



WFP Liberia Country Brief May 2021

World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES



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 2.4 million people moderately or severely food insecure (Liberia Food Security Assessment, March 2021). 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.



Population: **5 million**

2020 Human Development Index ranking: **175 out of 189**

Income Level: **Low income**

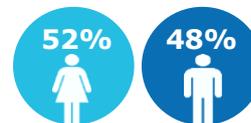
Chronic malnutrition: **30% of children between 6-59 months**

In Numbers

2,257 mt of food assistance distributed

USD 3.8 m six months (June - November 2021) net funding requirements

166,430 people assisted in May 2021



Operational Updates

- In May, WFP and partners continued the provision of staple food commodities to the most vulnerable households affected by COVID-19 prevention measures in Liberia under the Government-led COVID-19 Household Food Support Programme (COHFSP), with distributions assisting 138,490 beneficiaries (27,698 households) in 5 of the 15 counties (Bong, Lofa, Maryland, Nimba and Sinoe).
- WFP concluded the provision of emergency food assistance for two months to 15,500 food insecure new refugees from Côte d'Ivoire, who crossed into Liberia following contentious presidential elections in Côte d'Ivoire in October 2020. In May, the remaining 57 households in Grand Gedeh were assisted with food commodities. Due to the stabilization of the situation in Côte d'Ivoire, the majority of new arrivals are likely to return to their home country over the next weeks.
- WFP and partners continued the distribution of two months' food assistance to 91,305 severely 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. In May, WFP reached 3,564 households in Grand Kru, Maryland and River Gee counties.
- In collaboration with the Ministry of Education, WFP provided family take-home rations to 46,000 primary schoolchildren (21,000 girls and 25,000 boys) in the counties of Maryland and Nimba to support households' food needs amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. In May, WFP and partners assisted the remaining 1,967 students with family take-home rations in Maryland.
- WFP continued to conduct a cash-based transfer (CBT) pilot funded by a private sector contribution that will provide 1,000 schoolchildren and their families with a monthly e-voucher or a mobile money transfer, to increase their access to nutritious foods. For this purpose, WFP uses SCOPE, its digital beneficiary management platform, to track the transfer of entitlements to the targeted beneficiaries. In May, WFP and partners registered 213 households who received sim cards for assistance through mobile money. The CBT modality allows beneficiaries to purchase food at their local retailer, thus providing them with a dietary choice while contributing to the local economy.

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Main photo: Credit: WFP/Vannette Tolbert

Caption: A farmer and her family supported by WFP under the UN joint programme on rural women economic empowerment in Margibi County.

Liberia Country Strategic Plan (2019-2023)

2021 Total Requirement (in USD)	2021 Allocated Contributions (in USD)	Six Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
10.9 m	1.1 m	3.8 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 requirements from USD 89 million to USD 97 million. The budget increase is already taken into account in the six-month net funding requirements, and the 2021 total requirements are expected to increase following the budget revision.

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

- WFP finalized the report of the food security and post-harvest assessment that was conducted from February to March 2021 in all 15 counties of Liberia under the leadership of the Ministry of Agriculture, and supported by WFP, FAO, the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection, the Liberia Institute of Statistics and Geo-Information Service, and the National Disaster Management Agency. The preliminary findings showed a deterioration of the nutritional situation in Liberia, with an estimated 2.4 million people moderately or severely food insecure.
- Under the UN joint programme on social cohesion, WFP conducted a needs assessment among farmers in four project communities to inform future project activities that are intended to improve the development and standardization of agricultural products, and to establish vital market linkages. The findings show that farmers face various challenges, such as bad road conditions, the lack of appropriate harvesting materials and secured storage capacities, and the lack of training in harvest and post-harvest technologies. To address these challenges, the farmers received training in the production of vegetable storage baskets, and market stalls were erected at strategic locals in Bong and Lofa to further help preserve the agricultural produce.

Stakeholder Coordination

- In May, WFP and the Ministry of Education signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on the implementation of the school feeding activities. Under the MoU, WFP will provide strategic support to the Government of Liberia to improve the current school feeding policy.

Challenges

- Heavy rains further delayed the completion of the COHFSP distributions in several remote and difficult to reach communities across Liberia. Where necessary, WFP and partners worked with local authorities and community volunteers to improve roads and bridges, and use light vehicles to ensure the last mile delivery of the food commodities to the beneficiaries.
- WFP Liberia continues to face a critical funding gap of USD 3.8 million over the next six months (June to November 2021). In the absence of additional funding, this will severely impact WFP's ability to sustain its life-saving food assistance, school feeding and livelihood support, as well as its contribution to the socio-economic recovery efforts in Liberia amidst COVID-19.

Donors

Top donors to WFP Liberia Country Strategic Plan 2019-2023 include Canada, the Government of Liberia, Private Donors (Mastercard) and USA. Additional support has been provided by the UN Peacebuilding Fund.