic impact, especially in Africa and the Middle East. Lockdowns and global economic recession are expected to lead to a major loss of income among vulnerable populations, who are already living on the edge of poverty and hunger, and beyond.

Note below the **funding status** towards WFP's requirement of USD 350 million under the current Global Humanitarian Response Plan (GHRP) in support of a rapid scale-up of logistics common service provision, impact tracking (as per the Global Food Crisis Report), assessments and operational adaptation to render WFP's work and engagement with partners COVID-sensitive. Moreover, note the status of WFP's specific donor appeal to allow pre-positioning of a three-month stock in priority countries (1.9 billion), so as to safeguard critical food assistance programmes.



WFP has re-purposed 90 percent of the 135,000 metric tonnes of school-feeding related food in stock or in transit in view of school closures.

Since January, WFP has transported nearly 300 mt of humanitarian and medical cargo on behalf of partners to over 86 countries around the world.

Following guidance from OCHA, WFP is currently updating its portion of the Global Humanitarian Response Plan (GHRP) whose second iteration is expected early May. **WFP will by and large maintain the current focus of engagement in the GHRP with revised budgets.** On an exceptional basis, WFP may address direct first consequences to enhance the health response in the GHRP countries, in particular as regards imminent and urgent needs. Other increases in food assistance needs and requirements for common service provisions, as a result of COVID-19 at individual country level, will be reflected in the up-coming revisions of Humanitarian Response Plans, Regional Refugee Response Plans, etc.

## WFP OPERATIONS

**WFP has adapted its ways of operating to ensure uninterrupted life-saving assistance** to the most vulnerable populations, ensuring that programme implementation does not put beneficiaries at a higher risk of infection. In this context, WFP has already put in place different mitigation measures such as reducing food distribution site congestion, reducing market crowdedness by switching from cash to in-kind rations, and switching to take-home rations where schools are no longer functioning, among others. Several countries are scaling up CBT operations. Others have begun double food distributions or are exploring adjustments to their food baskets.

While global food supply is adequate and markets are relatively stable, some countries have put in place export bans and

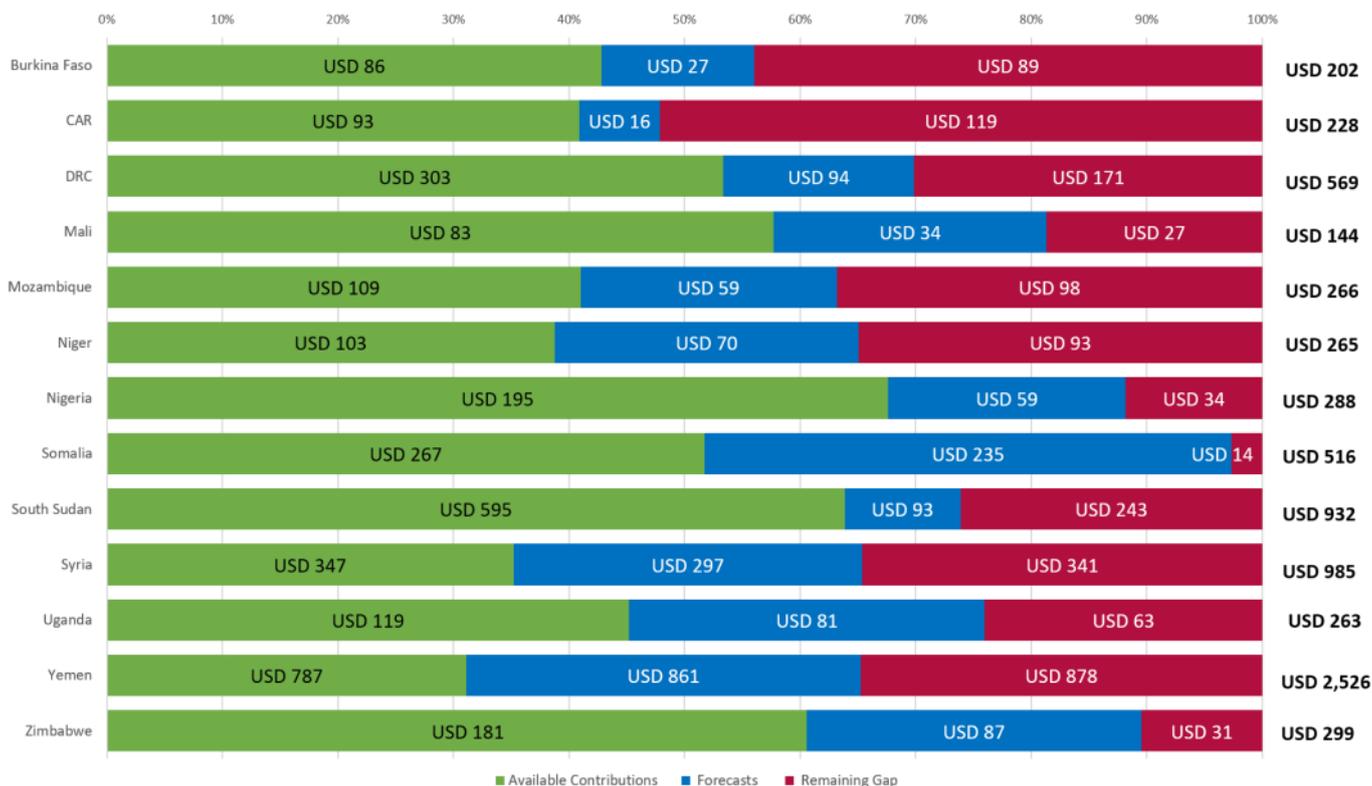
quotas on key food commodities. WFP continues to advocate for the uninhibited export of food commodities to ensure uninterrupted flow of vital humanitarian food assistance.

To date, more than 12 million children are no longer receiving school meals provided by WFP due to school closures. WFP is re-purposing an estimated **90 percent of the 135,000 mt** of school-feeding related food, mainly in the form of take-home rations for the children and their families. Other food stocks have been loaned or reallocated to assist severely vulnerable populations through general food distributions. Thanks to these operational adaptations, WFP will be able to continue support to some **eight million schoolchildren**.

WFP is working to ensure that contracted retailers have sufficient food stocks in place to sustain cash and voucher transfers in most at-risk operations, by supporting suppliers' capacity to replenish. In-kind distributions are sustained through local procurement options and the pre-positioning of a three-month food stock. WFP continues to closely monitor commodity prices with a view to optimize food baskets, accordingly, and sustain assistance.

Moreover, as of today, WFP has mobilized a total of **790,000 mt of food in corporate Global Commodity Management Facility (GCMF)** inventories across active supply lines — these are food stocks available in strategic locations to reduce lead times from when the food is purchased until it reaches the destination country. WFP operations can draw from these food stocks, as funding becomes available.

At present, countries with the most severe WFP funding shortfalls are Yemen, Syria, South Sudan, DRC, Niger, Nigeria, Burkina Faso, Mali, Central Africa Republic, Somalia, Uganda, Zimbabwe, and Mozambique. The total funding gap for these countries amounts to USD 2.2 billion for the remainder of the year.



Through a series of discussions, WFP has been closely coordinating with NGO partners to ensure a **collaborative approach** is taken **to sustaining operations, ensuring the safety and wellbeing of personnel and making COVID-sensitive programme adaptations.**

WFP continues to leverage its **Standby Partnerships**, which provide WFP with a vital mechanism to surge expertise, equipment and services, including the deployment of in-kind personnel to complement its internal staff capacity in large-scale emergencies. Despite the travel restrictions in place globally, so far eight personnel have deployed or are working remotely to support COVID-19 Programme, CBT, Supply Chain, Information Management and Telecommunication interventions on top of 35 personnel currently deployed to WFP's life-saving operation worldwide.

WFP continues to work with Civil Protection agencies, militaries and the European Union for the possible deployment of service modules, including operations equipment and personnel. WFP is also engaging with private sector partners worldwide to support the health and humanitarian response to COVID-19 with in-kind operational equipment, food commodities, supply chain solutions, logistics assets, expertise and other resources.

## SERVICE PROVISION

As part of WFP's common services plan for the COVID-19 global response, **WFP and the Government of Ethiopia have opened a new Humanitarian Air Hub at Addis Ababa's Bole International Airport** from which COVID-19 supplies, equipment and humanitarian workers will be transported by air across Ethiopia and Africa. A team of 25 WFP aviation and logistics staff are based at the hub, managing the 24-hour operation.

The first **UN solidarity flight** departed Addis Ababa on 14 April, carrying medical supplies to support the COVID-19 relief operation. WFP is supporting the dispatch of cargo to 52 countries across the continent.

As of today the **UN Humanitarian Response Depot** (UNHRD) network has dispatched 114 consignments to 86 countries in support of the COVID-19 response, including medical and WASH items. By hosting the Network Procurement Office and

the UNHRD Lab, the **Brindisi hub** continues to play a significant role in supporting governments and partners on a range of COVID-19 related activities in some of the world's hardest hit countries, including sourcing urgently needed equipment and organizing deliveries.

The **UN Humanitarian Air Services** (UNHAS) passenger air services remain suspended due to COVID-19 movement restrictions in Cameroon, Ethiopia, Libya, Mauritania, Niger, Somalia, Sudan and Yemen, with cargo services suspended in Niger, Yemen, Libya and Cameroon.

## INTER-AGENCY COLLABORATION

The UN Secretary-General has established a high-level **Supply Chain Task Force**, co-chaired by WHO and WFP to step up current joint efforts. The Task Force will focus on establishing and implementing a global strategy to ensure access to critical and life-saving supplies as identified by WHO, bringing together the collective capabilities of public and private actors to meet these needs while ensuring the flow of vital supplies and essential cargo.

The **Global Logistics Cluster**, led by WFP, is working with governments on optimizing the use of repatriation flights for the transport of humanitarian cargo on behalf of partners.

The **Global Food Security Cluster (gFSC)**, co-lead by FAO and WFP, has formed a Technical Working Group to monitor the food security situation in the context of COVID-19 and develop guidelines to inform response plans. The gFSC warns that the halt or suspension of livelihood activities in many countries will impact on the food security of populations at risk in the medium to longer term.

The WFP-led **Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC)** continues to monitor emergency operations in Bangladesh, Central African Republic, Libya, Nigeria, Syria and Yemen. In Central African Republic, the cluster is establishing a dedicated COVID-19 Common Feedback Mechanism call centre to assist the Ministry of Health in its response efforts, and provide critical information to the population. The ETC team is further working on the set-up of a COVID-19 emergency response room in Sana'a (Yemen).