

COUNTRY STRATEGY

Development Project (DEV) - the School Meals Project seeks to establish the foundation for a nationally owned, sustainable school feeding programme. It focuses on strengthening the overall institutional and policy framework for a national school meals system.

The Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation (PRRO) - seeks to provide assistance to food insecure and vulnerable households, particularly malnourished children with moderate acute malnutrition including pregnant and nursing women.

WFP has been present in The Gambia since 1970.



WFP staff take part in cooking demonstrations at a cash transfer site in Manneh Kunda, Upper Fulladu West CRR South.

OPERATIONS

	Project Duration	Planned number of people	Total requirements (in USD)	Total received (in USD)	Total Funded (%)	6 Months Net Funding Requirements (in USD)*	Top 5 Donors
DEV 200327	Aug 2012 – Dec 2017	126,513	21,565,001	11,918,237	55%	-	European Commission, The Gambia, Multilateral, Brazil, Private Donors.
PRRO 200557	Jun 2013 – Dec 2015	105,000	13,897,080	5,869,371	42%	532,926	Japan, ECHO, CERF

*October – March 2016

Summary of WFP assistance: The School Meals Project, “Establishing the Foundation for a nationally owned, Sustainable School Feeding Programme”, focuses on strengthening the overall institutional and policy framework for a national school meals system and consolidating and improving the gains achieved in access to pre-primary and primary education. This is accomplished through direct support for school meals in the most vulnerable regions and districts. Key activities include the provision of daily mid-morning meals, nutrition education, improving household and community nutrition practices, a pilot initiative on local procurement, which links school meals to local agricultural production. Following a SABER exercise in December 2014, a school feeding masterplan was prepared and validated. A cash transfer feasibility study was conducted, resulting in the selection of 24 schools to pilot two cash transfer models, namely: community decentralised local procurement and caterer system. Training is being planned for November. Other major activities being planned include the development of a signed transition agreement with the government, institutional capacity assessment and school feeding cost benefit analysis. Support was provided for the development of a social protection minimum package, through the UN Social Protection Working Group, which was finalised in April 2015, which includes school feeding. Assistance is underway to finalise an assistance programme with the WFP Centre of Excellence in Brazil.

Emergency Response and Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR): WFP is currently assisting the National Disaster Management Agency (NDMA), within the framework of a Memorandum of Understanding for DRR. As the Chair of the UN Disaster Management Group, WFP assists in coordinating a harmonised disaster preparedness and response plan.

The Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation: seeks to provide assistance to food insecure and vulnerable households, particularly malnourished children with moderate acute malnutrition including pregnant and nursing women and children 6-23 months especially during the lean season. Approximately 105,000 people are targeted for support. WFP is participating as part of the UN country team (UN agencies, Government and other development partners) in the formulation of the humanitarian response plan (HRP) under the coordination of UN – OCHA. The HRP addresses thematic humanitarian crises including Food Security, Nutrition, WASH, Health, Education and Protection. A three year plan 2014-16 is currently in place for The Gambia.

OPERATIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

ACHIEVEMENTS	ISSUES/CHALLENGES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School meals resumed in September following the summer holidays in North Bank, Central River, West Coast and Lower River Regions. Activities under the nutrition component (targeted supplementary feeding) for children under 5 were implemented in the 3 target regions, North Bank, Central River and Upper River Regions for August. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As of September, activities under the targeted supplementary feeding (nutrition component) for children under 5 have ceased due to the unavailability of commodities in country. Targeted supplementary feeding for pregnant and nursing women are still suspended due to lack of resources. Local purchase of iodized salt from smallholder farmers faces challenges related to insufficient iodine content. Efforts are in progress to address this issues. An International Monetary Fund mission in June concluded that the Gambian economy experienced sizable exogenous shocks on top of persistent policy slippages, especially government spending overruns. The irregular 'Back Way' migration of Gambian youths in search of economic opportunities in Europe is increasing significantly. According to the Italian government, more than 13 percent (highest among all countries) of illegal migrants entering into Italy in the first quarter of 2015 were from The Gambia.

PARTNERSHIPS

Partners involved during implementation of WFP programmes include the Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education, Ministry of Agriculture, National Disaster Management Agency, the Peace Corps, FAO, UNICEF, and the National Nutrition Agency working mainly in nutrition related activities, and the European Union.

Through the multi-sectoral coordinating committee, where most of these partners are represented, complementarities between the various interventions will be ensured in the development of national capacities for school feeding implementation and management.

COUNTRY BACKGROUND

The Gambia's economy is predominantly subsistence agrarian with a gross domestic product per capita of USD 624. It is ranked 172 out of 187 on the 2014 UNDP Human Development Index (HDI). The HDI for The Gambia increased from 0.272 in 1980 to 0.441 in 2014, but it is below the regional average for Sub-Saharan Africa during the same period. Poverty levels remain high with 33.6 percent of the population living below the income poverty line (USD 1.25/daily) and 10.1 percent of the population considered food insecure. Rain fed subsistence agriculture is the main source of livelihood for the majority of the population. Domestic cereal production accounts for up to 60 percent of annual consumption requirements and the country relies heavily on food imports. The 2013 Demographic Health Survey indicates that GAM rates at national level are up to 11.5 percent while two regions register rates above the 15 percent emergency threshold. There has generally been an upward trend in the prevalence of acute malnutrition at national level from 6.4 percent in 2005 to 9.9 percent in 2012. Severe acute malnutrition was reported at 1.6 percent. Rates are above the WHO "serious" threshold in some areas (e.g. 10.8 percent in Upper River Region, 11.1 percent in Central River Region South and 13.1 percent in the Central River Region North). The national prevalence of stunting for children under 5 is 25 percent, underweight rate is 16 percent and only 3 percent of children in the same age category are overweight. Stunting rates are higher than the national average in 5 out of 8 Local Government Area (LGA): 29.3 percent in Kuntaur LGA (CRRN); 34.5 percent in Janjangbureh LGA (CRRS); 32.1 percent in Basse LGA (URR); 27.3 percent in Mansakonko LGA (LRR); and 24.9 percent in Kerewan LGA (NBR). Infant and young child feeding indicators are poor with only 8 percent of children between 6-23 months fed in accordance with IYCF practices.

According to the International Panel on Climate Change, The Gambia is at the top of the list of 100 countries that are most vulnerable to the effects of climate change, especially weather related hazards such as drought, windstorms, floods and rising sea levels. Government policies provide for universal access to pre-primary and primary education though the quality of education as well as the retention of children in schools is of concern. According to the Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education's "2015 Education Year Book Statistics", national completion rate of primary school education is 73.6 percent.

