



WFP Algeria Country Brief

Highlights

- Poor funding continued to affect WFP’s operation in March: the food basket was reduced by 1 kg of Corn Soy Blend for 35,000 rations, and the mid-morning snacks for children in schools and kindergarten only consisted of only one glass of milk (half ration), without biscuits.
- WFP thanks the Governments of Switzerland and Italy for their recent contributions which will continue WFP’ life-saving food assistance to the Sahrawi refugees in Algeria.
- In March, WFP started a Food Security Assessment (FSA) to assess the refugee populations’ vulnerability to food insecurity.

WFP Assistance

Transitional Interim Country Strategic Plan (January 2018-December 2018)	Total Requirements (in USD)	Total Received (in USD)	6 Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD) *
	19.3 m	16 m	6.4 m

*April - September 2018

In line with WFP’s new 2017-2021 strategic plan, WFP Algeria transitioned to a 12-month Transitional Interim Country Strategic Plan (T-ICSP), extending the previous PRRO’s activities under the TICSP.

Food Distribution: WFP currently provides 125,000 food rations to refugees monthly. The composition of the food basket can vary from a five to nine food commodity basket, though this is subject to funding availability. Despite this, WFP ensures that the calorific intake per ration is on average maintained at 2,100 kilocalories per day, based on available resources.

Nutrition: WFP nutrition activities are fully integrated into the Sahrawi Health Authorities’ Programme on Reproductive Health. While UNHCR and partners target severely acute malnourished children, WFP combines treatment with prevention to address moderate acute malnutrition (MAM), as well as anaemia, stunting, among children under 5 years and pregnant and nursing women. Every month, WFP targets around 22,360 women and children in 29 health centers, under the Mother and Child Health (MCH) activity.

Treatment: WFP provides vegetable oil, sugar and Corn Soya Blend (CSB+) to treat malnourished pregnant and nursing women.

In addition, WFP provides a special spread fortified with vitamins and minerals (Plumpy’Sup) to acutely malnourished children aged 06-59 months.

Prevention: Pregnant and nursing women with anaemia receive Micronutrient Powders to prevent malnutrition. WFP also targets boys and girls aged 6-59 months with the monthly provision of a special spread, Nutributter, to prevent chronic malnutrition.

School Meals: WFP aims to provide a mid-morning snack consisting of two glasses of milk (80g) and High-Energy Biscuits (50g) to 41,426 primary, intermediate schools and kindergarten children as an incentive to fight short term hunger in schools.

Complementary activities: In 2017, WFP Algeria successfully concluded its hydroponics pilot project. An innovative, low-tech agricultural cultivation approach, aiming at reinforcing food security in the camps and the refugees’ resilience, through the production of green animal fodder for about 100,000 goats (average of 5 per family for 60 percent of refugees. Some 330 refugees benefitted directly from the pilot project, with 50 low tech units distributed to refugees in all five camps. Livestock fed with this green fodder proved to be significantly healthier and produce more milk and meat of better quality. The unit cost was of the locally made low tech unit was brought down to one-tenth (USD 2,500) for 60kg daily of the high-tech unit (USD 25,000) for 100kg daily and the family kit costs one tenth of the low tech one (USD 250) for 15kg daily. One goat eats 3 kg per day. WFP is also looking at reducing further costs for better affordability. WFP secured funding to scale up the hydroponics and expect to reach three times as many refugees, with an additional 170 units, and develop training material in several languages to facilitate replication. A fish farm is also funded.

In Numbers

125,000 General food rations distributed

2,007 kcal per ration per day reached in February

12,721 children and women received nutritional support

41,426 children received mid-morning snacks

Main Photo Credit: WFP/Maria Gallar
Caption: Monitoring during a food distribution in Boujdour camp.



Operational Updates

General Distribution

- In March, WFP distributed 125,000 reduced rations consisting of 8 kg wheat flour, 2 kg barley, 2 kg rice, 2 kg of yellow split peas, and 1 litre of fortified vegetable oil. Due to funding constraints WFP was only able to allow the distribution of 90,000 CSB+ General Food Distribution rations, the food basket did not include 1 kg corn soy blend; the rations' overall energy intake was 2,007 kcal per person per day, compared to 2,100 kcal planned.

Nutrition

- To combat Moderate Acute Malnutrition (MAM), WFP distributed daily rations of 100 g Corn Soya Blend (CSB+), 10 g vegetable oil and 7.5 g sugar to treat 549 moderately malnourished pregnant women and nursing mothers.
- WFP also distributed Plumpy'Sup, a specialised nutrition product for the treatment of malnourished children, to 342 children who received daily rations of 100 g.
- A special spread (Nutributter) to prevent chronic malnutrition in 12,721 children under five was also distributed (20 g every two days).
- WFP was unable to provide Micronutrient powders to prevent micronutrient deficiencies in pregnant and nursing women due to funding constraints.

School meals

- Children in school and kindergartens only received 40g of milk every day (1 glass of milk equivalent to half ration) and no high-energy biscuits.

Challenges

- Since January 2018, funding constraints have already affected three activities (excluding complementary activities). Distribution halt are likely to negatively impact the refugees, especially the most vulnerable like young children, and pregnant and nursing women. Particularly for the nutrition activity, these reductions risk to affect achievements, possibly leading to increased rates of moderate acute malnutrition, and a further deterioration of the anaemia prevalence amongst children, pregnant women, and nursing mothers.

Other

- WFP is currently conducting a Food Security Assessment (FSA) in the refugee camps to assess levels of food insecurity among the refugee population. The assessment collects information on household's food expenditure in all five camps over the course of several weeks. The data collection is near completion and will be followed by data analysis. The FSA will help WFP understanding better food insecurity, leading to the adjustment of the programme response to better serve refugees. The current planning figure of 125,000 has remained unchanged since 2006.

Country Background & Strategy



Algeria has been hosting refugees from Western Sahara since 1975. These refugees are in camps in the harsh, isolated desert environment of western Algeria, where opportunities for self-reliance are limited, forcing them to depend on humanitarian assistance for their survival.

Despite continued negotiations, there is little sign of a durable solution to the political stalemate and encampment remains the only feasible option for the refugees from Western Sahara in the foreseeable future. The political status quo is fueling anxiety and disillusionment, especially among the young population, which could lead to increased insecurity and tensions in the sub-region.

The 2016 UNHCR-WFP Joint Assessment Mission report confirmed that most refugees from Western Sahara are still highly reliant on humanitarian assistance. The results of the 2016 Nutrition Survey indicate an improvement in the overall nutrition situation of women and children, both global acute malnutrition and chronic malnutrition among children of 06-59 months reduced. However, anaemia rates are at 39 percent among children 6-59 months and 45 percent among women of reproductive age respectively.

WFP currently represents the major regular and reliable source of food for the refugees in Algeria. Upon the request of Algerian Government, WFP has been present in the camps since 1986.

Global acute malnutrition: < 5%
of children between 06-59 months

Chronic malnutrition: 19% of
children 6-59 months

Donors

Gran Canaria (Spanish region), Italy, Saudi Arabia, Switzerland, United States of America

Contact info: Katharina Meyer-Seipp
(katharina.meyerseipp@wfp.org)

Representative: Romain Sirois

Further information: www.wfp.org/countries/Algeria