



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES

WFP DPR Korea Country Brief January 2020



Operational Context

WFP has been present in DPR Korea since 1995, providing humanitarian assistance to vulnerable women and children, and working to build resilience to climate-related risks.

DPR Korea faces insufficient food production. Exacerbated by a lack of diverse diet, this results in chronic food insecurity and malnutrition, which is reflected in an increased prevalence of undernourishment, and high rates of stunting and anaemia. These challenges are compounded by the increase in climate-related disasters, which have profound humanitarian impacts for the country's food security and nutrition.

While the 2018 harvest was the worst in a decade resulting in a government appeal to international community, in 2019 the Government reported a record high harvest of over 6,6 million mt, which is reported to exceed country's average of 5,5 million mt by 20 percent and that of 2018 by 30 percent. rice contributed 43.4 percent, maize 39.7 percent, potato 10.6 percent, soybean 4.1 percent, and wheat and barley 2.2 percent.

Despite these positive indications the food insecurity and malnutrition in DPR Korea remains chronic and widespread and requires continued sustainable support of the international community.



Population: **25.9 million**¹

Life expectancy: **72 years**³

Income Level: **Low-income country**²

Prevalence of stunting: **19.1 % of children under 5 years of age**⁴

In Numbers

2,590 mt of food distributed

US\$ 10.9 million six months (February-July 2020) net funding requirements

592,750 people assisted in January 2020



Operational Updates

- In January 2020, WFP continued its nutrition programmes, having assisted around 550,000 people, including children in nurseries, kindergartens, hospitals, boarding schools, as well as pregnant and lactating women and girls (PLWG). In total, WFP produced and distributed 1,932 mt of fortified cereals and biscuits for the nutrition programme. Every month, this support is provided in the 60 most vulnerable counties across nine provinces.
- Through the food assistance-for-assets (FFA) activities, WFP distributed 659 mt of maize to 42,856 beneficiaries. Due to seasonal constraints, the asset creation work was not implemented. In the end of January, WFP's monitors conducted the final assessment of three projects funded by the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF). These projects implemented riverbed excavation and rehabilitation of embankments. In addition, WFP monitored food distributions for the tree plantation and agroforestry projects implemented in Haeju city of the South Hwanghae province.
- The National Coordinating Committee of the DPR Korea Ministry of Foreign Affairs (NCC) informed the international community that DPRK produced a record high harvest of over 6,6 million mt, reversing the trend of decline since 2016 (see the Operational Context section).
- In January WFP received approval from the UN Sanctions Committee for the import of working tools required for the implementation of FFA activities. This import is expected to provide a substantial support to the resilience activities, helping to address the food insecurity at the household level.
- DPR Korea was among the first countries to announce a closure of its border due to the current coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak in neighbouring China, having suspended the flights to China and to Russia.

Contact info: Andrey Shirkov, andrey.shirkov@wfp.org
Country Director: Praveen Agrawal
Further information: www.wfp.org/countries/korea-democratic-peoples-republic

¹ The projection made by DPRK Central Bureau of Statistics for 2020.

² OECD DAC list of ODA recipients for 2018, 2019 and 2020 flows.

³ WHO, 2016

⁴ The State of Food Security in the World in 2019 (SOFI 2019)

Interim Country Strategic Plan (2019-2021)

Total Requirement (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)	Six Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
161 m	45.3 m	10.9 m

Strategic Result 1: Everyone has access to food

Strategic Outcome 1: Children under 7, pregnant and breastfeeding women and girls, and tuberculosis patients in targeted counties have stabilized or improved nutrition, particularly micronutrient status, by 2025.

Focus area: *Resilience Building*

Activities: Provide nutrition assistance to children under 7, pregnant and breastfeeding women and girls (PLWG) and TB patients, and strengthen the capacity of local food processors

Strategic Result 1: Everyone has access to food

Strategic Outcome 2: People vulnerable to disasters and food insecurity in targeted counties are able to meet their food and nutrition needs during and after shocks and stresses by 2021.

Focus area: *Resilience Building*

Activities: Provide conditional gender-responsive resilience-building support for disaster-prone communities in WFP-targeted areas.

Strategic Result 1: Everyone has access to food

Strategic Outcome 3: Crisis-affected people have access to food all year.

Focus area: *Crisis Response*

Activities: Provide emergency in-kind food assistance to crisis-affected people in the event of humanitarian crises.

- DPR Korea’s Government is a main cooperating partner for implementation. The National Coordinating Committee of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (NCC) provides national staff, assets (such as factories for food transformation, warehouses and office space) and services (transportation from port to the factories and food distributions to WFP-supported institutions). Estimated host-government support in the form of logistics and technical assistance amounts to USD 6-7 million per year. While NCC is the lead cooperating partner, WFP developed the Multi-Disciplinary Project Management Team, engaging with line ministries and counterpart institutions.
- WFP is an active member of the UN Country team. As a co-chair of the food security and agriculture sector and the nutrition sector, (as well as a participant of the monitoring and evaluation, and data management working groups), WFP promoted a coordinated approach to SDG 2-related interventions. This included support in the formulation of the 2020 DPR Korea Needs and Priorities document.
- The DPR Korea Needs and Priorities determined UN Country Team requirements in 2020 as USD 107 million with 10.4 million people in need of humanitarian assistance. WFP’s funding requirements represent 50 percent of the total needs.
- The effective implementation of WFP’s operation in 2020 will critically depend on continued resource partnerships with its long-term partners, including Switzerland, Russia, Sweden, Canada, France, as well as new partners who re-engaged as donors in 2019, such as Republic of Korea, India, Norway etc.

Donors

In January 2020 WFP hasn’t received contributions.

Monitoring

The access to institutions, such as nurseries and kindergartens, is limited during the winter months. WFP conducted an FFA monitoring mission in late January for the final assessment of the food assistance-for-assets activities funded by CERF in South Hwanghae province (riverbed excavation and agroforestry). The prevention measures in respect to COVID-19, which DPRK started to introduce in late January, are expected to impact WFP’s monitoring capacity.

Challenges

- The outbreak of COVID-19 in neighbouring countries at the moment presents a major challenge. The prevention measures that the DPRK government started to introduce in end of January affect WFP’s work. Starting from that time the government suspended flights to and from China and Russia, and subsequently all cross-border movements.
- The lack of banking channels complicates the access to cash for operations. Nevertheless, the impact on WFP has been limited as WFP currently only handles limited in-country running costs.