



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES

WFP Liberia Country Brief December 2020



Operational Context

Liberia currently faces a series of endogenous shocks, further exacerbated by the impact of COVID-19, and that are largely driven by currency depreciation, declining external assistance, weak domestic revenue generation, and limited expenditure adjustments.

Food insecurity is widespread with an estimated 1.6 million people moderately or severely food insecure (Liberia Food Security Assessment, September 2020). Moreover, 63 percent of the population are multidimensional poor (with women more affected), 30 percent of children aged 6-59 months are stunted, and 3 percent are acutely malnourished.

The Government of Liberia's national development plan, the Pro-Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development (2018-2023), aims to make Liberia a middle-income country by 2030, in line with the Sustainable Development Goals. WFP's Country Strategic Plan (CSP) 2019-2023, links food security, agriculture, nutrition and education through an integrated approach. The CSP also focuses on capacity strengthening of institutions both at national and local levels.

To strategically assist the Government of Liberia's response to the COVID-19 crisis and address increasing humanitarian needs, WFP undertook a budget revision to its CSP, to scale-up assistance from 175,000 to 2.2 million people (target). WFP supports the Government's COVID-19 Household Food Support Programme (COHFSP) to provide food assistance to 2.5 million vulnerable persons affected by the COVID-19 prevention measures. WFP has also increased its support to humanitarian and development partners through access to common services.



Population: **5 million**

2019 Human Development Index: **176 out of 189**

Income Level: **Low-income**

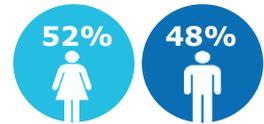
Chronic malnutrition: **30% of children between 6-59 months**

In Numbers

5,538 mt of food assistance distributed

USD 11.6 m six months (January-June 2021) net funding requirements

435,625 people assisted in December 2020



Operational Updates

- In December, WFP and partners provided 5,538 mt of basic food commodities to 435,625 beneficiaries (87,125 households) in the counties of Montserrado, Margibi and Nimba under the Government-led COVID-19 Household Food Support Programme (COHFSP). The latter aims at assisting the most vulnerable households affected by COVID-19 prevention measures in Liberia. Following earlier delays due to challenges in the beneficiary registration process, WFP has accelerated the COHFSP implementation in December. Beneficiary data entry and processing is completed for 13 of 15 counties and food commodities are being dispatched for distribution across the country.
- WFP is presently engaging with partners to mobilize resources to provide emergency food assistance to the Ivorian refugees who have crossed into Liberia following contentious presidential elections in Côte d'Ivoire in October 2020. Overall, USD 500,000 is urgently required to provide food assistance for two months to 15,500 food-insecure Ivorian refugees (new arrivals) currently residing in host communities and camps in the counties of Nimba, Grand Gedeh and Maryland. WFP's internal funds will be advanced to provide timely crisis response, while WFP continues to mobilize needed resources.
- In collaboration with the Ministry of Education, WFP finalized the preparations for the provision of take-home rations in January 2021 to 46,000 primary school children (21,000 girls and 25,000 boys) from 126 schools in Nimba and 97 schools in Maryland. In the absence of additional donor funding, WFP is facing a critical pipeline break under the school feeding programme anticipated from February 2021 onwards, impacting 90,000 school children in the most food-insecure areas of the country who will no longer receive nutritional support.
- WFP continues to prepare for the launch of a cash-based transfer pilot funded by a private sector contribution that will provide 1,000 school children and their families with a monthly commodity voucher or a mobile money transfer (with a monthly transfer value of USD 15), to support the targeted beneficiaries' access to nutritious foods.

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Main Photo: Credit: WFP/Vannette Tolbert

Caption: Women receiving household food rations under the COVID-19 Household Food Support Programme in Caldwell, Montserrado County.

Liberia Country Strategic Plan (2019-2023)

2020 Total Requirement (in USD)	2020 Allocated Contributions (in USD)	Six Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
49.4 m*	35.8 m	11.6 m

* WFP Liberia is currently preparing a budget revision at a value of USD 7.7 million to scale-up assistance under Activities 2 and 4, which will increase the total CSP requirements from USD 89 million to USD 97 million. The budget increase is already taken into account in the six-month net funding requirements.

Strategic Result 1: Everyone has access to food

Strategic Outcome 1: Food-insecure populations, including school-aged children in targeted areas, have access to adequate and nutritious food, including food produced locally, by 2030.
Focus area: Resilience Building

- Activity 1:**
- Provide an integrated, inclusive and gender-transformative school feeding package to food and nutritionally vulnerable school children including take-home rations of adolescent girls in a way that relies on and stimulates local production (home-grown school feeding).

Strategic Outcome 2: Crisis-affected populations in targeted areas are able to meet their basic food and nutrition needs during and in the aftermath of crises.
Focus area: Crisis Response

- Activity 2:**
- Provide an integrated emergency food and nutrition assistance package to vulnerable households affected by disasters and/or other disruptions.

Strategic Result 5: Countries strengthened capacity

Strategic Outcome 3: National and sub-national institutions have strengthened capacities to design and manage food security and nutrition, social protection, emergency preparedness and response, and disaster risk management systems by 2030.
Focus area: Resilience Building

- Activity 3:**
- Provide capacity strengthening support to the Government and its partners to strengthen national coordination mechanisms, information management and monitoring systems for food security and nutrition, and disaster risk management

Strategic Result 8: Enhance Global Partnerships

Strategic Outcome 4: Humanitarian and development partners have access to common services throughout the year.
Focus area: Crisis Response

- Activity 4:**
- Provide supply chain and ICT services to humanitarian and development partners

- With additional donor funding received, WFP has carried out targeting for the distribution of two months' food assistance for 91,305 highly food insecure beneficiaries (18,261 households) in four of the country's most food insecure counties (Grand Gedeh, Maryland, River Gee and Sinoe) in the southeast of Liberia. Distributions are expected to take place starting in February 2021.

Stakeholder Coordination

- To complement the Government of Liberia's efforts in assisting its food-insecure population, WFP presented a request for no-cost extensions of the COHFSP funding agreements to the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning and the Ministry of Agriculture. The no-cost extensions will facilitate completion of the COHFSP distributions in all 15 counties in the first quarter of 2021.
- WFP and non-governmental organization (NGO) partners sensitized local leaders in the southeastern counties through various stakeholder meetings about the COHFSP activities. In cooperation with the community leaders, the COHFSP partners identified clusters of communities to ease potential logistical bottlenecks during the dispatch and delivery of the COHFSP food assistance. Civil society and community-based organizations were also identified to support in the food distributions.
- To prepare for the implementation of two programmes under the Liberia Multi-Partner Trust Funds, which are implemented jointly with other UN agencies, WFP completed the onboarding process with its local NGO partner who will support the implementation of social cohesion and land governance activities in collaboration with government partners (Environmental Protection Agency, National Bureau of Concession and Liberia Land Authority).

Challenges

- The implementation of the COHFSP faced supply chain challenges such as the delayed arrival of commodities in-country, commodities on a sea vessel exposed to heavy rains requiring replacement, and difficulties sourcing vessels for sea transport of commodities from Monrovia to the southeast counties.
- WFP Liberia continues to face a critical funding gap of USD 11.6 million over the next six months (January to June 2021). Despite increased advocacy efforts, WFP's ability to sustain its life-saving food assistance, school feeding and livelihood support, as well as contribute to the socio-economic recovery efforts in Liberia amidst COVID-19 remains limited.

Donors

Donors to WFP Liberia in 2020 include: Canada, Government of Liberia, Private Donors (Mastercard) and the USA. Additional support has been provided by the UN Peacebuilding Fund.