

## **171st Session of the Council**

### **Item 18.2: Annual Report of the WFP Executive Board on its activities in 2021**

The World Food Programme (WFP) performance highlights summarized below reflect the findings presented in the organization's 2021 Annual Performance Report (APR). The APR 2021 was discussed and endorsed by the WFP Executive Board during its Annual Session in June 2022.

In 2021, the continued effects of COVID-19, compounded by increased conflict, climate shocks and worldwide rises in the cost of living, resulted in unprecedented increases in hunger and malnutrition. In 80 countries where WFP had an operational presence, acute malnutrition almost doubled compared to pre-pandemic levels in 2019, while a record 45 million people were at grave risk of famine. Significant increases in food and fuel prices, and supply chain disruptions continued to severely affect people's access to food and pushed WFP's food procurement costs up by 36 percent compared to 2019.

A record 128.2 million people were assisted by WFP and its partners in 2021, an increase of 11 percent compared with 2020 and slightly higher than the 9 percent average annual growth in the number of beneficiaries assisted during the five years of the WFP Strategic Plan for 2017-2021. However, the increase in the number of beneficiaries assisted was accomplished by reducing the size of rations or the duration of assistance in many operations because of resource constraints, and food and fuel price inflation.

Most of WFP's operations – representing 78 percent of total expenditures – accounted for 95 percent of the food and 93 percent of the cash-based transfers distributed. WFP implemented eight Level 3 and 11 Level 2 emergency operations in 2021, providing timely life-saving assistance, particularly in Ethiopia, Madagascar, South Sudan and Yemen, where people in some areas faced famine-like conditions. Programmes for the treatment of moderate acute malnutrition delivered strong results in improving the nutrition status of the people reached. However, programmes fell short of their targets for the proportion of the eligible population participating.

Success in strengthening food systems was partially demonstrated by the high proportion of the assisted population reporting increased benefits from the livelihood assets created or rehabilitated through WFP's activities. However, a large proportion of assisted households were unable to consume a diversified daily food basket or avoid adopting negative coping strategies. Strong performance was recorded in enhancing national nutrition and other policies and programmes, and the capacity of national governments to implement the related Sustainable Development Goals. Moderate progress was made in strengthening national partners' ownership of emergency preparedness activities. WFP approved USD 32.2 million for critical corporate initiatives for 2021 and generated an estimated USD 164 million in cost and time-saving efficiencies, 87 percent of which came from the top ten efficiency initiatives. In 2021, the average cost of serving WFP's direct beneficiaries was USD 0.38 per day and USD 53 for the year.

These results were achieved with the generous support of WFP resource partners. In 2021, WFP received record contributions of USD 9.6 billion – 15 percent more than in 2020. WFP's top ten donors accounted for 79 percent of contributions. Direct expenditures, excluding indirect support costs, totalled USD 8.6 billion with eight of the ten countries with the highest expenditures facing Level 3 or Level 2 emergencies, and direct expenditures in Afghanistan increasing by 126 percent over 2020. Needs in the remaining two countries, Somalia and Sudan, remained high due to protracted conflict, climate shocks and economic instability. For the fifth consecutive year, the operation in Yemen remained WFP's largest, and direct expenditures increased by 27 percent over 2020.

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