



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES

WFP Cuba Country Brief May 2021

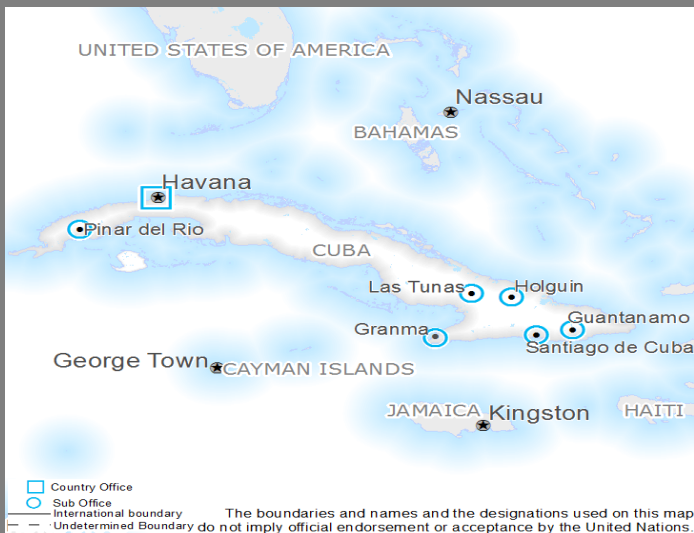


Operational Context

Over the last 50 years, Cuba's comprehensive social protection programmes have primarily eradicated poverty and hunger. Although effective, these programmes mostly rely on food imports and strain the national budget. Recurrent natural shocks place further challenges to food security and nutrition.

WFP accompanies the Government on its efforts to develop a new management model to make food-based social protection programmes more efficient and sustainable. WFP supports social safety nets for different vulnerable groups, strengthens agricultural value chains and promotes the improvement of resilience and disaster risk management. These activities contribute to Sustainable Goals 2, 5 and 17.

WFP has been working with Cuba since 1963.



Population: **11.2 million**

2018 Human Development Index: **70** out of **189**

Income Level: **Upper middle**

2019 Gender Inequality Index: **65** out of **189**

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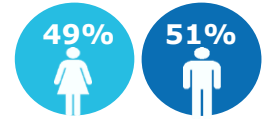
Further information: www.wfp.org/countries/cuba

In Numbers

USD 1.7 million total funding requirements

19.7 mt of food assistance distributed

16,730 people assisted



Operational Updates

- WFP advanced in the implementation of the Pro-Act project -jointly with FAO- in seven municipalities of Villa Clara province in closed coordination with local and national counterparts. The variety fairs are being developed in these municipalities to identify the vegetable's seed varieties most suitable to local conditions and consumers' preferences. Moreover, local counterparts with the remote support of WFP are carrying out the distribution and the starting-up of agricultural equipment. The first semi-protected organic garden was assembled and inaugurated in Encrucijada municipality.
- WFP is developing the pilot project that promotes the preventive and parametric insurance approaches in two municipalities of the eastern provinces, with the support of PULA, an international insurance and technology company. In May, the enumerators of Las Tunas province continued carrying out the crop cutting to develop parametric insurance indexes. They also shared experiences with their homologues of Guantanamo province which faced delays in the activities planned because this province was very affected by the COVID-19. Moreover, PULA facilitated a remote training on parametric insurance to representatives of the Insurance Company at provincial level, benefiting not only the two targeted provinces, but also the fifteen provinces of the country, as per the request of the Cuban Insurance Company.
- WFP distributed Super Cereal (CSB) to children aged 12-23 months and pregnant and lactating women in selected municipalities of Santiago de Cuba with high anaemia prevalence rates.

COVID-19 response

- May 2021 had the record of people infected by COVID-19 in one month, since beginning of the pandemic in March 2020. Havana, Santiago de Cuba, Mayabeque, Pinar del Rio, Camagüey, Matanzas, and Holguin had the highest levels of transmission of COVID-19 representing the 81.8% of the total number of cases reported in the month. In May, national authorities reported a cumulative total of 143, 323 confirmed cases, 136,339 have recovered and 965 deceased.

Interim Country Strategic Plan (2020)

Total Requirement (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)	Six Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
8.9 m	10.5 m	1.7 m

Strategic Result 3: Food systems are sustainable

Strategic Outcome 1: Key food system stakeholders have enhanced capacities to mitigate risks and better support social safety nets by 2021

Focus area: *Root causes*

Activity 1:

- Provide training, equipment and technical assistance to smallholder women and men, including young people, cooperatives, distributors and other stakeholders in agricultural value chains

Strategic Result 2: End malnutrition

Strategic Outcome 2: Nutritionally vulnerable groups, including school-age children, have improved nutrition status and more diversified and nutritious diets by 2021

Focus area: *Root causes*

Activity 2:

- Provide unconditional food assistance to shock-affected populations from prepositioned food stocks to ensure swift delivery.

Activity 3:

- Provide food assistance and educational messages to school-age children through the school feeding programme and training and technical assistance to national and local experts and decision makers involved in the programme

Strategic Result 5: Developing countries have strengthened capacity to implement the SDGs

Strategic Outcome 3: National and local authorities have strengthened capacities to ensure food and nutrition systems' resilience to shocks by 2021

Focus area: *Root causes*

Activity 4:

- Strengthen the capacities of national and local decision makers in disaster and climate risk management, emergency preparedness and response, food security and nutrition analysis and monitoring and information management

Strategic Result 1: Everyone has access to food

Strategic Outcome 4: Populations affected by natural hazards maintain access to food during and in the aftermath of a disaster

Focus area: *Crisis response*

Activity 5:

- Provide timely food assistance to shock-affected people using pre-positioned stock, and supply non-food items to support the local food distribution system

Donors: European Union, ECHO, Government of Cuba, Germany, Italy, Republic of Korea, KOICA, and the Russian Federation

- As part of the UN socio-economic response plan to COVID-19, WFP continued distributing CSB+ in community canteens of the five eastern provinces as well as rice and vegetable oil in community canteens nationwide to benefit about 66,400 vulnerable people.

Emergency Preparedness

- Rainfall in May behaved according to the historical trend, except in the western part of the country where was scarce. However, it was not enough for reverting the agricultural drought, which is still affecting the 24 percent of the country, especially in the eastern region, where persists the lack of humidity in the soil that could affect the spring planting season. WFP continued monitoring the evolution of drought in Cuba in close contact with counterparts and they are jointly applying the tools developed within the project "Pon tu Ficha" financed by DIPECHO and implemented in the five eastern provinces to mitigate the impact of the drought through early actions based on risk.

Monitoring

- WFP continuously monitors the implementation of programme activities. Considering the complex COVID-19 situation in the country, field monitors have reduced their visits to institutions and have increased monitoring by using remote alternatives, in close coordination with government counterparts.

Partnership

- The national project financed by Russia for strengthening the school feeding program in the eastern provinces linked to local food production was approved by the Cuban Ministry of Foreign Trade and Investment. WFP and the Ministry of Education -the leader of this project- started to work in the preparatory stage including the revision of the methodology shared by the Russian Social and Industrial Foodservice Institute (SIFI) which will provide technical assistance for first time to support the school feeding programme in Cuba.

Challenges

- COVID-19 has caused delays in the implementation of the capacity strengthening activities of the Interim Country Strategic Plan (ICSP). However, trainings, assessments and meetings have been adjusted to be carried out virtually.
- COVID-19 has also affected the procurement processes considering the low availability of commercial flights to Cuba. This has created an increase in external transport costs. In addition, the increasing of embargo restrictions has caused delays in payments to international suppliers.