

CASE FOR SUPPORT: EMERGENCY RESPONSE

# A Lifeline on the Front Lines



wfpusa.org

Children watch as a WFP team transports food items on mules through the Gorkha District of Nepal (©WFP/Samir Jung Thapa).



## THE UNITED NATIONS FIRST-RESPONDER

Every year, millions of people around the world are impacted by natural disasters and conflict. As an expert in emergency response, the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) is the first stop for governments and organizations in responding to food, logistics and emergency telecommunication needs in the wake of humanitarian crises. The agency works with local communities and governments to build a strategy that will bridge the gap from initial response to recovery and resilience.

WFP's emergency operations cover three main kinds of crises:

-  Sudden disasters: Usually natural disasters (such as floods and earthquakes) which affect food access and/or cause population displacements.
-  Slow-onset disasters: Such as droughts and crop failures.
-  Complex emergencies: Conflict, widespread social and economic disruption and large population displacements.



## WHEN DISASTER STRIKES

For example, when earthquakes devastated Nepal in April and May of 2015, WFP immediately shifted into action, deploying an emergency assessment team to develop an action plan for the response. The damage was widespread, resulting in over 8,000 dead and over 100,000 left homeless. Within three months, the agency fed over 2 million people, and enacted a cash-for-work scheme to simultaneously feed needy families as they put their lives back together. Through inter-agency cooperation, WFP built temporary health clinics with the World Health Organization and carried cargo and people on behalf of the United Nations Humanitarian Air Service.

Some of the worst-hit communities were in hard to reach areas, where only mountain trails link villages to one another. After the quakes, many of these traditional routes were destroyed or damaged, further isolating already-secluded people who were badly in need of help. WFP used tractors and helicopters to carry food, shelter and other emergency supplies to earthquake survivors in 11 districts cut off from transport routes beyond the Kathmandu Valley.

Left: As part of its emergency response to Haiti's 2010 earthquake, WFP set up a logistics base with the help of UPS in neighboring Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, to provide initial support (©WFP/Jonathan Thompson).

Right: A UNHAS helicopter crew member prepares for takeoff at Kissidougou airport in Guinea (©WFP/Ricci Shryock).



## ON THE FRONT LINES

In the last few years, conflicts across the Middle East and Central Africa have left millions of families hungry and homeless. There are currently more refugees and displaced people around the world than at any other time since World War II. Due to escalating needs and dwindling resources, humanitarian actors have been forced to cut their assistance to those affected by violence.

For instance, since 2011, the Syrian conflict has become WFP's largest and most complex emergency. The agency provides monthly life-saving food assistance across most of Syria's 14 governorates, currently serving over 4 million people. In neighboring states, almost 1.4 million refugees receive food assistance through e-cards, both inside and outside of formal refugee camps.

Conflict threatens people's access to food. In vulnerable situations where they may already be on the edge of food insecurity, this can upend a delicate balance, plunging entire segments of the population into hunger. WFP's emergency operations are designed to support those in need, until the threat of economic and political insecurity is gone and they can begin rebuilding their lives.

WFP provides food assistance to roughly 90 million people a year in 80 countries.



Left: Syrian Arab Red Crescent volunteers distribute bags of WFP wheat flour to internally displaced families in Syria (©WFP/Dina El Kassaby).

Opposite: WFP volunteers distribute relief items in Santa Cruz, Philippines, after flooding from typhoon Ketsana left the community with no electricity in 2009 (©WFP/Veejay Villafranca).





## OUR PARTNERS ON THE GROUND

WFP depends on a variety of local and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs), private sector partners and governmental authorities to implement projects. Without these partnerships, the transport of vital food, medicine, and other emergency relief supplies would be impossible.

WFP works with a wide range of local NGOs and civil society organizations at the country level, across multiple programs and operating contexts. The agency collaborates with more than 1,000 NGO and International Red Cross and Red Crescent partners who continue to play a crucial role in the delivery of humanitarian assistance, including both food- and non-food items.

Working with local partners enables WFP to deliver at maximum speed and scale while insuring return on investment through cost saving and efficiency. The extraordinary engagement that national NGOs have with their own communities, along with their deep understanding of local context, enriches WFP's programming, facilitates increased access and supports greater accountability.



## LOGISTICS THAT SAVE LIVES

When governments, international organizations, NGOs and other UN agencies look to enhance their ability to respond efficiently and effectively in a disaster, they call on the UN Humanitarian Response Depots (UNHRD). Managed by WFP, the UNHRD network supports the strategic stockpiling efforts of the wider humanitarian community. These stocks include medical kits, shelter items, ready-to-use foods, IT equipment and operational support assets, for a growing base of user organizations— all designed to strengthen and enhance response efforts at the onset of an emergency.

With six locations (Ghana, UAE, Malaysia, Panama, Italy and Spain), strategically located around the world near disaster-prone areas, while also within close proximity to airports, shipping ports and main roads, relief items can be delivered to affected areas worldwide within 24 to 48 hours.



A WFP Program Officer stands outside a grinding mill supported by one of WFP's food security programs in Juba, South Sudan (©WFP/Giulio d'Adamo).

For more information on WFP's emergency response go to <http://wfpusa.org/hungerhotspots>

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### CHAIRMAN

Hunter Biden

### VICE CHAIR

Bonnie Raquet

### IMMEDIATE PAST CHAIR

Randy Russell

### PRESIDENT & CEO

Richard Leach

### MEMBERS

Larry Darrow

Hon. Robert Dole

Hon. Jo Ann Emerson

Tony Fratto

Hon. Dan Glickman

Matthew Harrington

Marshall Matz, Esq.

Carl Stern

Joe Stone

### IN MEMORIAM

Hon. George McGovern

Samuel "Sandy" Berger

Cover: A large crowd waits for a helicopter to drop off tons of rice in the mountain district of Moussambe, Haiti (©WFP/Jim Farrell).



[wfpusa.org](http://wfpusa.org)

**World Food  
Program USA**

1725 Eye Street NW  
Suite 510  
Washington, DC 20006

[www.wfpusa.org](http://www.wfpusa.org)

tel: 202.627.3737