



WFP Statement Seventy-third World Health Assembly Committee A - Health Emergencies 10 November 2020

President, Honourable Delegates, Director-General,

The World Food Programme (WFP) would like to applaud the World Health Organization (WHO) for tirelessly working to support communities and countries respond to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The world is facing an unprecedented global health, humanitarian and food security emergency.

The devastating impact of COVID-19 is still playing out in terms of rising unemployment, shattered livelihoods and increasing hunger. Families are finding it harder to put healthy food on a plate, child malnutrition is threatening millions, and famine is looming in four¹ countries.

COVID-19 has ushered hunger into the lives of more urban communities while placing the vulnerable, such as refugees, people caught in conflict, and those living at the sharp end of climate change at higher risk of starvation.

WFP estimates that by the end of the year, the number of people suffering acute hunger could be as many as 270 million², compared to 149 million in 2019. WFP is mobilizing to meet the food needs of up to 138 million people in 2020, the biggest response in our history.

When COVID-19 first started disrupting travel – closing borders and bringing transport systems to a halt – WFP leveraged its logistics capacity to support WHO and the global response. WFP's Common Services have enabled critical health and humanitarian personnel and lifesaving cargo to reach the locations where they are needed most. As of 31 October, WFP had transported 25,000 personnel on behalf of 389 organizations. Since the first airlift was completed in April, over 85,000 cubic meters of cargo have been dispatched to 171 countries around the world on behalf of WHO and 63 organizations.

WFP has a long history of working with WHO to respond to the needs of the most vulnerable and remains steadfast in our commitment to support partners and governments respond to emergencies and drive progress towards the health-related SDGs. For this reason, WFP will continue to drive cooperation in the fight against COVID-19 with WHO via our bilateral corporate Memorandum of Understanding and through our commitment to The Global Action Plan for Healthy Lives and Well-being for All.

¹ Burkina Faso, Northeast Nigeria, South Sudan and Yemen

² In April 2020, WFP estimated that 270 million people would become acutely food insecure in the countries where WFP has presence by the end of the year if no action is taken.



World Food Programme
Programme Alimentaire Mondial
Programa Mundial de Alimentos
برنامج الأغذية العالمي

SAVING
LIVES
CHANGING
LIVES

Thank you.