Ending hunger remains a significant global challenge — 795 million people around the world are undernourished, 159 million children under the age of 5 are stunted, and 50 million children suffer from wasting — and must be achieved in the context of increasingly complex and protracted humanitarian needs, with severe impacts for food insecurity and undernutrition of affected populations. Climate change and rising inequality amplify these challenges by increasing people’s vulnerability to disasters.

The World Food Programme works to end hunger and contribute to a revitalized global partnership to implement the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

WFP works across a range of contexts from emergencies, including situations of disruptions, structural poverty, recovery and transitions. WFP’s dual mandate allows it to use a development lens in its humanitarian responses, and to align early recovery and development interventions accordingly. As a result of this dual mandate, WFP’s experience in both humanitarian and development contexts has allowed it to establish unique strengths and capacities for building resilience for food security and nutrition.

Two thirds of WFP’s work is in conflict-affected countries, where people are three times more exposed to the risk of food insecurity and malnourishment. WFP prioritizes assistance to women and children, as they are disproportionately affected by humanitarian crises and suffer higher morbidity and mortality rates.

Funded entirely by voluntary contributions, WFP supports 80 million people every year in around 80 countries. On an average day, WFP has 20 ships, 70 aircraft and 5,000 trucks delivering food and other assistance where they are needed the most. To do so, it works with governments, UN agencies, companies, and over 1,000 NGO partners.

The 2030 Agenda represents an integrated and comprehensive approach to sustainable development that places the eradication of hunger, malnutrition and poverty at the core of the Agenda. Governments are at the centre of the global partnership. The new development agenda has been developed and determined by member states and its implementation will be owned and led by governments.

WFP is currently aligning its operations with the 2030 Agenda through its new Strategic Plan. In contributing to the 2030 Agenda, WFP will keep a strong focus on saving lives and livelihoods in emergencies, leveraging its many recognized strengths in humanitarian and crisis settings. WFP will also use its ability to quickly scale up and respond to fast-evolving, complex crises through logistics, supply chain and telecommunications operations; the common services WFP provides through such operations are of crucial importance in supporting country, regional and global efforts to respond to humanitarian crises.

WFP at the World Humanitarian Summit (WHS)

WHS represents an historic opportunity for the humanitarian world to focus on reducing vulnerability and building the resilience of the most vulnerable people and communities in the world.

Integrating responses in the humanitarian-development nexus are an essential step. Multi-year collaborative planning and funding are critical to address the underlying causes of crises.
WFP employs a variety of innovative food security and nutrition approaches to support countries achieve SDG 2 and related goals. WFP carefully assesses, designs, implements and monitors food assistance programmes. Delivery and transfer mechanisms are tailored to adapt the contexts where WFP operates, and the needs of those it serves.

WFP delivers over 3 million tons of in-kind food each year, but is also increasing its assistance in the form of cash-based transfers. Cash-based transfers allow people to buy food locally and be in charge of key decisions that affect their lives, while also promoting local markets and financial inclusion. WFP’s cash-based transfers have tripled in the last four years and now account for over 20 percent of WFP’s transfers globally. In 2016, WFP plans to reach over 9.5 million people in 54 countries with nearly a billion dollars in transfer value.

Helping to eliminate malnutrition, particularly in contexts of high burden or high risk, is central to WFP’s work. Malnutrition has a huge impact on human development, contributing to the persistence of poverty and inequality through the inter-generational cycle of hunger. WFP supports countries’ capacities in nutrition-specific approaches that deliver quality nutrition services to treat and prevent malnutrition. WFP emphasizes a preventive approach to malnutrition, focusing on facilitating access to nutritious diets required by vulnerable groups, helping to provide the foundation for sustainable development.

WFP’s long experience in humanitarian and development contexts has established areas of comparative advantage in building resilience for food security and nutrition. WFP has invested in early-warning and preparedness systems – including supply chain management, logistics and emergency communications – that enable it and supported governments to respond to crises quickly and effectively. WFP also supports governments in developing capacity to manage disaster risk through an integrated system of early-warning, emergency preparedness, finance and risk-transfer tools, such as weather risk insurance. WFP’s expertise related to resilience-building includes vulnerability analysis and mapping, community-based programming and support to social protection systems. For example, WFP’s support to productive safety nets through community-based asset creation schemes in several of its operations has been widely acknowledged as central to its resilience-building work.

In more stable situations, WFP’s also focuses on purchasing staple crops from smallholders directly to help them connect with markets. With nutrition considerations in mind, a variety of innovative country and context-specific measures have been developed to emphasize the use of other types of food, be they fresh or fortified. WFP is mainstreaming its food systems strategies to smallholder farmers by transforming its local procurement into a tool for addressing hunger by providing a market for smallholder farmers and supporting them in improving crop quality and increasing their sales to WFP and other buyers. The Purchase for Progress (P4P) programme leverages WFP’s unique procurement footprint and deep field presence to link smallholder farmers to remunerative agricultural markets and reduce post-harvest losses. The programme has engaged 1.7 million smallholder farmers through over 800 farmers’ associations.

Facts & figures

WFP responded to 13 major emergencies in 2014 and 12 major emergencies in 2015.

In 2014 and 2015, WFP provided direct food assistance to on average more than 78 million people per year in 82 countries – most of them women and children.

On average, WFP distributes 3.2 million metric tons of food to the most vulnerable every year. In 2015, WFP’s global cash-based transfers value was US$680 million in support of 9.6 million people.

In the last 10 years, almost half of WFP’s emergency and recovery operations included a response to climate-related disasters; in the last five years, at least 40 percent of WFP’s operations included activities to reduce disaster risk.

In 2015, WFP ensured adequate access to nutritious food for 16 million children in 64 countries through school meal programmes.