

## COUNTRY STRATEGY

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

**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 women and nursing mothers.

WFP has been present in The Gambia since 1970.



## 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	125,055	15,835,161	9,812,043	62%	471,251	European Commission, The Gambia, Japan, Multilateral, Private Donors.
PRRO 200557	Jun 2013 – Dec 2015	100,173	13,897,080	5,505,846	40%	3,347,069	Japan, UN CERF, European Commission

\*July-December 2015.

### Summary of WFP assistance:

WFP supports the Government of The Gambia in pursuing both development and humanitarian objectives. While WFP is committed to help meet the needs of the most vulnerable, it is also assisting the government in its efforts to meet national priorities and contribute to achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

WFP started a Development Project with the goal of establishing the foundation for a transition towards a nationally owned and managed sustainable school feeding programme. The project focuses on capacity development and aims to ensure that the gains seen in increasing access to education under previous development projects are consolidated and improved upon, especially in regions with significantly low rates of enrolment and retention.

WFP started implementing a Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation (PRRO) as a follow up to emergency operations that provided food assistance to drought and flood affected populations across the country. The PRRO began in response to high malnutrition levels and aims to enable the recovery of households after two climatic shocks in 2011 and 2012. The goal of the operation is to enable communities impacted by the two emergencies to fully recover from the shocks, meet their daily food requirements and prevent deterioration of the nutritional and health situation. Components of the operation include blanket and targeted supplementary feeding assistance to children 6-59 months; targeted supplementary feeding for pregnant women and nursing mothers; livelihood activities with cash transfers as the modality of assistance for vulnerable households in the targeted communities; and supporting the national disaster risk reduction agenda and enhance government capacity in emergency preparedness and response.

### Useful links:

<http://www.wfp.org/countries/gambia>

## OPERATIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

ACHIEVEMENTS	ISSUES/CHALLENGES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>School meals were provided in full rations to North Bank, Central River, West Coast and Lower River Regions for the past quarter (April-June).</li> <li>In June 2015 the Country Office conducted a school feeding cash based transfer feasibility study jointly with the Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education in five administrative regions and 2 municipalities. The study covered 27 markets around the targeted schools and communities where the introduction of the cash modality is planned in September 2015.</li> <li>Activities under the targeted supplementary feeding (nutrition component) for children under 5 were implemented in the 3 target regions, North Bank, Central River and Upper River Regions.</li> </ul> <p>The fourth and final round of cash based transfer assistance to food insecure communities in Niani and Nianija Districts in Central River Region North from CERF funds were successfully completed in June. The second of three rounds of assistance with ECHO support commenced for Upper Fulladu West district in Central River Region South. The assistance prioritised very poor households in those three districts.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Funding is urgently needed for the recovery and livelihoods component of the PRRO. A pipeline break has halted the programme for pregnant women and nursing mothers since September 2014. A pipeline break continues for 36 percent of the people intended to receive assistance under the cash component.</li> <li>The Development project is facing a pipeline break in two regions, Greater Banjul Area and Upper River Region schools.</li> <li>An IMF mission in June concluded that the Gambian economy experienced sizable exogenous shocks on top of persistent policy slippages especially government spending overruns.</li> <li>The illegal 'Back Way' migration of Gambia youth 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 reported to be from The Gambia.</li> </ul>

## PARTNERSHIPS

Partners involved during implementation of WFP programmes and activities 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 coordination 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 (GDP) 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 54 percent of the population living on less than USD 2 per day and 18 percent 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 indicated that GAM rates at national level were up to 12 percent while two regions registered 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 nearly 10 percent in 2012. Severe acute malnutrition was reported at 1.6 percent. Rates are above the WHO "serious" threshold in some areas (e.g. 11 percent in Upper River Region and Central River Region South and 13 percent in the Central River Region North). The national prevalence of stunting is poor at 21 percent, as is the underweight rate, which is at 18 percent. Stunting rates are serious in some regions reaching 30 percent in Central River, 25 percent in North Bank and 26 percent in Upper River North regions (UNICEF/Government of the Gambia, Smart Survey, 2012). Infant and young child feeding indicators are poor with only 34 percent receiving exclusive breast feeding (UNICEF/Government of the Gambia, MICS, 2010). According to the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) 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 "2012 Education Statistics", 10 percent of children do not attend school, partly due to high education related costs.

