



WFP Timor Leste Country Brief

Highlights

- From January 2015 to February 2017, a total of 13,578 children under the age of 5 years and 19,510 pregnant and nursing mothers were treated for malnutrition. In addition, 8,244 children and 6,429 pregnant and nursing mothers received nutritious food in a malnutrition prevention project.
- Since January 2016, 309.3 mt of locally-produced Timor Vita, a specialised nutritious food for women, was distributed to 87 percent of the health facilities in 9 municipalities.
- From July–December 2016, 382 health staff and volunteers were trained in separate trainings on nutrition, behaviour change and counselling.

WFP Assistance

Capacity Development for Health and Nutrition	Total Requirements (in USD)	Total Received (in USD)	Net Funding Requirements (in USD)*
DEV 200770: (Jan 2015 - Dec 2017)	13.8 m	9.35 m (68%)	-

*April - September 2017

GENDER MARKER **2A**  DEV 200770

WFP's assistance is focused on improving the nutritional status of vulnerable people, most notably pregnant and nursing women, and children aged five years and below. Through a targeted supplementary feeding programme, WFP helps reduce the infant and maternal mortality rate and helps improve the health of the most vulnerable populations. The assistance is in line with the Government's strategic plan, and with the Ministry of Health's strategic goals to reduce maternal and infant mortality rates. The Ministry is the main implementing partner of the nutrition project, with two community based organizations who have established mother support groups to demonstrate proper infant feeding practices, hygiene and nutrition.

WFP's strategy in Timor-Leste is to partner for improved nutrition, behaviour change communication around nutrition, monitoring and evaluation, and logistics, with the overarching goal of strengthening the Government's ability to design, plan and manage the entire supplementary feeding programme. WFP also works closely with other United Nations agencies to implement its programmes in support of health, education, poverty eradication, adaptation to climate change, and capacity development of government systems.

WFP's activities address the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially SDGs on poverty, hunger, health and gender equality.

Main photo

Credit: WFP/ Cesaltino Ximenes
Caption: Claudina Gama receives specialised nutritious food as part of the emergency El Niño project in Eukesi, Lautem. Her son is suffering from wasting which indicates the child's weight is too low for his height.



Credit: WFP/ Dionisio da Cruz

Caption: Joao da Silva explains the importance of food nutrition in Lolotoi, Bobonaro.

Posters as take-home menus

Outdoor health clinics, or SISCa, are an important opportunity for communities to receive check-ups and health information, especially for people living in remote areas. Nutrition focal points who receive training on health promotion from WFP, such as Joao da Silva in Bobonaro, explain to caregivers which foods they and their child should eat using activities and take-home posters.

"Usually the mothers just give the children rice porridge with salt all day. But with these posters they say it is like a menu: now I can put it in my kitchen and know to add vegetables and eggs to the rice porridge," explains Dionisio da Cruz, a WFP field staff member in Bobonaro, who supports health staff to conduct health promotion at these events.

In Numbers (February 2016)

3,385 pregnant or nursing mothers and

6,030 children under the age of five were assisted with nutritious food.



Operational Updates

- In response to the drought caused by El Niño in Baucau, Lautem and Viqueque, 4,819 children under two years, and 4,988 pregnant and nursing women, received specialised nutritious food to prevent malnutrition in February. Initial monitoring shows 10 percent of children under two, and 25 percent of targeted women, were found to be suffering from acute malnutrition. These findings are worrying and underline the need for continued nutrition treatment in the eastern part of Timor-Leste. WFP's non-governmental organization (NGO) partners Catholic Relief Services, Care International, and HIAMHealth, are mobilising communities and conducting nutrition education.
- WFP's NGO partners Alola Foundation and World Vision have reached 41,751 people in Covalima, Oecusse and Dili with nutrition and health messaging through 215 mother support groups.
- Health staff have provided 28,442 caregivers with counselling on how to assist their child or a pregnant or nursing mother to recover from malnutrition.
- Building on the success of the pilot project in Dili, WFP began planning the establishment of the online supply chain management system, mSupply, with the Timor-Leste Medical Supply Agency (SAMES), which plans to deliver specialised nutritious food and general medical supplies to Ainaro, Covalima, Ermera and Bobonaro in early 2017 using the online system.
- As a result of the nutrition seminar jointly organised with the President of the Parliament in October, the Parliament proposed an increase of the Ministry of Health's nutrition budget from USD 54,000 in 2016 to USD 422,000 in 2017.
- Between July and December, 382 health staff and volunteers were trained on nutrition programmes, behaviour change and/or counselling in Oecusse, Bobonaro, Covalima, Dili, Baucau, Lautem and Viqueque.
- Joint WFP and Ministry of Health cooking demonstrations have reached 1,801 caregivers since June 2016.
- Partner organizations, Alola Foundation and World Vision, have tested women and children in 16,931 households in Dili, Oecusse and Covalima for malnutrition.

Challenges

- There is a low level of understanding amongst the community about the signs of malnutrition, and how to prevent children or babies from becoming malnourished. Many parents do not understand that their baby or child needs to eat a balanced diet, particularly protein, in order to grow and develop to their full mental and physical potential.

Country Background & Strategy



Timor-Leste was internationally recognised as an independent state in 2002. Since 1999, a number of United Nations peacekeeping missions have been deployed to assist the country and augment its capacity in terms of security, governance and justice systems. The last peacekeeping missions withdrew at the end of 2012.

The 2015 Human Development Report indicates the country has made important strides. Timor-Leste ranks 133 out of 188 countries, placing Timor-Leste within the medium human development category. Poverty rates have dropped from 49.9% in 2007 to 41.8% in 2014 according to the World Bank. Timor-Leste's rates of malnutrition have decreased but are still the highest in Asia and are categorised as serious. The 2009 Demographic Health Survey found 58 percent stunting and 19 percent wasting which were categorised as "serious". However by 2013, the Timor-Leste Food and Nutrition Survey, found rates had reduced to 50 percent and 11 percent respectively. A Lancet report applauded the country's progress on reducing maternal mortality, being one of nine countries to do so since 1990.

The Prime Minister has prioritised the SDG2 — to end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture — for 2017.

Population: **1.2 million**

2015 Human Development Index:
133 out of 188

Poverty: **41.8% live below poverty line** (2014 data)

Chronic malnutrition: **50.2% of children between 6-59 months**

Donors

KOICA, European Union, CERF, private donors

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