

Adham plays with a paper plane made from a WFP sign outside of his school in Aden, Yemen. His school takes part in WFP's school meals program, where high energy biscuits are distributed to provide children with the extra nutrition they need to grow and learn.



World Food  
Program USA

# SPRING 2022 IMPACT REPORT



# INTRODUCTION

Global hunger rates are soaring. In numbers, up to 276 million people are acutely food insecure or at high risk of hunger in 81 countries and up to 44 million people in 38 countries are on the brink of famine. Organized violence and conflict are the primary drivers of hunger and food insecurity. As the COVID-19 pandemic continues, new variants bring additional disruptions to global and national economies. Rising food prices continue to push people further into poverty while extreme weather events wreak havoc on communities, destroying their livelihoods and straining local food systems.



*Photo: WFP / Esther Ouoba*

*WFP staff member, Noura Tissoloko, waits on the airstrip until the helicopter takes off in Fasa N' Gourma, Burkina Faso.*

Humanitarian organizations like the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) help save lives and support the livelihoods of millions of individuals across the world. WFP and its partner organizations are uniquely positioned to deliver emergency food and nutrition assistance – laying the foundation for longer-term interventions that address the root causes of hunger and strengthen communities' abilities to respond to shocks.

**Thanks to generous contributions of the international community and partners like you, the U.N. World Food Programme reached 128 million people with food, cash-assistance and nutrition programs in 2021.**

Thanks to the generous contributions of the international community and partners like you, WFP reached 128 million people with food, cash-assistance and nutrition programs in 2021. This year, WFP aims to reach up to 137 million people. We hope this report will bring you closer to the individuals and communities we support.

This report reveals the critical importance of programs that save and change lives, such as our emergency relief in disaster zones, support for small-scale farmers and school meals for students.





*Raghad, age 2, and her father pose outside a WFP-supported mobile clinic in Lahj, Yemen. Raghad is eating specialized nutritious food, which is provided to children under the age of 5 who are enrolled in the clinic. These foods help prevent and treat malnutrition.*

*Photo: WFP / Hebatallah Munassal*



# MEET MARY–ELLEN MCGROARTY:

## WFP COUNTRY DIRECTOR AND REPRESENTATIVE IN AFGHANISTAN

Mary-Ellen McGroarty is the representative and country director for the United Nations World Food Programme in Afghanistan. She began her career with WFP in 1997, serving in South Sudan and Chad before her appointment to Afghanistan in October 2020.

In her role, she leads WFP operations in Afghanistan and a team of 500 international and local WFP staff members. During her visit to Washington, D.C. in January 2022, she shared insights on the situation in Afghanistan with World Food Program USA. During her visit, she also met with U.S. government officials and agencies to advocate for funding for the humanitarian crisis affecting millions of people in Afghanistan.



Photo: WFP / Sadeq Naseri

*Children wait in line at a WFP food distribution site in Kabul, Afghanistan.*

**What is the situation in Afghanistan like today?** For millions of children, women and men in Afghanistan, the situation is desperate. Many families across the country cannot feed their children nor keep themselves warm. We have almost 22.8 million people facing acute malnutrition and 8.4 million one step away from famine. Children are becoming malnourished at an incredible pace, jobs have been lost and food prices continue to rise. A tsunami of hunger and malnutrition is sweeping across Afghanistan.

### **What are your biggest priorities in the coming months and year?**

Over the next couple of months, we are focused on saving lives. I have traveled across the country, and I have met many women and men who have gone days without food as they try to feed their children. Our focus is bringing food and nutrition assistance to those who need it most.

**Could you share a personal story of how you see U.N. World Food Program making a difference?** I have met many individuals over the last couple of months. Even as we deal with incredible hardships, we have glimmers of hope. When you see women coming up to you and thanking you for the assistance that WFP is able to provide with the incredible generosity of donors. When they tell you that that food has saved the lives of their children.

Recently, I was in a hospital that treats malnutrition. A young child was brought back from the brink and was recovering from malnutrition. We see it every single day: WFP makes a difference in the lives of millions across the country.

**“Even as we deal with incredible hardships, we have glimmers of hope when you see women coming up to you and thanking you for the assistance that WFP is able to provide with the incredible generosity of donors.”**

*- Mary-Ellen McGroarty*

CONTINUED



WFP country director for Afghanistan, Mary-Ellen McGroarty and WFP head of office in Herat, Quadir Assemy, during a visit to a WFP food distribution site on the outskirts of Herat, Afghanistan.





Photo: WFP / Sadeq Naseri

Yasmin is one of the millions of women who receives WFP emergency food assistance in Afghanistan. Food items provided include wheat flour, oil and peas.

**“As a woman and leader, I am finding it an emotional rollercoaster and heartbreak that we are in 2022 and we are talking about women working and girls’ education in Afghanistan.”**

- Mary-Ellen McGroarty

### **Looking back at all of your years at WFP, what has been the biggest challenge you have faced?**

I suppose of all my years at WFP, the one I have found most emotionally difficult is our work in Afghanistan. It’s not just the humanitarian crisis, it’s the dark ideology that’s descending across the country. As a woman and leader, I am finding it an emotional rollercoaster and heartbreak that we are in 2022 and we are talking about women working and girls’ education in Afghanistan. I have seen the hope and aspirations wrenched away from young women, and I find that incredibly difficult. I am very challenged in the heart, and I am very challenged in the head in how women can move forward under what is a very different reality in Afghanistan.

### **What can people in the United States do to support Afghanistan?**

My message to the people of the U.S. is to not forget about Afghanistan and its people and children. It is their hour of greatest need. I would encourage you to donate to World Food Program USA and to urge your state representatives (or elected officials) to support resources for the humanitarian effort in Afghanistan.

The United Nations World Food Programme is working to reach up to 23 million men, women and children in Afghanistan in 2022. WFP is equipped to respond to the crisis and, with dedicated leaders and staff, will continue to reach Afghans across all 34 provinces with food and nutrition assistance. WFP is also working to boost local markets by providing cash-based transfers, encourage school attendance through school meals programs, and strengthen community resilience by rehabilitating agricultural land, roads and irrigation systems.





*Young children pose for a photograph outside of a camp for internally displaced persons on the outskirts of Herat, Afghanistan.*





*A farmer poses with crops grown in the swampland that has been rehabilitated for farming use.*

## COUNTRY SNAPSHOTS

### CASH-BASED ASSISTANCE IN

# SIERRA LEONE

### PROMOTED PEACE AND LONG-TERM STABILITY



Sierra Leone is a small country located in western Africa. More than 53% of the country's population experiences extreme poverty, earning less than \$1.25 per day. An 11-year war, the 2014 Ebola outbreak, and COVID-19 pandemic have had detrimental effects on food production, communities' health and social stability. Deforestation and land degradation are also worsening the country's food security, with only 4% of farmers producing enough food to meet their family's needs for one year.

**WFP and the government are working with farmers to equip them with the resources they need to improve these ecosystems, boost their self-reliance and grow crops.**

Sierra Leone has large mineral deposits, and its economy is largely driven by mining and agricultural activities. Historic tensions and grievances exist between farming and mining communities who compete over access to land. Only one-fifth of farmland is available for agricultural use, and subsistence farmers largely employ traditional methods, with limited use of improved seeds or fertilizers.

The southern part of the country is rich in swampland that has vast potential to grow crops such as rice. Unfortunately, swamps are often abandoned by farmers because of limited technical knowledge and the intensity of labor required to properly farm within swamps. WFP and the government are working with farmers to equip them with the resources they need to improve these ecosystems, boost their self-reliance and grow healthy crops.



Given the rapid deterioration of food security in Sierra Leone, WFP's program in Moyamba district is assisting farming groups to rehabilitate land to grow rice and vegetables, which boosts their food and nutrition security.



Photo: WFP / Richard Mbouet

More than 4,000 farmer groups, primarily composed of women, receive cash payments to create and maintain irrigation systems for over 2,000 acres of the valley swamps. The project is also addressing conflict in the region as Mami Achion, the coordinator of one of the farmer groups explains:

*"We were forced to abandon our initial farms because of conflict with miners. They were mining in the very place we cultivated, thereby reducing our farming space. About 150 of us women decided to form Manumuma Women's Farmers' Association in 2020 and establish ourselves."*

She adds: *"There is no more commotion now. We come together and agree on how to distribute our tasks and how many days and hours in a week to work under WFP's [peacebuilding] program. Most of the group members are widows or single moms, and almost all of us raise our own as well as relatives' children. We are determined to succeed so that we can feed our families."*

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Rosalie, age 5, in her schoolyard in Dondon, Haiti. Her school serves as a WFP emergency food and cash-distribution center.

## SCHOOL REHABILITATION PROJECT IN HAITIAN COMMUNITIES AFFECTED BY THE AUGUST 2021 EARTHQUAKE



The earthquake that hit Haiti in August 2021 left a trail of destruction and food insecurity in its wake. More than 1,200 schools were destroyed and thousands of schoolchildren were pushed into hunger. In response, the Haitian Ministry of Education and the Directorate of School Engineering, supported by WFP, have been working to repair schools impacted by the quake.

**Thanks to a simple design by WFP, temporary school structures have been built that each include a classroom, kitchen and storage space. The structures can also be expanded to include additional classrooms.**

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*"We had to consider the risk of natural disasters in the region. Thanks to the engineering team, the rebuilt schools are all earthquake and cyclone resistant," says Tanguy Armand, WFP's head of infrastructure in Haiti, who emphasized the modern design of the new buildings. "The space is airy, bright and includes access for people with reduced mobility. We're already seeing an increase in new enrollment."*

WFP and its local partners have completed the rehabilitation of four schools in a project that aims to restore nearly 200 in earthquake-affected communities by the end of 2022. In addition to rehabilitating schools, WFP continues to support earthquake-affected communities in Haiti by providing emergency food and cash-based assistance to an estimated 450,000 individuals.



## EMERGENCY RESPONSE TO TYPHOON ODETTE IN THE PHILIPPINES



In December 2021, Typhoon Odette crisscrossed the Philippines – making landfall more than nine times throughout the country. The typhoon affected an estimated 9.9 million people in 11 of the 17 regions of the Philippines, destroying countless homes and livelihoods.

Working with the country's government, WFP provided emergency food, cash and logistics and telecommunications support. In the early days of its disaster response, WFP mobilized 544 trucks and transported more than half a million family food packages. WFP also worked with the Department of Information, Communication and Technology to launch innovative mobile emergency telecommunications sets called MOVE, which enabled emergency responders to quickly communicate and coordinate the disaster response.



Photo: WFP / Ryan Matias

Typhoon Rai brought torrential rain, heavy winds, surge storms and landslides, damaging homes and infrastructure in Siargo Island, Philippines.

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*After passing through central and southern regions of the Philippines in December 2021, Typhoon Rai caused massive damages. The typhoon was the third strongest storm to strike the Philippines since the 1950s.*







**Madagascar:** Madagascar continues to reel from the effects of economic downturn and recurring natural disasters including cyclones, floods and drought. Since the beginning of 2022, Madagascar has been hit by multiple tropical weather systems – with each event triggering flooding and landslides, disrupting planting season and damaging infrastructure.

WFP has scaled up operations to reach 700,000 people per month through general food distributions and highly fortified supplements. In the southern regions of Atsimo-Andrefana, Androy and Anosy, WFP is the largest provider of school meals – reaching 228,000 children from 760 schools across 11 school districts.



**Northern Ethiopia:** Ongoing conflict in northern Ethiopia remains highly volatile, with an estimated 840,000 persons displaced from their homes. High levels of food insecurity remain a major concern as 9.4 million people need emergency food assistance. Humanitarian access, violence and drought remain significant challenges for WFP's response in 2022, and yet WFP reached almost 4 million people across northern Ethiopia since March 2021, providing a lifeline to families experiencing hunger and instability.



**Yemen:** Yemen's civil war began in March 2014. The country's hunger crisis is mainly caused by war and is further exacerbated by the depreciation of the Yemeni currency, poverty, limited employment opportunities, disruptions to supply chains and its dependency on imported food (more than 90% of food in Yemen is imported). The impact on Yemenis is clear: inadequate food consumption is rising at an alarming rate with over 17 million people experiencing various levels of food insecurity. Today, an estimated 31,000 people are living in famine-like conditions; the number is expected to rise to 160,000 in the second half of this year.

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In 2022, WFP plans to reach 12.9 million people with food assistance, 3.7 million children and pregnant and lactating women with nutrition support, and 1.5 million individuals with livelihoods and asset creation activities. Examples of livelihood and asset creation projects include rebuilding community assets like roads, irrigation systems, schools and health facilities. Participants in livelihoods programs are provided with cash or food in exchange for working on these projects. WFP also aims to expand its school meals program to reach 2.4 million Yemeni children.







# SCHOOL MEALS

## FOR CHILDREN IN SYRIA AND VENEZUELA

Healthy and well-nourished children are able to focus better in the classroom. School meals programs give children the nutrition they need to thrive and yield high returns on investment in educational attainment, health outcomes, social protection and economic output. School meals can save a family nearly 10% of their income for every one child fed per year. This cost savings allows parents or caregivers to use those funds for other critical items, such as medicine or housing.



*Youseff's family poses for a photograph in their home in Aleppo, Syria.*

*In the words of Youseff's mother, Ghazwa:  
"We are originally a family that loves education. But with the crisis,  
education is becoming very challenging and costly."*

In many countries, gender, ethnicity, language, health issues and disability can be barriers to education. Children in conflict-affected countries are more than twice as likely to be out of school, and girls in these countries are 2.5 times more likely to be out of school than girls in peaceful countries. For children that experience poverty, school enrollment, attendance and learning are often made even more challenging due to hunger and malnutrition.

School meals programs supported by WFP are a powerful safety net and can serve as a strong incentive for parents to enroll their kids in school and keep them there. Examples from Syria and Venezuela illustrate the clear linkages between education and health and their transformational outcomes for children and their communities.

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**Syria:** Multiple shocks over the past years have pushed millions of Syrians into poverty and hunger. Today, an estimated 90% of Syrians live below the poverty line. Conflict, mass displacement, a severe economic downturn and the declining value of Syrian currency continue to deteriorate conditions for individuals and families. This January, the average cost of a basic food basket, which includes a month's worth of food and non-food staples, cost \$245. That is double the average household income, putting it out of reach for nearly all Syrian families. As a result, approximately 46% of Syrian adults say they are eating less food so their children can eat instead.

The crisis in Syria has had widespread effects on children's education. An estimated 7,000 schools have been damaged by the conflict, and over 2.4 million children are out of school. Despite these challenges, each month WFP distributes more than 512,000 fortified school snacks and fresh meals to students across Syria. Youseff, age 8, is the youngest of five siblings and one of the 34,000 students in Aleppo who receives a fresh meal at school from WFP. He attends a school for children with disabilities that is supported by WFP through a project serving meals to ensure students receive nutritious food. These meals are prepared by more than 100 women, many of whom run their households. The fresh school meals program provides women with training and an income, allowing them to support their families and gain financial independence.

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**Venezuela:** A long-running economic crisis has made access to nutritious food and diversified diets increasingly expensive for Venezuelan families. According to WFP's assessment, 2.3 million people were severely food insecure and in need of immediate humanitarian assistance in 2019.

In response, we have expanded our school meals program to reach more than 110,000 students and school staff in the northwest part of the country. WFP launched this program in July 2021 in the state of Falcón and is planning to gradually include all the municipalities in the states of Barinas, Trujillo and Yaracuy. Schoolchildren under the age of six, in areas identified by WFP as the most malnourished, are at the center of its program that aims to reach up to 1.5 million kids by the end of the 2022-2023 school year.

**WFP has expanded its school meals program to reach more than 110,000 students and school staff in the northwest part of Venezuela.**



*Wilkerson, age 4, plays inside his home in La Vela de Coro, Venezuela after eating lunch with the take-home rations provided by WFP.*



# THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNERS

WFP is working hand in hand with communities globally to save lives, enhance access to food and improve livelihoods. We are grateful to World Food Program USA donors and partners who have generously joined our efforts to prevent and address global hunger.

*Women participating in a WFP livelihoods program in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh. The program helps rural women start and expand their own economic ventures, increasing their incomes and access to nutritious foods.*



Photo: WFP / Sayed Asif Mahmud



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