



# WFP Philippines COUNTRY ACHIEVEMENTS

Based on the Annual Country Report 2020

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Cover photo by WFP/Arete/Angelo Mendoza

*Antonette B. Torrente, 26, from Pagsangahan, Catanduanes, is one of WFP's beneficiaries in its cash-based assistance to communities in Catanduanes affected by the devastating effects of Typhoon Goni. Antonette, a mother of 3, struggles with the lack of food, money, and clothing due to the typhoon. Access to their village became severely limited when their newly built bridge was destroyed by the typhoon, as well. As a result, she had to scavenge for food to feed her children at the time.*



*expresses its utmost gratitude to its 2020 donors for aiding us in*

**SAVING LIVES. CHANGING LIVES.**



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# Message from the REPRESENTATIVE & COUNTRY DIRECTOR

2 ZERO HUNGER



## BRENDA BARTON

Representative and Country Director  
WFP Philippines

**Years from now**, when we look back to the year that was 2020, many of us will consider it an unprecedented and challenging year that brought many of us to our knees. This is especially so for the most vulnerable, those in the margins of society, who have few to zero savings to continue putting food on their families' table amid quarantine measures and job losses. COVID-19 has impacted all of us ways we have never seen nor even imagined. But it has also forced us to create and implement new, innovative solutions to cope and fight back like we have never done before – a true test of our resolve to resist and persist.

For colleagues at WFP here in the Philippines and globally, we had to find ways to identify and reach people who were suffering quietly in their homes, away from the television screens where

communities struck by natural or man-made disasters, needing our help, pop out of invisibility.

I'm proud to see how colleagues at WFP, now a Nobel Peace Prize recipient, rose to these unique challenges to meet the needs of communities and governments.

From the warm and congenial in-person meetings and fora moving to virtual channels, especially in fast moving emergencies, we knew we had to keep the momentum going and our energy aflame because if there is one thing the pandemic has successfully emphasized, it is the fact that coordination among actors indeed saves lives.

2020 literally started off with a bang with the eruption of Taal Volcano, the complexity of which was layered with a raging pandemic. The year was bookended with two strong typhoons that added salt to the wounds. The double hit brought by typhoons Rolly (Goni) and Ulysses (Vamco) exacerbated the situation of thousands of Filipinos who for a year, were reeling from the impact of the pandemic.

To assuage their suffering, WFP supported the Government in providing relief assistance to affected communities with cash assistance, demonstrating the effectiveness of cash to empower and dignify disaster-stricken communities in deciding for themselves their greatest needs, be it food, medicine, shelter repair, and other essentials.

I am also impressed by the technological solutions we have lent to the Government to support the Social Amelioration Programme. In just one week in April 2020, we rolled out SCOPE - WFP's globally



recognized beneficiary registration and cash transfer platform - that enabled the Bangsamoro Government to serve 2.3 million people through cash assistance. The establishment of this efficient registry allowed the migration of the Government's beneficiary master list into SCOPE in just 37 days, effectively fast-tracking the distribution of cash while limiting the risk of infection through the avoidance of in-person hand-outs. Likewise, our support to the Government in monitoring the food security of all 17 regions amid the pandemic provided critical information for the government to understand the fast moving vulnerability of people as the pandemic spread.

WFP also made remarkable strides in the areas of science and evidence generation for food security and nutrition, which require new solutions to overcome the country's serious rates of malnutrition - pre COVID - especially the stagnant high rates of stunting. In one year, we worked on a designing an innovative social and behaviour change communication project to unpack the barriers to good nutrition, a climate change and food security analysis, a food basket survey, a food security and peacebuilding study, and iron fortification pilot, among others. These are vital cogs to a machine that will allow WFP to inform the policies and to design and expand the implementation of targeted Government programmes.

Indeed 2020 was a year of unprecedented challenges. But it was also a year of unprecedented and ground-breaking responses, all of which would not be possible without our robust partnership with the Government and partners, the unwavering support of our donors, and the tireless and dedicated support of our staff. We close 2020 not with the bitterness it left to the tongue, but with the growing pains and learnings we took away from it. And as the calendar changes to 2021, it does not guarantee that suffering will magically disappear along with 2020. But whatever happens, we shall be fighting braver, pushing harder, and persisting stronger to deliver our services to those who need it the most... across and within this country's 7,641 islands.



**Brenda Barton**

Representative and Country Director  
WFP Philippines



## TOTAL BENEFICIARIES REACHED IN 2020



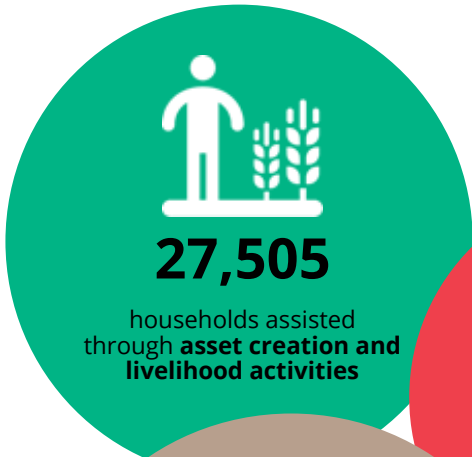
62,367

Total beneficiaries reached in 2020



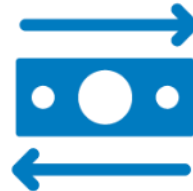
■ male ■ female

## TOTAL BENEFICIARIES REACHED BY PROGRAMME AREAS



173 mt

of **food** provided to beneficiaries



US\$ 433,633

of total **cash** distributed



**2020** was a challenging year for WFP in the Philippines, characterized by a series of emergencies and a nationwide lockdown caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. **Nevertheless, groundbreaking initiatives made 2020 a year of accomplishments as well.** At the beginning of the year, WFP's programmes were gradually shifting towards capacity strengthening. WFP assisted in enhancing institutional capacities and streamlining government systems. This included informing policies, facilitating knowledge transfer through training, technological solutions, and technical support. As the nation remains one of the countries most exposed to natural hazards, WFP also continued to play a vital role in emergency response. At the request of the Government, WFP provided life-saving food and/or cash support to disaster-stricken families, where its support was most needed, in coordination with local authorities.

When COVID-19 began to spread in the Philippines, WFP did not have ongoing food or cash transfers on the ground. Capacity strengthening activities were affected by mandatory community quarantine measures. Training activities, workshops and other engagements scheduled for the remainder of the year were held as virtual events. A beneficiary profiling exercise using SCOPE in Batangas following the eruption of Taal Volcano had to be put on hold. Likewise, the delivery of vehicles for the Government Emergency Communications System – Mobile Operations Vehicle for Emergencies (GECS MOVE)

and corresponding training activities were delayed. Nevertheless, WFP completed the first of three phases of the GECS MOVE project, delivering six sets of rapid deployable emergency communications systems integrated into custom vehicles.

WFP also supported the Government by transporting food, health and medical kits, and equipment. WFP loaned portable warehouse facilities to local governments in need. In addition, WFP provided SCOPE, its beneficiary and transfer management platform, as the technical solution for beneficiary registration and tracking of the Government's cash assistance to families affected by the pandemic in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM). Finally, the Government utilized WFP's remote monitoring and analysis tools to assess the food security situation of the country during the pandemic.

Despite the pandemic, WFP stayed on its course in its support to the Government, particularly in its role as a technical advisor and development partner to the Inter-Agency Task Force for Zero Hunger (IATF-ZH) and the Enhanced Partnership Against Hunger and Poverty (EPAHP). IATF-ZH is a government consortium initiated by the Office of the President that seeks to consolidate national efforts in achieving the Government's goal of addressing hunger and poverty. As a key partner, WFP provided technical and strategic advice on the programmes,



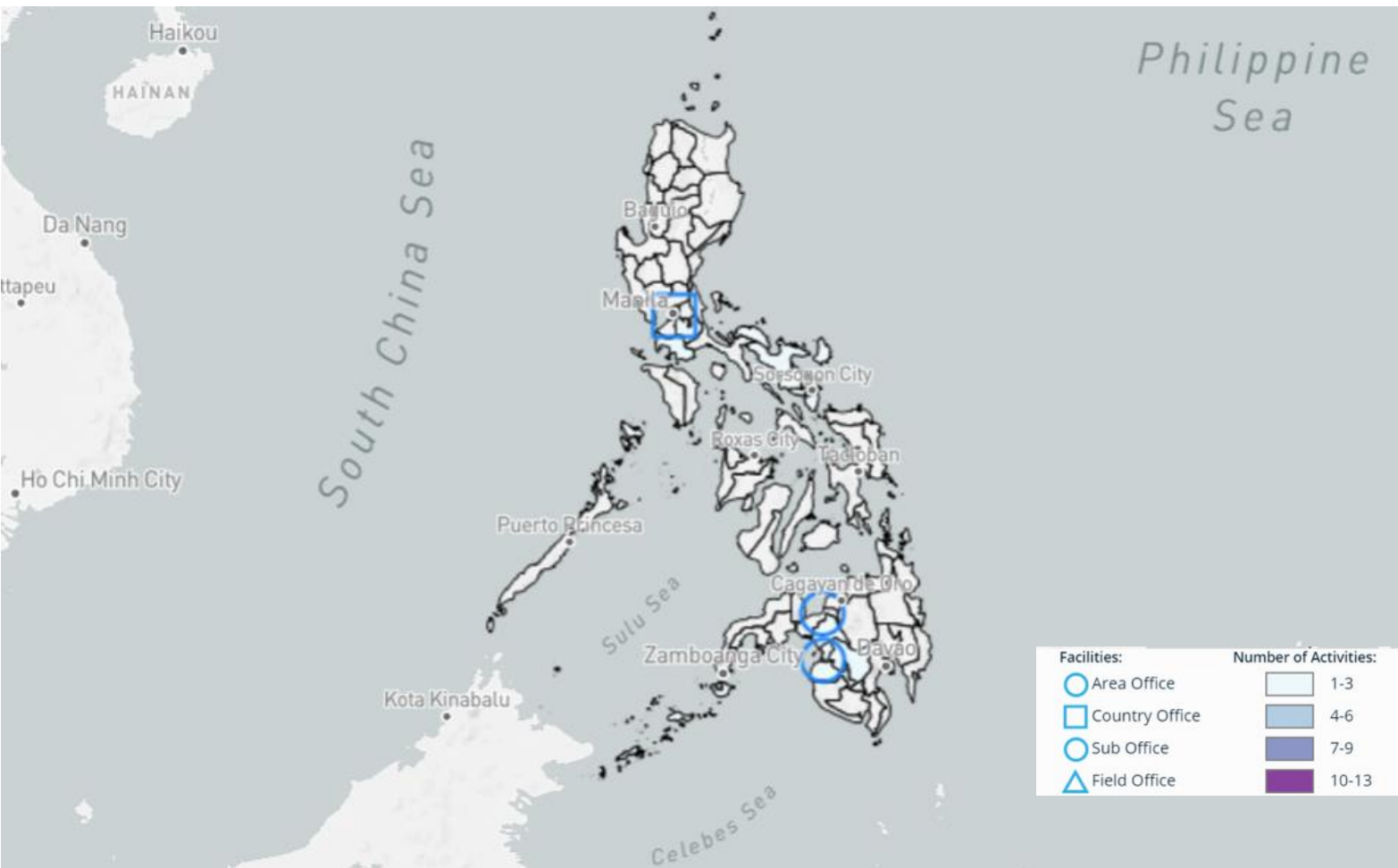
projects, and activities enveloped within. Relatedly, WFP also supported EPAHP, a government initiative bringing together agencies to support poor people in rural areas. These initiatives directly contribute to Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) 2 (Zero Hunger) and 17 (Partnership for the Goals).

In BARMM, WFP assisted efforts to achieve food security and nutrition in support of the peacebuilding process. With decades of unrest leading to displacement and economic stagnation, people were facing intergenerational food insecurity and malnutrition. During the region's transition, WFP was identified as a main partner in building and strengthening institutional capacities. One exceptional achievement in 2020 was the development and launch of the first-ever Food Security and Nutrition Roadmap for the Bangsamoro people. The Roadmap sets the course for the holistic integration of food security and nutrition into the region's local development plans.

Towards the end of the year, the Philippines' response capacities were put to further test when

two strong typhoons severely devastated the Bicol Region and Cagayan Valley. During these crises, WFP employed its expertise in mobilizing emergency response. WFP supported the Government's response by transporting life-saving provisions and rolled out cash-based assistance covering the immediate food and shelter repair needs of typhoon victims.

Amid the numerous hurdles of 2020, WFP forged stronger partnerships, initiated innovative solutions, and assisted the Government in improving the lives of Filipino people. As WFP was awarded the **2020 Nobel Peace Prize**, it upholds its critical role in ending hunger in the Philippines by reducing suffering caused by food insecurity, malnutrition and poverty and by mitigating the impact of COVID-19. With strong support from the Government and generous contributions from its donors, WFP continued to save lives and change lives in the Philippines.



# CONTEXT AND OPERATIONS

## AND COVID-19 RESPONSE

The Philippines is a dynamic country in Southeast Asia with an economic development that has seen an annual growth rate of its gross domestic product (GDP) above 6 percent since 2015. Its population of 110 million people is becoming increasingly urban. With a median age of 24 years, the Philippines has a vibrant workforce and Filipinos living outside the country drive robust remittances.

Notwithstanding its economic vitality observed in recent years, the country battles with chronic challenges that hamper its overall development to be felt across all socioeconomic classes. The Asian Development Bank reported that 16.6 percent of its population lived below the national poverty line in 2018 and 2.7 percent of the

employed population had very low purchasing power of PHP 90/day (USD 1.90/day) in 2019. This is consistent with WFP's findings in its [Fill the Nutrient Gap analysis](#), conducted in 2018, which found that almost all households could afford a diet that meets energy needs, but a third of all households could not afford a diet that meets nutritional needs. The minimum wage is insufficient to access a nutritious diet. Exacerbating the situation is an estimated GDP contraction of 8.1 percent in 2020 due to the effects of COVID-19, with a record high adult joblessness of 45.5 percent (27.3 million adults) in July 2020.

Despite the commendable efforts to improve food security and nutrition, the



*Prior to providing cash assistance to the victims of Typhoon Goni in Bicol, WFP conducted community orientations to ensure beneficiaries are sensitized on the mechanics of the programme such as the targeting criteria, project duration, and amount of support.*



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*In late 2019 to early 2020, WFP provided support to the victims of Typhoon Kammuri in Sorsogon, Philippines as part of its early action response.*

Philippines lags behind other countries in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations in terms of nutrition. Childhood stunting remains high at 28.8 percent, child wasting has slightly increased to 5.8 percent (from 5.6 percent in 2018), and overweight/obesity is at 2.9 percent based on the 2019 National Nutrition Survey. High stunting rates in the Philippines can be largely attributed to maternal malnutrition as 29.9 percent of pregnant women and 10.4 percent of lactating mothers were undernourished. The prevalence of low birth weight is one of the highest in Asia at 14 percent. [3] Likewise, infant and young child feeding practices need improvement as reflected by a very low dietary diversity (20.1 percent) and minimum acceptable diet (9.9 percent) among children aged 6-23 months. The prevalence of anaemia among children aged 6-11 months is also high at 38 percent.

One of the drivers of food insecurity and malnutrition in the Philippines is its high vulnerability to impacts of climate change and natural hazards, such as earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, typhoons and drought. As 2020 came to a close, the country suffered a triple hit. Typhoons Molave,

Goni and Vamco (local names Quinta, Rolly and Ulysses) pummeled the same regions in quick succession, causing the worst flooding in the last 45 years. These events exacerbated the affected population's food security and nutrition situation and caused the Government to invite humanitarian support from the United Nations.

The Philippines is also struggling to end the decades-long conflict in its southern regions. WFP's re-establishment in the Philippines in 2006 can be traced back to the Government's request for assistance in negotiating peace in the region while responding to worsening food insecurity caused by multiple displacements and losses in livelihoods of the Bangsamoro people.

In 2020, COVID-19 added to the multi-faceted challenges affecting the country. Towards year-end, the country recorded more than 450,000 COVID-19 cases, most of which were concentrated in Metro Manila. The overwhelming spread of the pandemic led to restrictions, including nationwide community quarantine, which caused operational delays to some of WFP's ongoing projects. While no food or cash distributions were ongoing when the country



entered a lockdown in March 2020, WFP had to adjust its capacity strengthening activities to virtual delivery to ensure compliance with government measures and prevent the further spread of the virus.

To assist the Government's social protection system, WFP rolled out SCOPE, its beneficiary and transfer management platform, as the technical solution for beneficiary registration and tracking of the Government's cash assistance to households in the Bangsamoro region whose incomes were affected by the pandemic. WFP also supported the national government by conducting remote monitoring and vulnerability assessment services using a food security lens.

Overall, WFP's activities directly contributed to the Government's efforts in putting an end to hunger in the Philippines. WFP was selected to support the Zero Hunger Task Force, a government consortium at the helm of the country's aspirations of attaining Zero Hunger by 2030.

WFP's operations in the Philippines are articulated in its [Country Strategic Plan \(CSP\) 2018-2023](#). In line with the country's lower middle-income status, WFP has gradually shifted its focus to capacity strengthening of government institutions across all levels. Three of the CSP's four strategic outcomes aim at informing policies, facilitating knowledge transfer and providing technical support. WFP leverages its unique expertise in food security and agriculture, nutrition, logistics and emergency telecommunications, aligned with the Philippine Framework for Sustainable Development and directly contributing to Sustainable Development Goals 2 and 17. Due to the vulnerability of the Philippines to natural hazards, one of WFP's strategic outcomes remains focused on crisis response, enabling WFP to be ready to implement humanitarian interventions as requested by the Government in times of overwhelming disasters.



Filipina Sacris, 52, is one of the residents of Catanduanes who received cash assistance from WFP following the devastation of Typhoon Goni.



## RISK MANAGEMENT

At the outset of its Country Strategic Plan, WFP anticipated a number of strategic, operational, and fiduciary risks. Strategic risks were driven mainly by natural hazards, economic crises caused by inflation and disasters, armed conflicts, and funding shortfalls. In 2020, the biggest operational risk was presented by the COVID-19 pandemic that stalled the implementation of WFP's programmes, restricted staff movement and affected supply chain services, and the arrival and clearance of its overseas cargo for one of its major projects with the Government. Lastly, staff health and wellness amid the pandemic represented a major fiduciary risk. Since mid-March 2020, all WFP staff have been telecommuting to minimize risks of exposure. The country office activated a business continuity plan to ensure smooth operations.

To mitigate the risks of natural hazards, WFP relied on its existing capacities and innovations to monitor occurrences of weather events. An artificial intelligence tool called Automated Livelihoods Information Assistant (ALIA) helped forecast the potential impact of typhoons, the extent of damage and needs of the affected people. WFP also used its Automatic Disaster Analysis & Mapping tool (ADAM) to generate a snapshot of natural hazards immediately after their occurrence. Throughout 2020, WFP collaborated with relevant government agencies and clusters to monitor hazards, security situations, market prices, and COVID-19 cases. To narrow the funding gap, WFP sent appeals to donors at the beginning of the pandemic and consulted with potential new donors to ensure the continuity of food security and disaster risk reduction activities. WFP also appealed for financial support to its Strategic Resource Allocation Committee.

Throughout the year, WFP maintained a risk outlook that identified various types of risks and detailed its likelihood of occurrence, impact, and seriousness. The outlook also captured measures and controls in place, mitigation actions, and potential escalation of the situation.



©WFP/Fahima Abdulaziz



WFP supports the livelihood of smallholder farmers in the Bangsamoro Region through establishment of agro-forestry nurseries.



# PARTNERSHIPS

In 2020, WFP's partnerships with government agencies, development partners, and civil society organizations have expanded and contributed towards the achievement of its strategic outcomes. **WFP thanks its donors for their support in 2020: Archer-Daniels-Midland Company, Australia, Emerging Donors Matching Fund, Japan Association for the World Food Programme, Italy, New Zealand, Philippines, Share Foods GmbH, United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund, United States of America, and World Bank.**

Strategic Outcome 1 focuses on crisis response. WFP worked with the Department of Social Welfare and Development, the Office of Civil Defense and the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council.

In Mindanao, WFP continued to provide technical support to the rebuilding of Marawi City following the siege. WFP collaborated with the Task Force Bangon Marawi, the Provincial Government of Lanao del Sur, the Marawi City Government, the Department of Social Welfare and Development Region X, the Mindanao Humanitarian Team, and the Philippine Information Agency in integrating food security and nutrition components into Marawi's recovery plan.

For responses to typhoons Goni and Vamco in Bicol Region, WFP coordinated with the provincial governments of Albay and Catanduanes in providing cash-based transfers to the most vulnerable families. Local non-governmental organizations Coastal CORE and EDUCO served as partners on the ground.

Under Strategic Outcome 2, WFP provided technical support to both the public and private sectors. For its social and behaviour change communication project, WFP partnered with the Provincial Government of Maguindanao. WFP also supported the Government's Inter-Agency Task Force on Zero Hunger, led by the Office of the Cabinet Secretary, and its demonstrative arm, the Enhanced Partnership Against Hunger and Poverty. The Government selected WFP as one of its partners to advise on matters related to food security, agriculture and nutrition.



*The Department of Social Welfare and Development and WFP worked together in the profiling of households affected by the eruption of Taal Volcano in early 2020.*



WFP Deputy Country Director Mats Persson (leftmost) and United Nations Resident Coordinator Gustavo Gonzales (second from left), together with Cabinet Secretary Karlo Nograles (second from right) and Department of Agriculture Secretary William Dar joined the candle lighting ceremony and declaration of the 2020 World Food Day pledge during World Food Day 2020 celebrations on 16 October 2020.

WFP acted as lead convener of the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Business Network, with the National Nutrition Council as co-convener. Nutrition International, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and Alcanz International provided strategic support through coordination, identification of partners and technical advice. WFP is also an active member of the United Nations SUN Network and the National Nutrition Cluster.

For Strategic Outcome 3, WFP continued to build on its engagement with the transitional government of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM). Under the regional convergence project, WFP partnered with the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Agrarian Reform; the Ministry of Environment, Natural Resources and Energy; the Ministry of Interior and Local Government; and the Bangsamoro Planning and Development Authority. On matters related to food security and nutrition, WFP worked with the Ministry of Social Services and Development and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). WFP also engaged in capacity strengthening with the Ministry of Basic, Higher and Technical Education.

The majority of WFP's partners towards Strategic Outcome 4 were national government agencies. As the lead agency of the Forecast-based Financing (FbF) Technical Working Group, WFP formed partnerships with the Office of Civil Defense, the Department of Social Welfare and Development, the Department of Interior and Local Government, the Climate Change Commission, the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomic Services Administration, the Department of Finance and the National Economic Development Authority. WFP also maintained partnerships with other FbF actors including the Philippine Red Cross, Oxfam, START Network, and FAO; the governments of the ten partner provinces; the Development Academy of the Philippines; and with local non-governmental organizations Coastal CORE and Livelihood Development, Inc. On its shock-responsive social protection project, WFP partnered with FAO and UNICEF.

Through emergency logistics augmentation, WFP transported life-saving food, medicines, and other non-food essentials for UNICEF, International Medical Corps, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (AHA Centre/DELSA). WFP also provided warehouse management and equipment support to the Provincial Capitol of Catanduanes, the Municipality of Pila in Laguna, the Municipality of Makilala in Cotabato, Cotabato Regional and Medical Centre, Rapid Emergency Action on Disaster Incidence of BARMM. Overall, WFP maintained consultative partnerships with the Philippine Disaster Resilience Foundation and HELP Logistics.



# FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

In 2020, WFP revised its Country Strategic Plan (CSP) to update the requirements of its operations, particularly to adapt to the multiple shocks experienced during the year.

While WFP had seemingly sufficient overall funding to implement activities for the year, three quarters of the funds were earmarked for specific activities, resulting in significant discrepancies between the four Strategic Outcomes. The earmarked funding limited WFP's flexibility to prioritize the activities according to needs.

Notably, the available resources included a multi-year contribution from the Philippines for the second tranche of a project under Strategic Outcome 4. This is however programmed for implementation in 2021, as the first tranche of the project was closed at the end of 2020. WFP also received pooled funds for an emergency response to typhoons Goni and Vamco and engaged in a strategic partnership with the World Bank. An agreement with the Green Climate Fund, through the Land Bank of the Philippines, is under negotiation. WFP continuously engaged with public and private sector donors as well as the Government to pursue resourcing partnerships to sustain the activities laid out in the CSP.

Funds carried over from 2019 for activities under Strategic Outcome 1 (crisis response) enabled WFP to roll out early recovery support to people affected by the eruption of Taal Volcano. This also allowed WFP to implement SCOPE, its beneficiary and transfer management platform, in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM), supporting the registration of beneficiaries entitled to financial assistance from the Government during the pandemic. Similarly, the funding supported the use of SCOPE to register cash-based transfer beneficiaries in the Bicol Region affected by typhoons Goni and Vamco. Overall, WFP spent around 80 percent of the funds required according to its implementation plan.

Strategic Outcome 2 (nutrition), similar to previous years, was the least funded component of the CSP with only 1 percent of requirements covered. Lack of funding meant that no specialized nutritious food could be distributed at any time of the year. WFP internal allocations from the 2030 Fund, nonetheless, enabled WFP to implement capacity strengthening activities.

Strategic Outcome 3 (resilience) received approximately half of the funds required for 2020. This Strategic Outcome also benefited from WFP internal allocations which supported food security analysis in BARMM. By end-2020, WFP had spent half of the funds against its latest implementation plan, challenged by extended periods of school closure and delays in implementation due to COVID-19 quarantine measures. Pending activities from 2020 were carried over for implementation in the first quarter of 2021.

Strategic Outcome 4 (capacity strengthening) received the highest funding level thanks to guaranteed single- and multi-year contributions. This Strategic Outcome also benefited from WFP internal allocations that supported the implementation of SCOPE in BARMM. By year-end, WFP had spent approximately 63 percent of funds against its latest implementation plan on forecast-based financing, strengthening government capacities in beneficiary profiling/ registration, and logistics and emergency telecommunications.





# PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE



# STRATEGIC OUTCOME 1

## Crisis-affected people in the Philippines are able to meet their food and nutrition needs during and immediately after an emergency

Under **Strategic Outcome 1, Activity 1**, WFP aims to complement the Government's emergency response to crises, such as typhoons, floods, earthquakes, droughts and volcanic eruptions. Adequate funding thanks to pooled funds and contributions from the previous year carried over into 2020 enabled WFP to help improve the food security situation of the crisis-affected populations it served.



**10,945** crisis-affected individuals supported with cash



**21,465** individuals supported with cash through food assistance for assets



**4,398** households profiled in SCOPE (Taal Volcano eruption)



**US\$ 402,691** cash distributed to crisis-affected households



**356,000** households registered in SCOPE to benefit from the Government's COVID response



## Typhoon Kammuri Early Action

At the end of 2019, WFP had provided anticipatory cash-based transfers (CBT) in

Sorsogon using scientific forecasts to identify which communities would be most affected by a typhoon. In early 2020, WFP's post-distribution monitoring results showed that the proportion of people with acceptable food consumption had increased from 88.9 percent in 2019 to 96.2 in 2020, while the proportion of people with borderline to poor food consumption had significantly decreased from 11.1 percent to 3.8 percent. The activity supported 1,430 households in November 2019 with USD 45 (PHP 2,300), coupled with anticipatory action and sensitization messages

on the importance of typhoon preparedness. The action enabled beneficiaries to repair their houses, preposition food stocks, harvest early and protect animal cages, thereby mitigating risks and losses.



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WFP monitoring staff Arlene Robles interviews one of the beneficiaries of WFP's early action cash-based transfers for Typhoon Kammuri response in Pilar, Sorsogon.





## Mindanao Conflict Response (2019-2020)

Food assistance for assets activities in the provinces of Lanao del Sur, Maguindanao, North Cotabato and Sulu began in end-2019 and finished in early 2020. WFP provided CBT to 4,293 displaced families (21,465 individuals) affected by sporadic armed clashes in the south. WFP and the local government facilitated vegetable and corn production and handicrafts (mat weaving and pottery). In Sulu particularly, vegetable production led to the establishment of a community market. With the assistance, the number of assessed households with borderline and poor food consumption dropped from 19.4 percent in 2019 to 10.5 percent in 2020 and the proportion of those with acceptable food consumption increased from 80.7 percent to 89.5 percent. However, households adopted more negative coping strategies, as demonstrated in the worrying trend of the average consumption-based coping strategy index.



## Taal Volcano Eruption

In January 2020, Taal Volcano, the second most active volcano in the country, spewed ashes and lava resulting in a level 4 alert status (hazardous eruption imminent) within a 14 km radius of the volcano crater. To augment emergency response, the Government requested that WFP utilize its beneficiary and transfer management system, SCOPE, to conduct a profiling exercise of the affected populations. WFP enabled the use of a dedicated beneficiary registry in SCOPE where the Government could control and manage its own data. While WFP and the Government planned to register 100,000 households, the pandemic led to a suspension of the activity, which meant that only 4,398 families (17,607 individuals) were profiled. The remaining funds were redirected to the COVID-19 response. A potential resumption of the profiling exercise is yet to be determined.



The Department of Social Welfare and Development and WFP worked together in the profiling of households affected by the eruption of Taal Volcano in early 2020.

©WFP/Ariene Robles



## COVID-19 Response

To curtail the negative effect of the community quarantine and stringent social distancing measures on the economic, physical and psychosocial well-being of the most affected sectors of the population such as senior citizens, pregnant and lactating women, single parents, persons with disabilities, homeless families and workers in the informal sector, the Department of Social Welfare and Development has implemented the Social Amelioration Programme (SAP). SAP is the Government's cash emergency subsidy programme for 18 million Filipinos affected by the pandemic and aimed at covering basic needs like food and medicine. The Ministry of Social Services and Development in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) sought WFP's technical assistance on digital solutions to reach the most vulnerable populations through the SAP.



WFP and the Ministry of Social Services and Development registered more than 356,000 households were registered in SCOPE to receive financial assistance amid the pandemic.

©Ministry of Social Services and Development—BARMM

WFP supported the Government of BARMM in a rapid cash distribution where usual financial service providers could not necessarily operate given the quarantine measures in place. Under the pressure to deliver assistance as fast as possible, the Ministry needed a technical solution to support over 480,000 affected households in July in an accountable and efficient manner.

WFP conducted virtual and face-to-face training on the use of SCOPE to government personnel who undertook the beneficiary profiling and cash disbursement. Within 37 days, the Ministry deployed 600 enumerators, served 2.3 million people, and had their records placed in a single digital platform that was flexible and easy to use. To fast-track the operation, the Government's existing beneficiary data were migrated into SCOPE, while beneficiaries not yet included in any database were registered during the distribution. This significantly reduced registration time and physical contact with communities, limiting the risk of infection. More than 356,000 households were registered in SCOPE, and the Ministry of Social Services and Development provided cash assistance to almost 460,000 households.

The creation of a dedicated beneficiary registry in the SCOPE environment dedicated for the Government laid the groundwork for a longer-term approach towards further development of a digital ecosystem. The benefits of the solution exceeded the purpose of the current operation and enhanced the Government's capacities and trust in digital assistance delivery for programming.



*Remnants of a house show evidence of damages in San Miguel, Catanduanes, on 15th December 2020. WFP is providing support to local communities in Catanduanes, Philippines, following the devastating effects of Typhoon Goni.*



## Typhoons Goni and Vamco Response

On 1 November 2020, Typhoon Goni, the most powerful storm recorded worldwide this year, barreled through the archipelago, leaving Bicol Region severely affected. Catanduanes, an island province in the region, was badly hit with more than 2 million people affected and 10,000 homes damaged across eight regions. Several days later, Typhoon Vamco followed almost the same path that Goni crossed, compounding its impact. Vamco also left communities in Cagayan Valley submerged in water as the country's largest dam, Magat, opened its flood gates to avoid critical spill-over levels. It affected a total of 4.2 million people in the same regions affected by Goni. The National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council reported agricultural damages of USD 194 million.





©WFP/Arrete/Angelo Mendoza

*A local beneficiary acquires her Money Transfer Control Number in Pagsangahan, Catanduanes, on 17th December 2020. WFP is providing support to local communities in the province following the devastating effects of Typhoon Goni.*

The scale of the damages prompted the Government to invite humanitarian actors to complement its emergency response. The United Nations coordinated rapid needs assessments in Bicol Region and Cagayan Valley. WFP joined the assessments and gauged the food security and livelihood conditions in the most affected areas.

Based on the findings of the rapid assessments and the ongoing COVID-19 response, the United Nations Country Team and other humanitarian actors launched a Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan aiming to cover 5.4 million of the poorest Filipinos affected by the typhoons and the pandemic. Of this total number, WFP aims to reach more than 20,000 households with CBT to support their food needs. Thanks to WFP's reliable groundwork profiling and registering beneficiaries in SCOPE in the past, the Department of Social Welfare and Development endorsed SCOPE as the beneficiary registration platform for the Government and United Nations responses in Bicol.

In coordination with the Government and with Western Union as the financial service provider, WFP started its CBT assistance to cover the lifesaving needs of affected families focusing on the most vulnerable groups, specifically households headed by women, children and persons with disabilities. WFP started CBT disbursements in the municipality of San Miguel in Catanduanes in December and expanded them to selected communities in Albay Province in the first quarter of 2021. WFP targeted 12,243 households (61,215 individuals) for the operation but given the initial delays at the end of the year, it reached 2,189 households (10,945 individuals) during the first round of distribution. The finalization of two subsequent rounds is scheduled for the first quarter of 2021.



## Support to the Rehabilitation of Marawi City

Following the 2017 Marawi Siege that displaced more than 77,000 households, WFP continued its support to the rehabilitation of Marawi through capacity strengthening. To ensure integration of food security and nutrition into local planning, WFP supported the drafting of the Food Security and Nutrition Plan and Gender and Development Code of Lanao del Sur and Marawi City.

**GENDER AND AGE MARKER:** Strategic Outcome 1 partially integrated gender and age across its projects. WFP focused on reaching the most vulnerable groups affected by crises to address inequalities, but with a limited lens on gender and age.



# STRATEGIC OUTCOME 2

**Women, boys, and girls in provinces prioritized by the Government have adequate and healthy diets to reduce malnutrition by 2022 in line with government targets**

WFP's **Strategic Outcome 2, Activity 2** (end malnutrition) is anchored in the Philippine Plan of Action for Nutrition 2017-2022, which aims to reduce childhood stunting to an acceptable percentage (from 33.4 percent to 21.4 percent). Due to the very minimal funding received for this strategic outcome, WFP was not able to reach its intended beneficiaries, young children and pregnant and lactating women, with specialized nutritious food. However, a contribution from WFP's 2030 Fund enabled WFP to support the Government with capacity strengthening activities on food security and nutrition.



## Support to Policy and Guidelines

### **Government's Inter-agency Task Force on Zero Hunger**

Through Presidential Executive Order 101, the Inter-Agency Task Force on Zero Hunger (IATF-ZH) was formed in January 2020. Chaired by the Office of the Cabinet Secretary, the task force is responsible for formulating the National Food Policy, as well as coordinating and rationalizing all efforts to ensure a whole-of-government approach in attaining Zero Hunger by 2030. At present, IATF-ZH has set six key result areas embedded in the National Food Policy, namely, 1) review and rationalize existing policies, rules, and regulations related to Zero Hunger; 2) ensure available and

affordable food; 3) secure nutrition adequacy; 4) secure food accessibility and safety; 5) ensure sustainable food systems, food resiliency, and stability; and 6) ensure information, education, awareness, and people participation. WFP was chosen as technical partner and has advised on all key results areas, providing significant inputs into the crafting of the National Food Policy launched on World Food Day, 16 October 2020.

WFP and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) supported the Department of Health and National Nutrition Council in the technical review and finalization of the Nutrition-in-Emergencies Manual. It is now being used by the country and guides the provision of a package of health and nutrition interventions to pregnant and lactating women and young children to mitigate the negative effects of calamities.



## Strategic Platform, Planning, and Programming

### ***Enhanced Partnership Against Hunger and Poverty***

Formulated in 2020, the Enhanced Partnership Against Hunger and Poverty (EPAHP) is the offshoot of the Partnership Against Hunger and Poverty (PAHP), which expired in December 2019. Spearheaded by the Department of Social Welfare and Development, the EPAHP aims to address the key challenges in the social and economic inclusive growth of the country through a holistic whole-of-government approach to mitigate hunger, ensure food security and health, and reduce poverty in the rural communities. Together with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), WFP is a technical advisor to the group. Starting with only four member agencies, the EPAHP has expanded to include 26 members and resource agencies that pool and re-align resources to uphold the consortium's objective. EPAHP members were able to organize agrarian reform beneficiaries in all 17 regions of the country, and two national banks have provided credits to farmers. The consortium also developed a Community Participation Procurement Manual to engage farmers and link them with local markets (i.e. feeding institutions). WFP provided technical assistance with the overall strategy and planning of the manual, as well as drafting of the EPAHP Joint Memorandum Circular that defines the work and terms of reference of the members.

### ***Global Plan of Action on Child Wasting***

In March 2020, the [Global Action Plan \(GAP\) on Child Wasting](#) was released. The Philippines was identified as one of the frontrunner countries on GAP for its leadership and investments in contributing to the prevention and management of wasting. The National Nutrition Council, WFP, other United Nations agencies and relevant national agencies finalized key priorities from the list of recommended actions to sustain the work done to manage and reduce the prevalence of childhood acute malnutrition.

WFP was also involved in the development of the State of Food Insecurity in the Philippines Report and the Socio-Economic and Peace Framework (SEPF) backed up by the Common Country Assessment. WFP participated in the Mid-Term Review of the Philippine Plan of Action for Nutrition and the joint assessment of the Scaling-Up-Nutrition Initiative in the country. Moreover, WFP supported the Food and Nutrition Research Institute in the development and design of a web-based analysis tool to optimize low-cost and nutritionally adequate diets for Filipinos.



©WFP/Martin Parreno

WFP and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations were selected as advisers and witnessed the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding of the Enhanced Partnership Against Hunger and Poverty (EPAHP) led by Cabinet Secretary Karlo Nograles on 9 December 2019 in Malacañang. EPAHP aims to mitigate hunger, ensure food and nutrition security, and reduce poverty in urban and rural communities, including marginalized communities.





## Evidence Generation

In October 2020, WFP launched formative research to inform the design and development of a social and behaviour change communication (SBCC) strategy. The research will provide insights into the sociocultural barriers which contribute to poor dietary practices among women and children, and identify enablers and motivators that can play a critical role in improving these practices. Despite setbacks related to the recruitment and operation due to the pandemic, WFP successfully assembled its SBCC team in the Philippines and started the data collection in Maguindanao Province in October. The findings will be presented to the Government and development partners in the first half of 2021 for the subsequent development of SBCC strategy. It will also serve as WFP's contribution to improving the National Food Policy developed by the Inter-agency Task Force on Zero Hunger. Complementing this research, a media landscape analysis will be commissioned in early 2021.

To assess the effect of the pandemic on food costs, WFP updated the Cost of the Diet study (as part of its Fill the Nutrient Gap analysis) for all regions of the country. From January to May 2020, the year-on-year costs of a nutritious diet increased by around 5 percent at the national level, with several regions witnessing a similar price increase within only six months. Central Visayas recorded the highest increase: its urban and rural areas experienced 11 percent and 10 percent increases, respectively. The Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) also recorded a relatively high cost of diet. Urban and rural areas showed increases by 6 percent and 5 percent, respectively.



WFP rolled out its Social & Behaviour Change Communication project in 2020. The SBCC team had started data collection in the province of Maguindanao to understand the sociocultural barriers that contribute to poor dietary practices among women and children.



## Coordination and Networking

### *Scaling Up Nutrition Business Network (SBN)*

The Philippines became the 51st country to join the SUN Movement in 2015. The National Nutrition Council leads the SUN initiative in the country and oversees the different networks convened to support the Philippine Plan of Action for Nutrition. Under the SUN, six networks have been formed among the Government, United Nations, civil society organizations, businesses, academia and donors. In February 2020, WFP and the National Nutrition Council co-organized the SBN. It serves as the platform for business cooperation on nutrition initiatives, with the aim to reduce all forms of malnutrition among the nutritionally-vulnerable population. WFP and the National Nutrition Council congregated 13 members from the private sector and a further expansion is foreseen for 2021.





## Advocacy and other Initiatives

During the pandemic, WFP supported the National Nutrition Council in the design of a Rapid Nutrition Assessment and the development of two Nutrition Cluster Advisories. To advocate for food security and nutrition amid the pandemic, WFP provided keynote addresses and lectures in various government-led virtual media events such as the "July 2020 Nutrition Month Celebration," "Nutrition-in-Emergencies during the Pandemic," "First 1,000 Days Virtual Talk," and "*Dagyaw*: Open Government Partnership Virtual Talk on Food Security and Nutrition."

WFP developed recipe books both for the management of moderate acute malnutrition (MAM) and school feeding. The MAM recipe book was recognized by the National Nutrition Council and distributed nationwide at the height of the pandemic when ready-to-use supplementary foods were not available for acutely malnourished children. Parents were oriented in the use of government cash assistance for nutritious food, guided by the MAM recipe book. Meanwhile, the school feeding recipe book was included in the School-based Feeding Programme Manual of the Ministry of Basic, Higher and Technical Education in BARMM following WFP's successful iron fortification pilot in 2019.



*GENDER AND AGE MARKER: Gender and age were both fully integrated into the activities under this Strategic Outcome. WFP gathered baseline information from various demographics (pregnant and lactating women and caregivers of children) in its SBCC project.*



# STRATEGIC OUTCOME 3

Vulnerable communities in Mindanao have improved food security and nutrition by 2022 in line with government targets

**Strategic Outcome 3, Activity 3** comprises WFP's support to the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) and local governments to address the food security and nutrition needs of all segments of the population to further consolidate and enhance existing peace and development plans. The transformative process and strong institutional partnerships with ministries in BARMM have given WFP an opportunity to impart its expertise in integrating food security and nutrition to regional planning. Substantial funding gaps as well as restrictions related to COVID-19 hindered WFP's ability to reach all targeted beneficiaries. Still, WFP's policy support and technical assistance were highly successful.



**6,040** individuals reached with food/cash through food assistance for assets



**13** tools/products developed in Mindanao in support of food security and nutrition initiatives



**23,917** students supported with on-site school meals



**42** technical assistance activities and training sessions/workshops conducted



**US\$ 30,941** cash distributed to selected farmers through cash-based transfers



**250** government and national partner staff benefiting from technical assistance and training

*WFP helps uplift the lives of decommissioned and soon-to-be decommissioned combatants through agricultural productivity that will assimilate them back to society as economic contributors.*







## Bangsamoro Food Security and Nutrition Roadmap

With robust support from WFP, the BARMM Food Security and Nutrition Roadmap was formulated and launched in 2020. This marked a new era for designing, implementing and monitoring progress towards achieving a self-reliant, food-secure and resilient BARMM. The roadmap promotes synergy among ministries and development partners for improved food security and nutrition in the region. Specifically, it focuses on formulation and implementation of policies, programmes and projects towards (1) improved livelihood and household income with focus on agricultural productivity; (2) expanded markets and value chains; (3) increased resilience of vulnerable populations and communities; (4) enhanced management of natural resources and adaptation to climate change; (5) enhanced dietary quality and nutrition; (6) improved information systems, research and innovation for agriculture and nutrition; (7) improved policies, institutions and implementation capacity for food security and nutrition; and (8) improved women's empowerment and gender equality.

©Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, and Agrarian Reform



WFP and BARMM ministries launched the Food Security and Nutrition Roadmap in July 2020 to serve as the blueprint towards a self-sufficient, self-reliant, food secure Bangsamoro Region.



©WFP/Fahima Abdulaziz



## Convergence Model for Food Security

WFP worked hand-in-hand with BARMM ministries in establishing a convergence model. The model aims to strengthen coordination and collaboration across agencies and sectors to holistically implement their programmes and optimize impact to (1) protect, conserve and rehabilitate forests, coastal and marine resources; (2) uplift the lives of decommissioned and soon-to-be decommissioned combatants through agricultural productivity that will assimilate them back to society as economic contributors; and (3) mainstream disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation measures to improve resilience.

Part of WFP's contribution to the convergence model was to offer livelihood support opportunities to farmers as they awaited their yields during harvest season. WFP provided

WFP supports the Bangsamoro region in improving the lives and livelihood of decommissioned and soon-to-be decommissioned combatants through agricultural activities such as vegetable gardening and fruit and tree planting.



conditional cash-based transfers (CBT) to participants for their work in preserving and utilizing arable lands. While WFP planned to engage 5,500 farmers and their families (27,500 individuals), funding gaps forced it to drastically reduce its target to 1,000 households at the end of 2020. By year-end, 15 percent of targeted beneficiaries were reached (745 farmers and their families – 13,725 individuals). The farmers prepared land for vegetable production, planted nurseries and forest and fruit trees in eight municipalities. Beneficiaries and their families were registered in SCOPE and each household received PHP 6,245 (equivalent to USD 130). Due to implementation delays in the roll-out of CBT, the first round of distribution was carried out in November 2020. CBT disbursements in Lanao del Sur and Maguindanao continued into the first quarter of 2021.

WFP introduced the community-based participatory planning (CBPP) approach in the formulation of Convergence Area Development Plans (CADPs) and trained 51 staff from the regional level as trainers for municipal facilitators, with an additional 54 facilitators trained in five municipalities. The CBPP is a multi-sectoral approach that enabled the consideration and integration of food security and nutrition into planning, including the availability and accessibility of food commodities within the community. In one of the communities, the CADP captured the goals of all 160 participants about their future as smallholder farmers. These included rural community development in the form of farm-to-market roads, education, health and social services.



©WFP/Mamatanto Madidis

WFP's women beneficiaries in Maguindanao actively took part in the decision-making and led the marketing aspect of the project following the harvest.

## Bangsamoro Food Sufficiency Task Force

WFP informed policies that led to the issuance of an executive order creating the Bangsamoro Food Sufficiency Task Force. This kickstarted the region's food security and nutrition strategies focusing on sustainable food systems. WFP co-facilitated various capacity strengthening activities to ensure the functionality of the task force and participation of government agencies.



## Food Basket Survey and Market Analysis

Acknowledging market functionality as a crucial component of sustainable food systems, the Government of BARMM expressed its desire to conduct a coordinated market assessment, analysis and mapping of all markets in the region. WFP provided its assessment tools to determine the availability of basic food groups in the locality; map the local food sources and supply chain; and collect information on markets. This initiative will help lay down the fundamental requirements for sustainable food systems in the region and will assist the Government in targeting, analysing, programming, and implementing projects, and enable the adoption of policy reforms to prioritize locally produced food for feeding programmes. WFP trained 40 Bangsamoro Food Security Task Force members on food basket surveys and market assessments.



## Iron-Fortified Rice through School-based Feeding and School-based Feeding Programme Process Review

During the last quarter of 2019, WFP piloted an iron fortification project in Mindanao and established the viability of sourcing locally produced iron-fortified rice kernels and blending in the region. As the pilot continued in early 2020, WFP supported 23,917 schoolchildren in 72 schools in Mindanao, in partnership with the Ministry of Education. WFP initially targeted 45,000 schoolchildren, however, the enactment of the Food Fortification Law and the National School Feeding Law for undernourished children provided a window of opportunity for WFP to prioritize and focus on malnourished children through iron-fortified rice.

In conjunction with WFP's initiatives in improving and expanding school feeding in Mindanao, the Ministry of Basic, Higher and Technical Education and WFP had conducted a process review of the regional school-based feeding programme (SBFP) to revisit the implementation processes, identify gaps and challenges, and formulate action points to further strengthen the programme. Building on the findings of the process review, WFP provided and co-funded capacity strengthening activities. In 2020, WFP focused on the development of BARMM SBFP guidelines and modules to ensure and promote a common understanding of SBF implementation; review of the SBFP monitoring & evaluation system; and assistance with the procurement through supplier mapping and identification of licensed iron-fortified kernel suppliers in Mindanao, quality testing with the Food and Drug Administration and blending and mixing ratio based on Government guidelines.



©WFP/Anthony Chase Lim

*WFP supported the Bangsamoro Government in the improvement of the school-based feeding programme in 2021 through a pilot iron fortification project that reached more than 23,000 schoolchildren.*



## Food Security and Peacebuilding Study

Together with forumZFD, a local peacebuilding agency, WFP launched a study in October 2020 on "Food Security and Peacebuilding" to articulate WFP's contribution to peace in BARMM, based on analysis and stakeholder consultations. The project also entails the development of a monitoring framework and research strategy to gather further evidence of contributions to peace.

In 2020, WFP and forumZFD completed three out of four study phases. In Phase 1, WFP conducted a systemic conflict analysis to understand the conflict context. This implied taking into consideration the various conflict drivers, including issues of governance and normalization processes and feelings of exclusion and marginalization. Phase 2 comprised consultations to analyse WFP's contributions to peace. According to draft findings, one of WFP's activities that helped support peace was the recent establishment of the convergence model with regional ministries, which created a perceived 'one-stop shop' for uplifting the lives of the communities. The regional government saw the collaboration as a mechanism to combine resources,



knowledge, and skills. This formed a stronger political will to push for needed reforms, particularly to implement joint programmes effectively and give a sense of ownership to building sustainable peace in the region. There remains a need for a more conscious integration of conflict sensitivity principles and peacebuilding in capacity strengthening activities with the ministries, and for a structured integration of conflict analysis in programme planning and implementation. In Phase 3, the researchers formulated recommendations to enhance WFP's planning, monitoring and evaluation system by integrating conflict analysis and including an outcome mapping to articulate and measure WFP's contributions to peace. Phase 4, during which findings and recommendations are to be finalized, will commence in 2021.



*In Mindanao, WFP works with the local government units in implementing farming activities that will provide income to selected farmers through a food assistance for assets project.*

*In partnership with the BARMM government ministries, WFP is enabling livelihood activities among smallholder farmers through vegetable production, fruit and trees planting, and establishment of agro-forestry nurseries in arable lands in Maguindanao.*



**GENDER AND AGE MARKER:** Strategic Outcome 3 fully integrated gender and age in its programming. It actively contributed to achieving equality across gender and age and other vulnerable groups.





# STRATEGIC OUTCOME 4

National and local government agencies have enhanced capabilities to reduce vulnerabilities to shocks by 2022



**6,000** households surveyed amid the pandemic



**157** government and national partners staff trained by WFP



**231** trucks provided to support the Government's COVID-19, volcanic eruption, and typhoon emergency responses



**74** individuals benefiting from climate and weather risk information through face-to-face communication channels



**13** technical assistance activities and trainings conducted



**6** sets of customized emergency communications system and vehicles handed over to the Government

**Strategic Outcome 4 Activity 4** aims to support national and local capacities for disaster risk reduction and management as well as climate change adaptation. With sufficient funding, Activity 4 provided food security monitoring tools to the Government during the pandemic and completed the first phase of Forecast-based Financing (FbF), among other achievements.



## Remote Monitoring & Assessment for COVID-19 Response

WFP supported the Government's COVID-19 response through nationwide remote monitoring and assessments, in addition to beneficiary registration and management in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM). The Department of Social Welfare and Development and WFP agreed to use WFP's remote monitoring and assessment tools to support the Government in post-distribution monitoring to understand how the beneficiaries of the Government's Social Amelioration Programme (SAP) utilized the financial assistance received during the pandemic and to collect information on the impact of the crisis on the food security of affected populations, both SAP beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries. The inclusion of non-beneficiary households and use of a longitudinal approach allowed stronger conclusions about the outcomes of the SAP. Preliminary results indicated that around three in ten households were moderately or severely food-insecure. It is also worth highlighting that the SAP transfer value was more than the average income of beneficiaries following the COVID-19 shock and that 97 percent of them used the assistance to purchase food. The level of satisfaction among SAP beneficiaries was high, with 84 percent satisfied with the quantity received and 87 percent satisfied with the timeliness of the assistance. Further analysis, including incorporating data from the forthcoming second and third rounds of data collection, would be required to be more conclusive about the effectiveness of SAP and inform policy recommendations such as better targeting and transfer value for SAP interventions. Overall findings for all three rounds will be released following the completion of the study in 2021.



## Closing of the Five-Year Forecast-based Financing Project

WFP's first FbF project in the Philippines concluded in December 2020 after five years of implementation. The project helped strengthen the capacity of the Government to shift from a traditional response after a disaster to an anticipatory approach through early action, particularly through the revision of guidelines on the declaration of state of calamity that will allow the local government access to the quick response fund to finance anticipatory actions. Evidence from an early simulation exercise WFP conducted in late 2019 highlighted that the community was able to mitigate risks and minimize losses thanks to the anticipatory measures initiated by WFP and supported by the local government.

In 2020, WFP continued to oversee the implementation of preparedness standard operating procedures (SOPs) when specific triggers were met. WFP supported the development and simulation of the FbF SOPs in partner provinces, which have been integrated into the local response plan. Some partner provinces also allocated financial resources for early actions.

One of the most salient learnings from the five-year implementation was the strengthening of anticipatory actions as it complemented pre-emptive evacuation and information dissemination. This innovative aspect of resilience programmes can be integrated into the disaster risk reduction and management plan of every community, where there is adequate coordination, programme orientation, and communication prior to a disaster. With support from the Green Climate Fund, FbF will be scaled up to new areas and will support the Government in the operationalization of multi-hazard anticipatory actions. WFP will also explore entry points for the integration of FbF and shock-responsive social protection.



## Shock-Responsive Social Protection

With the aim of strengthening shock-responsive social protection in the Philippines, WFP collected vulnerability and impact analysis data to refine hazard-specific vulnerability and risk assessments on typhoons and drought. These were complemented with government vulnerability datasets on flood and drought, and WFP's global datasets to analyse floods and droughts.

Based on the assessment findings, WFP developed initial models for typhoon vulnerability maps with triggers and thresholds. These tools can enhance the Government's social protection mechanisms and inform actions of humanitarian responders such as WFP, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the Philippine Red Cross. Going forward, forecast information on upcoming typhoons will be overlaid with vulnerability maps to serve as references for early simulations among disaster responders.

WFP will commence the shock-responsive social protection capacity assessment of the national government and the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) from February to April 2021. This aims at consolidating existing technical approaches and capacity strengthening materials to enable government partners to design, implement and finance shock-responsive social protection.

*Remnants of the destruction caused by Typhoon Kammuri in December 2019. By using forecast information, WFP identified the communities that will be worst hit by the typhoon and provided early action response through cash assistance.*



**Strategic Outcome 4, Activity 5** aims to strengthen and augment government and partners' emergency preparedness and response capacity to include supply chain and information and communication technology. WFP received requests from the Government to provide logistics surge support to various emergency operations. Flexibility in the contributions received under this activity enabled WFP to immediately respond to government requests especially during the onset of typhoons Goni and Vamco. Additionally, WFP wrapped up the first phase of its project with the Department of Information and Communication Technology.



## Taal Volcano Eruption

WFP supported the Government's COVID-19 response through nationwide remote monitoring and assessments, in addition to beneficiary registration and management in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM). The Department of Social Welfare and Development and WFP agreed to use WFP's remote monitoring and assessment tools to support the Government in post-distribution monitoring to understand how the beneficiaries of the Government's Social Amelioration Programme (SAP) utilized the financial assistance received during the pandemic and to collect information on the impact of the crisis on the food security of affected populations, both SAP beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries. The inclusion of non-beneficiary households and use of a longitudinal approach allowed stronger conclusions about the outcomes of the SAP. Preliminary results indicated that around three in ten households were moderately or severely food-insecure. It is also worth highlighting that the SAP transfer value was more than the average income of beneficiaries following the COVID-19 shock and that 97 percent of them used the assistance to purchase food. The level of satisfaction among SAP beneficiaries was high, with 84 percent satisfied with the quantity received and 87 percent satisfied with the timeliness of the assistance. Further analysis, including incorporating data from the forthcoming second and third rounds of data collection, would be required to be more conclusive about the effectiveness of SAP and inform policy recommendations such as better targeting and transfer value for SAP interventions. Overall findings for all three rounds will be released following the completion of the study in 2021.



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Since the COVID-19 pandemic began spreading in the Philippines, WFP has supported the Government by transporting various health and medical equipment and kits to and from various cities/provinces in the country.



## COVID-19 Response

WFP provided 95 trucks to move relief items, personal protective equipment, health kits and other equipment to Luzon and Visayas. WFP also supported the local governments of Pila, Laguna and Cotabato City in establishing temporary medical facilities to serve as isolation centres for suspected cases of COVID-19 through the installation of mobile storage units, portable offices and generators. This effectively provided them a localized solution to ease the overwhelming load on government hospitals. In BARMM, WFP offered free storage in its Polloc warehouse for 2,800 mt of rice allocated to affected families. On a cost-recovery basis, WFP also transported cleaning and disinfection kits to different locations nationwide on behalf of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the International Medical Corps.





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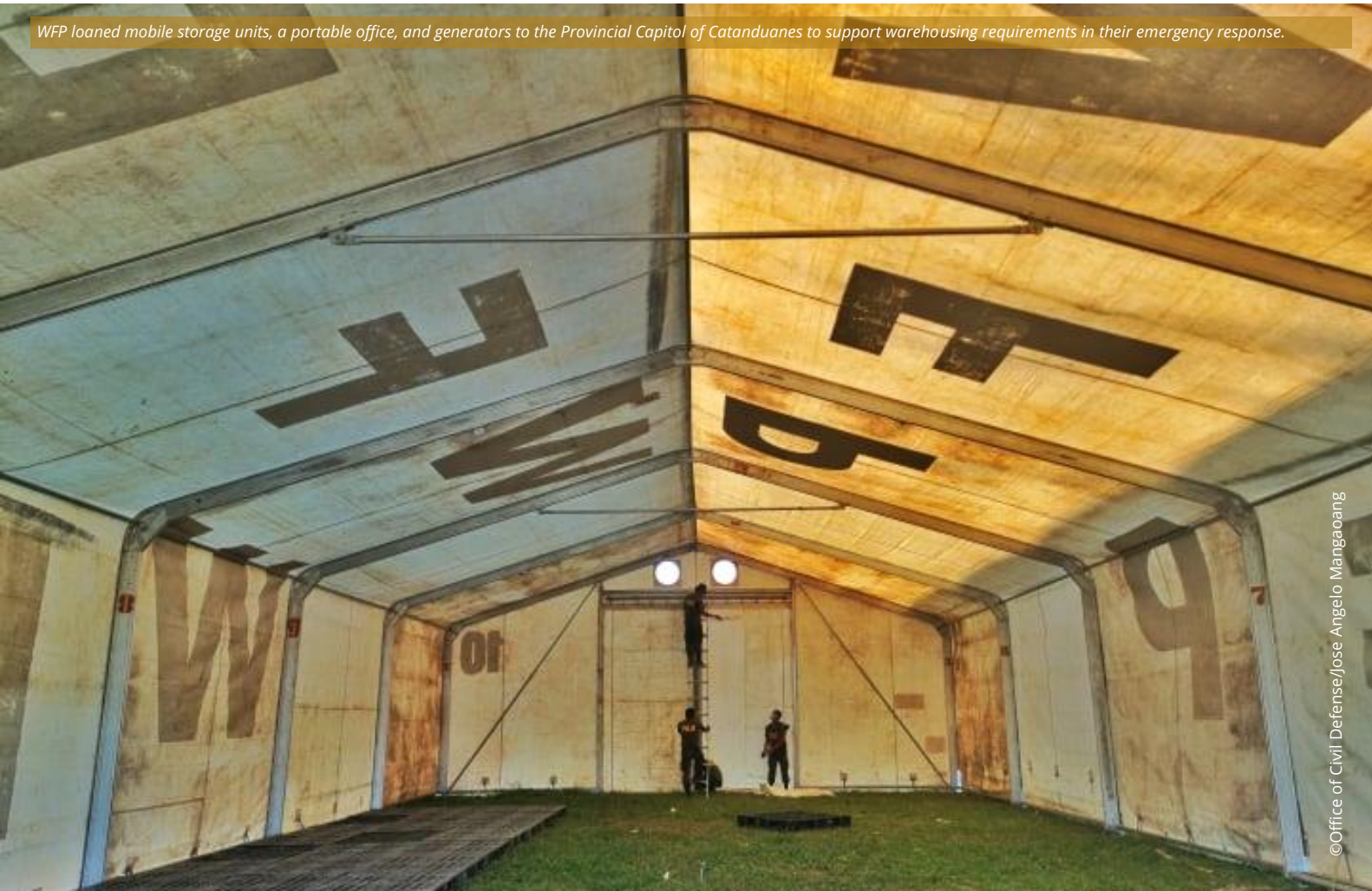


## Typhoons Goni and Vamco Response

When the regions of Bicol and Cagayan Valley were battered by typhoons Goni and Vamco on 1 November 2020, WFP first committed to providing 35 trucks for emergency logistics operations as requested by the Government. Given higher than expected needs, WFP mobilized 73 trucks to transport family food packs, water and essential non-food items such as kitchen items, water cans, tarpaulin rolls (for temporary shelter), hygiene kits, and tents.

WFP provided mobile storage units and a portable office to the Provincial Capitol of Catanduanes, which served as a logistics hub. WFP also sent two generators, one for the portable office and another for the water filtration system to provide clean drinking water to communities.

WFP loaned mobile storage units, a portable office, and generators to the Provincial Capitol of Catanduanes to support warehousing requirements in their emergency response.







## Government Emergency Telecommunications System Project

Towards the end of the year, WFP and the Department of Information and Communications Technology wrapped up the first phase of its joint project, the Government Emergency Communications System – Mobile Operations Vehicle for Emergencies (GECS MOVE). WFP completed and turned over six MOVE sets, each with three components: (1) the hub, a customized heavy-duty truck with integrated communications system; (2) the dispatch, a support vehicle to extend the reach of the hub, and; (3) an off-road motorcycle with communication equipment to reach inaccessible terrain.

GECS MOVE are rapid deployable communications systems aimed at accelerating response services during crises. Engineers from the WFP Fast IT and Telecommunications Emergency and Support Team (FITTEST) in Dubai launched a nationwide training caravan to equip engineers from the Department of Information and Communications Technology and technical staff in the operation and maintenance of the MOVE sets.



Each MOVE set is composed of (1) the hub, a customized heavy-duty truck with integrated communications system; (2) the dispatch, a support vehicle to extend the reach of the hub, and; (3) an off-road motorcycle with communication equipment to reach inaccessible terrain.

**GENDER AND AGE MARKER:** Strategic Outcome 4 focused on informing policies, knowledge transfer, providing technical support to the Government, and augmenting logistics and emergency telecommunications support during crises. Hence, Strategic Outcome 4 did not integrate gender and age in its programming given the nature of activities in 2020.



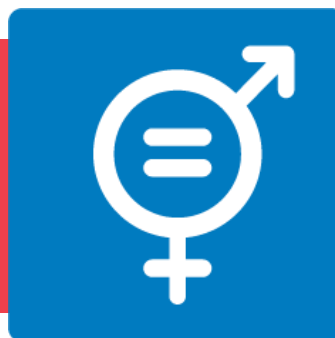
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# CROSS-CUTTING RESULTS





# PROGRESS TOWARDS GENDER EQUALITY



The Philippines has consistently narrowed down gender gaps throughout the years. According to the 2020 Gender Gap Report, the country ranked second in East Asia and the Pacific with 78 percent of its gender gap fully closed due to its strong performance in gender equality on economic participation and opportunity, educational attainment and health and survival. This is widely observed in urban settings where women are highly represented in the workforce.

Further, according to the 2019 Gender Diversity Benchmark for Asia, the Philippines ranked first in gender diversity and had the smallest pay gap between men and women. However, women remain outnumbered by men in terms of occupying leadership roles. In rural settings, many women are still relegated to traditional roles such as housewives and primary caregivers of children. Community quarantine measures related to COVID-19 further challenged the country's progress towards gender equality. In one of WFP's project areas in Mindanao, WFP found that the proportion of women represented in food assistance decision-making bodies had dropped significantly from 51 percent in 2019 to 41 percent in 2020. This was likely influenced by the fact that women spent considerably more time with family duties (including child care and homeschooling) and household chores, lacking time to participate in food assistance decision-making. Acknowledging these challenges, WFP has started to explore ways to raise women's participation and increase its advocacy efforts.



©WFP/Catherine Mones

*As the women of Datu Saudi Ampatuan joined WFP's livelihood activities and received conditional cash assistance, they learned not just farming techniques, but also about the agricultural value chain. The women farmers of Maguindanao pushed for the sustainability of their livelihoods even after the completion of the cash-based assistance.*

Meanwhile, WFP integrated gender in its capacity strengthening activities. During the remote assessment and post-distribution monitoring that WFP conducted to gauge the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and utilization of financial assistance from the Government, WFP included gender dimensions in the design of the study. It gathered varied perspectives from different genders, age groups and socioeconomic statuses.

When WFP provided cash assistance to decommissioned combatants in Maguindanao and Lanao del Sur to assist them in transitioning to productive work, it introduced the community-based participatory planning approach. This consultative process engaged all sectors in the community including women, the elderly, youth, indigenous peoples and religious groups. Although the targeting criteria focused on decommissioned combatants, the majority of which are male, WFP included 105 women-led households in the 1,000 participating households. The women actively took part in the decision-making and led the development of marketing products in selling their harvest.

In the development of the Food Security and Nutrition Roadmap of the Bangsamoro Region, WFP included a section on improving gender equality and women empowerment. In particular, the strategies entail the adoption of policies to protect the rights of women and encourage their participation in agricultural value chains. Moreover, they foresee integrating gender policies in community programmes, and providing opportunities for microfinancing and development programmes targeting women entrepreneurs.

In Lanao del Sur, WFP supported a technical working group to enhance the Gender and Development Code to help address issues faced by marginalized people. This will also be a component in the implementation of the Province's Food Security and Nutrition Plan 2020-2023. At the end of the year, the gender and development fund of the province was utilized to assist disadvantaged women through home industries that generated income.



*"Before, we were just stay-at-home wives because we thought we do not have the skills needed to have a job. But when we joined this programme, we realized that we can do so much more," - these were the words of the women of the Pamatuladan Ladies Cooperative who benefited from WFP's food assistance for assets activities in Maguindanao.*



# PROTECTION AND ACCOUNTABILITY TO AFFECTED POPULATION



WFP ensured that the protection and accountability to affected populations were central in all aspects of the programme from planning, design and implementation to feedback.

The safety, dignity and integrity of the people it assists are of paramount importance to WFP. Hence, principles and systems are in place to ensure that WFP effectively delivers its programmes without endangering the welfare of its beneficiaries. During registration in SCOPE, WFP's beneficiary and transfer management platform, WFP secured the permission and consent of beneficiaries to collect and process their data. Prior to giving their permission, beneficiaries received an orientation session to ascertain that they had a thorough understanding of the purpose of collecting their information and who had access to their data. Beneficiaries were also made aware that they owned their data, which could be deleted or updated upon their request. For this reason, WFP also advertised its Community Feedback Mechanism (CFM) to beneficiaries. For every intervention that required sharing or transferring a copy of beneficiary data, WFP and its partners signed a data-sharing agreement.

WFP maintains zero tolerance for sexual exploitation and abuse and ensured protection against sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) in all its operations. In 2020, it remained an active member of the Philippine PSEA Task Force and participated in the development of a PSEA Task Force Facilitator's Training Manual. Together with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and Translators without Borders, WFP supported the humanitarian community with data collection for an assessment to identify how organizations are planning and responding to protection issues.

To ensure accountability to affected populations, WFP strengthened its efforts to inform populations about



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*Before Typhoon Kammuri made landfall in Sorsogon, Philippines, WFP utilized scientific forecast (through the Forecast-based Financing project) to identify the communities that will be most affected by the typhoon. WFP implemented an early action response and provided financial assistance to the communities to help them preposition food and repair their houses in preparation for the imminent threats of the typhoon.*

its programmes. Monitoring results demonstrated the success of these measures, as the percentage of assisted people who felt properly informed about the programme increased significantly compared to the baseline values. In addition, WFP invested in creating a greater understanding among the communities of how they could seek information and provide feedback on WFP's programmes through its CFM.

Fulfilling its 2019 plans to adopt a new CFM system to improve the recording and tracking mechanism, WFP started using the SugarCRM (customer relations management) software in 2020. SugarCRM is a tool with mobile/offline capability that allows for easier tracking of complaints and feedback received from various channels. Two WFP staff were trained on the use and management of SugarCRM. The system upgrade enabled WFP to easily customize its CFM data dashboard, draft reports and access quick analytics, and integrate it with other systems such as SCOPE. Use of the SugarCRM system improved WFP's beneficiary services by allowing easy tracking and case status updates.

In all operations on the ground, WFP guaranteed visibility of its CFM hotlines and email address on banners, calling cards, flyers and other communications materials. WFP staff also advertised the CFM during community-based participatory planning and encouraged the community to be transparent in airing their concerns to further establish trust between the organization and the community.

In 2020, WFP received 138 messages through its CFM. Nineteen of these were inquiries, 22 expression of gratitude, 51 requests for assistance due to the pandemic, 38 were information requests on how to claim assistance and eight were complaints about local facilitators. Out of 138 messages received, 50 were from women, 40 from men and 48 preferred not to say. All feedback received through various channels was treated with utmost confidentiality by a dedicated CFM focal person who directly handled all feedback received, including sensitive information. This enabled WFP to create a safe space for various kinds of feedback received from the public. WFP utilized all feedback received to strengthen the CFM even in remote locations. It also helped improve targeting, thus enhancing the positive effect of the response.







The Philippines remained on top of the list of countries suffering the most from extreme weather events and sustaining weather-related losses in 2018 and over a 20-year period from 1998 to 2018, according to the Global Climate Risk Index 2020. The regular exposure to typhoons means that the country often faces new typhoons while still recovering from previous ones, derailing recovery efforts and further endangering the affected communities that are in the usual pathways of typhoons.



*In partnership with the BARMM government ministries, WFP is enabling livelihood activities among smallholder farmers through vegetable production, fruit and trees planting, and establishment of agro-forestry nurseries in arable lands in Maguindanao.*

While the Government has made commendable strides in improving its resilience, risk reduction and response efforts, gaps in anticipatory measures and emergency responses are yet to be fully bridged. Agriculture, which represents the largest share of livelihoods in rural communities, is often hit hardest. The impact of climate change also contributes to the depletion of arable lands, directly affecting food systems.

WFP contributed to the mitigation of the impacts of natural hazards and climate change by engaging in sustainable activities in its project areas. In the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM), WFP has participated in an ongoing food security and environment-centric convergence project towards capacity strengthening. The collaboration with BARMM ministries showcased sustainable income-generating activities towards holistic rural development. This concerted effort is a multi-sectoral approach with the aim to (1) protect, conserve, and rehabilitate forests, coastal, and marine resources to achieve ecological balance and diversity; (2) uplift the lives of decommissioned and soon-to-be decommissioned combatants through agricultural productivity that will assimilate them back to society as economic contributors towards development; and (3) mainstream disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation measures to improve community resilience.

In October 2020, WFP launched the Philippine Climate Change and Food Security Analysis to better understand the short-, medium- and long-term impacts that climate change will have on food security, nutrition, and livelihoods. This analysis will inform WFP's technical assistance to the Government around adaptation planning. It will also serve as the analytical foundation for joint interventions and proposals to donors with climate change adaptation programming priorities.

In October 2020, WFP launched a study that will foresee and model the projected impacts of climate change over the next 70 years in the Philippines. The study will look at the areas of food production, access, utilization and consumption and stability. Using the lens of food production, WFP will study the impact of climate change on crops, livestock and staples in the Philippines, as well as plant disease patterns that affect food production. On access, WFP will focus on the impacts of climate change on markets and access to food. The analysis will also factor in the effect on water availability, rural infrastructure, and nutrition. Considering these three dimensions, WFP will assess how climate change will impact food security in the long term. Findings are expected in the second quarter of 2021.

# 2020 ANNUAL COUNTRY REPORT

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Josephine Tomon is one of WFP's beneficiaries in its cash assistance project in 2020. WFP is providing support to local communities in Catanduanes, Philippines, following the devastating effects of Typhoon Goni. Josephine, a mother of 9, plants vegetables, takes care of pigs, and her husband is a jeepney driver. Due to the typhoon, they lost their entire house which remains untouched. Currently, she lives with her husband and three of her children in the home of one of her daughters.

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