



Food Assistance Convention

**FOOD ASSISTANCE CONVENTION
2020 ANNUAL NARRATIVE REPORT**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|---|----|
| Acronyms..... | 5 |
| Executive summary..... | 8 |
| General Context..... | 8 |
| Global Food and Nutrition Situation in 2020 | 8 |
| The Food Assistance Convention..... | 11 |
| Reporting on Food Assistance Operations | 12 |
| Committee Meetings | 14 |
| Field Mission | 14 |
| Overall Assistance by FAC Member States..... | 15 |
| Food Assistance in 2020..... | 15 |
| Australia | 15 |
| Austria..... | 15 |
| Canada | 16 |
| Denmark | 17 |
| European Union | 17 |
| Finland | 18 |
| France..... | 18 |
| Japan | 19 |
| Republic of Korea..... | 19 |
| Russia Federation..... | 20 |
| Slovenia | 20 |
| Spain..... | 21 |
| Sweden..... | 21 |
| Switzerland | 22 |

2020 Food Assistance Convention Narrative Report

| | |
|---|----|
| United States | 23 |
| Key Food Assistance Responses by FAC Members | 24 |
| Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) | 24 |
| Yemen | 25 |
| Afghanistan | 25 |
| Syria (and neighbouring countries/Syrian Refugees)..... | 25 |
| Lebanon | 26 |
| South Sudan | 26 |
| Ethiopia (Tigray Region)..... | 26 |
| Sahel Food and Nutrition Crisis | 27 |
| Bangladesh/Myanmar (Rohingya Crisis) | 27 |
| Forgotten crisis and/or other areas..... | 28 |
| Cameroon | 28 |
| Latin America and the Caribbean | 28 |
| Coordination among Donors | 29 |
| Overall COVID-19 Response | 29 |
| Global Network against Food Crises | 29 |
| Good Humanitarian Donorship..... | 30 |
| Policy Initiatives | 30 |
| Disability and Inclusion..... | 30 |
| The European Green Deal | 30 |
| The Grand Bargain..... | 31 |
| Innovative Approaches to Food Assistance..... | 31 |
| Anticipatory action..... | 31 |
| School Feeding Programmes | 32 |
| Best Practices and Lessons Learned in 2020 | 32 |
| Lessons from Multi-Sectoral Resilience Food Security Activities | 32 |

2020 Food Assistance Convention Narrative Report

| | |
|---|----|
| Packaging Safety | 33 |
| Strengthened Localization | 33 |
| Three-year Consecutive Rice Contribution amidst COVID-19 | 33 |
| Annex 1: Overview of Contributions by FAC Members In 2020 | 34 |
| Annex 2: FAC Contribution breakdown by Earmarking Type in 2020 | 34 |
| Annex 3: Overview of FAC Contributions by Recipient Country in 2020 | 35 |

ACRONYMS

| | |
|----------|---|
| ACF | Action Contre la Faim |
| ADA | Austrian Development Agency |
| ADC | Australian Development Cooperation |
| AECID | La Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo (Spanish Agency for International Development) |
| AHP | Australian Humanitarian Partnership |
| AUD | Australian Dollar |
| ASEAN | Association of South-East Asian Nations |
| ADF | ASEAN Disability Forum |
| BHA | USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance |
| BMLRT | Austrian Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Regions and Tourism |
| BMNT | Austrian Federal Ministry of Sustainability and Tourism |
| CAR | Central African Republic |
| CALP | Cash Learning Partnership |
| CBPF | Country Based Pooled Funds |
| CBT | Cash-Based Transfers |
| CCC | Commodity Credit Corporation |
| CERF | Central Emergency Response Fund |
| CFS | Committee on World Food Security |
| CH | Cadre Harmonisé |
| CHF | Swiss Franc |
| CIS | Commonwealth of Independent States |
| COVID-19 | Coronavirus Disease 2019 |
| DFAT | Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Australia |
| DG ECHO | European Commission's Directorate General for Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid |
| DPRK | Democratic People's Republic of Korea |
| DRC | Democratic Republic of the Congo |
| DRR | Disaster Risk Reduction |
| ECHO | European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations |
| EFSN | Enhancing Food Security and Nutrition |
| EU | European Union |
| EUR | Euro |
| FAC | Food Assistance Convention |
| FAO | Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations |
| FAS | USDA Foreign Agricultural Service |
| FbF | Forecast-based Financing |
| FPI | Food Price Index |
| FSIN | Food Security Information Network |
| FSL | Food Security and Livelihoods |
| FEWS | Famine Early Warning Systems Network |
| FFP | USAID Legacy Office of Food for Peace |
| FFPr | Food for Progress |

2020 Food Assistance Convention Narrative Report

| | |
|-------|--|
| FY | Fiscal Year |
| GB | Grand Bargain |
| GBV | Gender-based Violence |
| GEWE | Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment |
| GFNC | Global Network against Food Crises |
| GHD | Good Humanitarian Donorship |
| GRFC | Global Report on Food Crises |
| HDP | Humanitarian-development-peace nexus |
| HEB | High-energy Biscuits |
| HRW | Hard Red Winter Wheat |
| IBRD | International Bank for Reconstruction and Development |
| ICRC | International Committee of the Red Cross |
| ICSP | Interim Country Strategic Plan |
| IDA | International Disability Alliance |
| IDMC | Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre |
| IDP | Internally Displaced Person |
| IFAD | International Fund for Agricultural Development |
| IFRC | International Federation of the Red Cross and Red crescent Societies |
| IHL | International Humanitarian Law |
| IPC | Integrated Food Security Phase Classification |
| IRA | Immediate Response Account |
| MAFRA | Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs of the Republic of Korea |
| MT | Metric Ton |
| NGO | Non-Governmental Organization |
| NRC | Norwegian Refugee Council |
| OCHA | United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Aid |
| ODA | Official Development Assistance |
| OFDA | USAID Legacy Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance |
| OPT | Occupied Palestinian Territories |
| PDF | Pacific Disability Forum |
| PIO | Public International Organization |
| PVO | Private Voluntary Organization |
| PSNP | Productive Safety Net Programme |
| RBA | Rome-based Agencies |
| RFSA | Resilience Food Security Activity |
| ROK | Republic of Korea |
| RUTF | Ready to Use therapeutic Foods |
| SDC | Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation |
| SDG | Sustainable Development Goals |
| SHA | Swiss Humanitarian Aid Unit |
| SIPRI | Stockholm International Peace Research Institute |
| SPF | Strategic Partnership Framework |
| TCI | Transforming Communities for Inclusion of persons with psychosocial disabilities |
| TdH | Terre des Hommes |
| THR | Take-Home Rations |

2020 Food Assistance Convention Narrative Report

| | |
|--------|---|
| UN | United Nations |
| UNDP | United Nations Development Programme |
| UNFPA | United Nations Population Fund |
| UNHCR | Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees |
| UNICEF | United Nations Children's Fund |
| UNIDO | United Nations Industrial Development Organisation |
| UNRWA | United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees |
| USA | United States of America |
| USAID | United States Agency for International Development |
| USD | United States Dollars |
| WFP | World Food Programme |
| WHS | World Humanitarian Summit |

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Globally, emergency hunger worsened in 2020. According to the *Global Report on Food Crises*, approximately 155 million people in 55 countries/territories - or 21.5 percent of the population analysed - were classified in crisis condition or worse (IPC/CH Phase 3 or above)¹ or equivalent. This represents an alarming increase of nearly 20 million people since 2019, when almost 135 million people were facing acute food insecurity. The magnitude and severity of food crises in 2020 were mainly driven by protracted conflict and insecurity, economic shocks – related to the COVID-19 pandemic - and weather extremes which exacerbated pre-existing fragilities. With the looming threat of famine and the heightened vulnerability of women and children to malnutrition, the continued commitment and determination of the international community to provide a comprehensive and principled humanitarian response is paramount.

The continued increase of people affected by food insecurity emphasizes the ongoing relevance of the Food Assistance Convention (FAC). The FAC represents a commitment by its Parties² to contribute to global food security and to improve the ability of the international community to respond to emergency food crises, to save and change lives, to reduce hunger, to improve levels of nutrition, to create livelihoods, and to strengthen the resilience and self-sufficiency of the most vulnerable populations. This 2020 Food Assistance Convention Annual Report presents a summary of the Parties' contributions towards these objectives, as per their individual financial and narrative reports for the year.

In 2020, all Parties fulfilled or substantially exceeded their commitments by collectively contributing over six billion three hundred thousand US dollars to the improvement of worldwide food security. Key responses were supported in collaboration with various agencies and programmes of the United Nations, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, national governments in the developing world, and civil-society organizations. Geographically, food assistance was provided in Africa, Asia, Europe, the Middle East, Latin America and the Caribbean, and the Pacific region. Food assistance was provided as in-kind food distribution, cash-based transfers, food vouchers, fortified food programmes, school feeding programmes, work-for-food programmes, nutrition-targeted interventions, and much more.

GENERAL CONTEXT

Global Food and Nutrition Situation in 2020

In 2020, approximately 155 million people in 55 countries/territories were classified in crisis conditions or worse (IPC/CH Phase 3 or above) or equivalent. An estimated 15.8 million

¹ GRFC, 2021, p.10

² In 2021: Australia, Austria, Canada, Denmark, European Union, Finland, France, Japan, Republic of Korea, Luxembourg, Russia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United States of America.

children under the age of 5 years suffered from wasting, while 75.2 million were affected by stunting. Unequal gender norms, exacerbated by the socio-economic impact of Covid-19, drove greater loss of women’s livelihoods, pushing them further into poverty.

Geographically, Africa remained the continent most affected by food crises, accounting for close to two-thirds of acutely-food insecure people with 97.9 million acutely-food insecure people - an increase of 54 percent compared to 2019 – largely due to intensifying conflict, mass displacement and the economic impact of COVID-19. Substantial challenges continue to exist in the Middle East with a total of 29.4 million acutely-food insecure people, followed by South Asia (15.6M), Central America and Haiti (11.8M) and Eastern Europe (0.6M)., predominately due to increasing analysis coverage, conflict, repeated weather extremes and economic fallout of COVID-19 (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Numbers of acutely food-insecure people in Crisis or worse (IPC/CH Phase 3 or above) by region.³



For the third year in a row, three conflict-affected countries – Yemen, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), and Afghanistan – had the largest populations of food insecure people. Along with the Syrian Arab Republic, these countries account for 40% of the world’s total acutely food insecure. Ten countries/territories – DRC, Yemen, Afghanistan, Syrian Arab Republic, Sudan, northern Nigeria, Ethiopia, South Sudan, Zimbabwe and Haiti - constituted the worst food crises and accounted for 103.2 million (66%) of the total world population in IPC/CH 3 or above (see Figure 2). Alarming, 121 500 people were in famine-like conditions – Catastrophe IPC Phase 5 – in South Sudan (105 000) and Yemen (16 500). Conflict and insecurity, remained the primary driver of food crises in 2020 which disrupted livelihoods, trade and crop production and increased spike in food prices. Economics shocks were more significant, particularly in Haiti, Sudan and Zimbabwe. Compared to 2019, the impact of weather extremes was relatively lower

³ GRFC 2021, p. 25

than the other two drivers, similarly to locust infestation which threatened crops in east and southern Africa and Yemen.

Figure 2: Top 10 crises with the highest number of people in IPC/CH Phase 3 or above (or equivalent) in 2020⁴

The 10 crises with the highest number of people in IPC/CH Phase 3 or above (or equivalent) in 2020

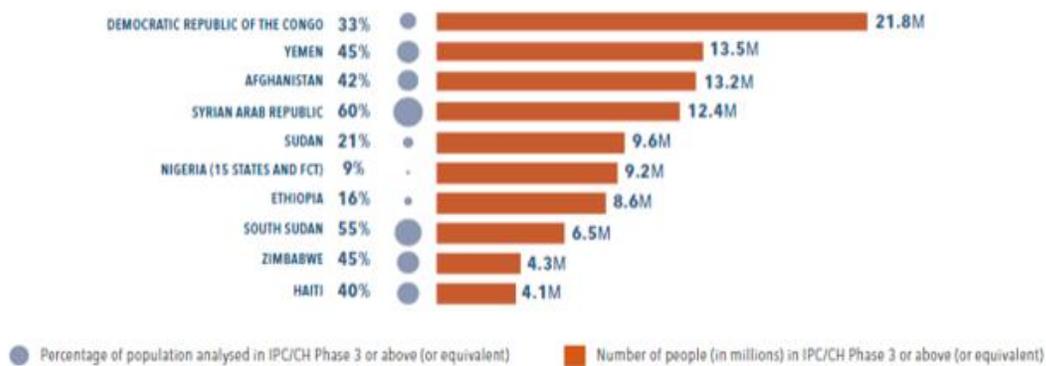
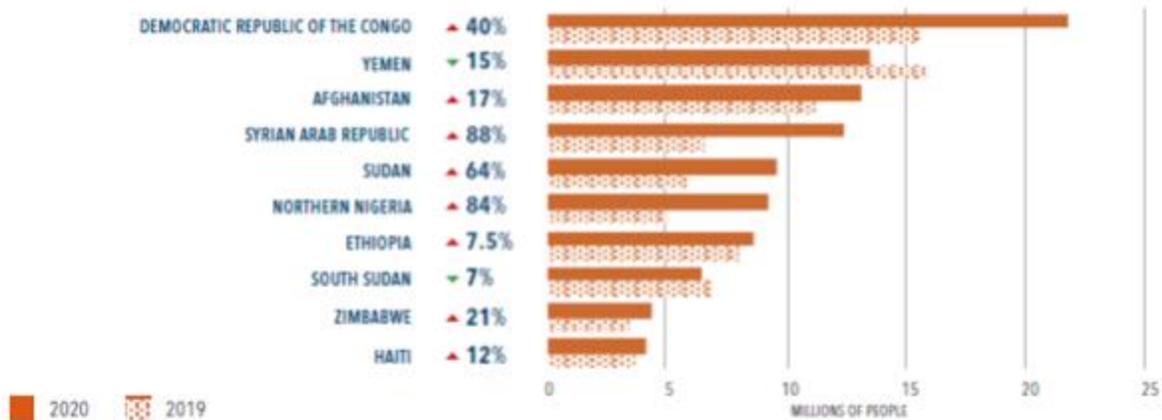


Figure 3: Change in numbers of people in IPC/CH Phase 3 or above (or equivalent) in the 10 worst food crises, 2019-2020⁵

Change in numbers of people in IPC/CH Phase 3 or above (or equivalent) in the 10 worst food crises, 2019-2020



Note: The 2019 and 2020 analyses are not fully comparable for Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, northern Nigeria and Sudan.
Source: FSIN, GRFC 2021.

⁴ GRFC 2021 p. 17

⁵ GRFC 2021 P. 16

The Food Assistance Convention

The overall goal of the Convention is to save lives, reduce hunger, improve food security, and improve the nutritional status of the most vulnerable populations by:

- i. Addressing the food and nutritional needs of crisis-affected populations through commitments made by the Parties to provide food assistance that improves access to, and consumption of, adequate, safe and nutritious food;
- ii. Ensuring that food assistance is appropriate, timely, effective, efficient and based on needs and shared principles;
- iii. Facilitating, information sharing, cooperation, and coordination, and providing a forum for discussion in order to improve the effective, efficient, and coherent use of the Parties' resources to respond to identified needs.

The Food Assistance Convention was adopted on 25 April 2012 in London⁶, and took force in January 2013 following the deposition of instruments of ratification by the initial signatories. The FAC represents a continued commitment by the 16 Parties⁷ to contribute to global food security, and to improve the ability of the international community to respond to emergency food situations and other food needs of developing countries. It is the latest in a long series of multilateral cooperation instruments in operation since 1967, including the Food Aid Convention 1999. The 2012 Convention expanded the traditional focus of previous Food Aid Conventions that focused exclusively on commitments of in-kind food aid for direct consumption. The current Convention includes a broader range of eligible activities and food assistance products, including cash, vouchers and products intended for protecting livelihoods, a greater focus on nutrition, as well as a commitment to improved transparency and accountability. Under the FAC, the Parties make minimum annual commitments (in monetary value) that provide a predictable and secured response which is an important signal to partners, namely the United Nations (UN), International and National Non-Governmental Organisations (INGOs) and others, and more importantly, a manifestation to people affected by crises that the international community stands with them.

The FAC is governed by the Food Assistance Committee, which serves as a forum for member states to share information and best practices on food assistance. The International Grains Council (IGC) is the designated Secretariat of the FAC, to assist the FAC Chair⁸ with the associated tasks. In 2020, Denmark successfully completed its term as chair at the 13th Session of the Committee, and handed over Chairmanship to Canada.

⁶ https://treaties.un.org/doc/source/signature/2012/CTC_XIX-48.pdf

⁷ In 2021: Australia, Austria, Canada, Denmark, European Union, Finland, France, Japan, Republic of Korea, Luxembourg, Russia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United States of America.

⁸ Per date of accession: Canada took over from Denmark in December 2020, with the European Union as Vice-Chair.

Reporting on Food Assistance Operations

Following each calendar year, Parties provide a financial and a narrative report on food assistance operations, detailing how their respective commitments were fulfilled. The standardized financial and narrative reporting template helps to improve the quality of the data and transparency of the commitments and contributions of the reporting parties. The minimum annual financial commitments and actual total contributions for 2020 of the 16 Parties who have ratified, accepted, and/or approved the FAC are set out in Table 2.

In 2020, Parties to the FAC contributed a total of **USD 6,419.8 million**. Reporting members fulfilled their obligations, with several Parties substantially exceeding their 2020 commitments. In line with the principles of the FAC, all Parties remained steadfast in their commitments to contribute to global food security, and to improve the ability of the international community to respond to emergency food situations in as timely a manner as possible.

In 2020, cash-based transfer programming (CBT) continued to receive increased support as the transfer modality for multi-purpose assistance by FAC Parties. In-kind donations were reported by Korea, Switzerland and United States. The vast majority of total contributions were provided fully in grant form, with a substantial part consisting of earmarked or lightly earmarked contributions, predominately at country or activity level. Multi-year funding and un-earmarked contributions were mainly provided to WFP, and to a lesser extent through the CERF and country-based pooled funds (CBPFs).

Humanitarian and developmental partners vary across Parties, with WFP, FAO, OCHA, UNICEF, UNDP, UNRWA, and ICRC as the most common partners. Contributions to civil society organisations such as ACTED, CARE, and Save the Children among others, were also reported.

In 2020, the top 10 FAC Recipient Countries were Syria, Sudan, Ethiopia, Yemen, Lebanon, South Sudan, Somalia, DRC, Afghanistan and Haiti.

2020 Food Assistance Convention Narrative Report

Table 2: Overview of commitments and contributions⁹

| <i>Donor</i> | <i>2020 Commitment</i> | <i>2020 Commitment in US\$ (million)</i> | <i>2020 Contribution in US\$ (million)¹⁰</i> |
|--------------------------------|------------------------|--|---|
| Australia | A\$80m | 55 | 64 |
| Austria | €1495m | 1.8 | 1.8 |
| Canada | C\$250m | 186.3 | 330.5 |
| Denmark | DKK203m | 30.6 | 85.1 |
| European Union | €350m | 399 | 572.4 |
| Finland | €6m | 5.4 | 18.6 |
| France | €50.6m | 57.6 | 57.6 |
| Japan | JPY10bn | 93.6 | 234.6 |
| Republic of Korea | €4m | 37.3 | 37.3 |
| Luxembourg¹¹ | KRW46bn | 3.6 | <i>not available</i> |
| Russia | \$15m | 15 | 78.2 |
| Slovenia | €30,000 | 34.2 | 150 |
| Spain | €10m | 11.4 | 16.3 |
| Sweden | SEK200m | 25.6 | 192.5 |
| Switzerland | CHF34m | 36 | 110.8 |
| United States | \$2.5bn | 2,500 | 4,619.3 |
| Total | | 3,458.7 | 6,419.8 |

⁹ Currency conversions into USD are based on *Financial Times*, as provided by the FAC Secretariat.

¹⁰ Data gathered through the FAC annual financial reports 2020 provided by members

¹¹ At the time of producing this report, Luxembourg had not yet submitted its Annual report for 2020.

Committee Meetings

FAC Members met once in 2020, at the 13th Session of the Food Assistance Committee, held on Thursday 12 November 2020 via videoconference due to the COVID-19 travel restrictions. The following day's seminar, "How to ensure effective disability inclusion during a pandemic response", included presentations from expert practitioners affiliated with the International Disability Alliance Vanuatu Disabled People's Federation, World Food Program, Asian Disability Forum, Transforming Communities for Inclusion of persons with psychosocial disabilities of Asia Pacific and Pacific Disability Forum. The seminar addressed key areas of actions to reflect on the importance of meaningful consultation with and active participation of people with disabilities throughout the COVID-19 response and recovery. These key actions included ensuring the mainstreaming of disability in all COVID-19 response and recovery; accessibility of information, facilities, services and programs; meaningful consultation with and active participation of persons with disabilities and their representative organizations; as well as the implementation of accountability mechanisms to ensure disability inclusion in all stages of the COVID-19 response and recovery.

At the FAC 13th Session, the IGC presented on the 2020 situation for global grains, rice and oilseeds markets which highlighted a global production record. Despite ample supplies, grains, rice and oilseeds prices rose sharply, mainly due to strong demand, tightening inventories of major exporters and raising concerns about climatic conditions adversely affecting 2021/22 production prospects in the northern hemisphere. The presentation also highlighted how currency movements additionally increased volatility of the food basket of net importing countries from Africa and Asia. The Committee appointed Ms. Tara Carney, Director, International Humanitarian Assistance Operations Division (Canada) as Chairperson for 2021 and Mr. Andreas Papaconstantinou, Director for "Neighbourhood and Middle East", EU Directorate General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations, was appointed Vice Chairperson.

Canada, as incoming Chair of the FAC, noted that 2020 had been an alarming year, with unprecedented levels of food and nutrition needs with record numbers of people facing crisis or food insecurity, worsened as a result of the protracted conflict, weather extremes and the socioeconomic impact of COVID. Faced with these global challenges and deteriorating food crisis projections, the FAC forum was going to continue to provide an avenue to bring together efforts with a focus on humanitarian programming while also addressing the root causes of food insecurity.

Field Mission

Denmark, as the Chair, along with FAC members including the EU, US, and others organized a donor field mission to Ethiopia from 8th to 13th March 2020. The donor mission aimed to observe and discuss food assistance, food security and nutrition programming in Ethiopia and learn of innovative approaches and the different challenges faced by humanitarian and development partners, government and communities. The COVID-19 pandemic outbreak imposed last minute changes to the planned program for the mission, including a shortened schedule. Despite these

challenges, fruitful meetings were held with a wide range of relevant actors in Addis Ababa which included: FEWSNET, the Humanitarian Coordination Team, the Humanitarian Resilience Donor Group, the PSNP Donor Working Group and the World Bank. The field visit organized in Dire Dawa allowed the delegation to visit IDP sites with WFP food and cash distribution to IDPs, returnees and host population along with health centers; and discuss with the beneficiaries their situation and challenges. While in Kortu, the delegation observed a range of activities mainly related to livelihoods and resilience building, but also to community and peace building.

OVERALL ASSISTANCE BY FAC MEMBER STATES

FOOD ASSISTANCE IN 2020

Australia

In 2020, Australia met and exceeded its FAC commitment of USD 55.04 million (AUD 80 million) with total contributions amounting to USD 64.07 million (AUD 93.13 million) as untied and cash based support. Throughout 2020, Australia maintained support for populations affected by protracted conflict, food insecurity and displacement in countries across Asia, Africa and the Middle East.

Australia provided emergency food assistance through WFP valued at USD 52.74 million (AUD 69.39 million), as well as support to other UN and international agencies. This assistance targeted conflict-affected populations in Afghanistan and South Sudan, as well as refugee communities in Bangladesh and the Middle East. In addition, Australia provided USD 22.8 million (AUD 30 million) in core, un-earmarked funding to WFP.

In 2020, Australia also funded WFP's COVID-19 response across Asia and the Pacific with USD 5.89 million (AUD 7.75 million) directed towards the Rohingya crisis in Myanmar and Bangladesh and the Pacific. Australia also worked alongside WFP and Pacific governments to establish a Pacific air service, ensuring the delivery of essential health and humanitarian supplies through the region in the absence of commercial flight operations. Further, Australia provided technical assistance (through Australia Assists) to work with WFP to assess and resolve supply chain bottlenecks in the Pacific, and to prioritise the inclusion and protection of women and girls and people with disabilities in WFP's operations.

Australia's contributions of USD 7.57 million (AUD 11 million) to the UN Central Emergency Response Fund and USD 15.58 million (AUD 22.65 million) to Country-Based Pooled Funds in Afghanistan, Myanmar, Somalia and South Sudan supported coordinated assistance to populations affected by protracted conflict, food insecurity and displacement.

Austria

2020 Food Assistance Convention Narrative Report

In 2020, Austria responded to food insecurity and humanitarian crises driven by conflict and disasters. Austria exceeded its FAC commitment of USD 1.70 million¹² (EUR 1.495 million), with total contributions amounted to USD 1.82 million (EUR 1.6 million).

Austria's food assistance contributions were made through WFP in support of emergency relief and immediate food assistance for host communities, internally displaced persons (IDPs), returnees and refugees. This support helped increase access to lifesaving, nutritious and affordable food for vulnerable populations as the COVID-19 pandemic, coupled with conflicts and/or extreme weather events, led to economic decline in many countries.

The protracted crisis in Syria, which has led to mass displacement and food insecurity, as well as the economic consequences of the explosion in the port of Beirut were at the heart of Austria's food assistance in 2020. Austria remains committed to provide flexible and predictable funding to support responses to unexpected humanitarian crises and shocks while ensuring stability for its trusted and long-standing partners.

Canada

In 2020, in response to increasing food-security needs, Canada provided USD 330.5 million (CAD 443.3 million) in FAC-eligible contributions, exceeding its commitment of USD 186.4 million (CAD 250 million). Approximately 25 percent was provided as un-earmarked long-term institutional support to provide partners the flexibility to plan for, and respond to, new needs, emerging crises, or critical funding requirements. The remaining 75 percent was provided in support of eligible food security, nutrition, and livelihood assistance at country level through multilateral and NGO partners.

As part of its work on gender-responsive humanitarian action under its Feminist International Assistance Policy, Canada partnered with WFP, UN Population Fund (UNFPA), and UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) in 2019 to implement the project 'Breaking Barriers to Girls' Education' in Niger and Chad, which continued in 2020. This initiative not only provided nutritious and fortified school meals to children in emergency contexts, but also integrated school health packages that include education services about nutrition and health, as well as sexual and reproductive health and gender-based violence. To maintain key access to nutritious food for vulnerable children – particularly girls – the initiative provided Take-Home Rations (THR) in lieu of school feeding during the COVID-related school closures. THR served as a safety net for crisis-affected households, and mitigated risks of school dropout, child labour and child forced marriage.

The COVID-19 pandemic has been a multiplier of vulnerability, compounding threats to food insecurity and hindering the ability of affected communities to cope. To respond to the increased food assistance needs of vulnerable populations following the outbreak of the pandemic, Canada provided a total of USD 38 million (CAD 50.5 million) to the WFP and FAO. These multi-country allocations provided much needed food assistance, supplementary feeding for

¹² FAC Secretariat Exchange Rates – Calendar Year Average for 2020: USD 1 = EUR 0,877

children under the age of five, as well as pregnant and lactating women, and livelihood support to populations in emergency contexts such as in Burkina Faso, Columbia, Nigeria, Somalia, and Yemen.

In the face of growing hunger, Canada continues to support both emergency and longer-term programming with experienced partners to respond to food needs as the world grapples with an unparalleled food crisis.

Denmark

In 2020, Denmark responded to food insecurity and humanitarian crises caused by a wide range of conflicts, natural disasters, and economic shocks. Total food assistance contributions in 2020 amounted to USD 85 million (DKK 582 million). Denmark exceeded its FAC financial commitment of USD 30.6 million (DKK 210 million) by USD 54 million (DKK 372 million). With the current increase in food insecurity around the globe, Denmark is committed to lift its share of the burden in reaching Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) number 2: “Zero Hunger”.

Denmark’s contributions towards SDG2 in 2020 included a wide range of development and humanitarian interventions, predominately in collaboration with UN agencies and programmes, alongside Danish civil society organisations. Interventions include, but are not limited to, food assistance in protracted crises and emergencies, school feeding programmes, support to resilience and food security, forecast-based financing and anticipatory action, cash-based transfers, and agricultural development.

Throughout 2020, Denmark maintained support for populations affected by protracted conflict, fragility, food insecurity and displacement in countries across Africa, Asia, and the Middle East. Addressing food insecurity in a wider manner than through narrow food assistance is necessary in the achievement of long-term durable solutions. With a range of partners, Denmark address food security issues as a core element of the HDP-nexus, contributing to agricultural development, climate change adaption, resilience building, research, cash assistance, pooled funds, et cetera. Denmark therefore supports WFP’s dual mandate in providing short-term lifesaving food assistance as well as building longer-term food security and resilience.

European Union

The European Union's (EU) initial commitment under the Food Assistance Convention for 2020 was USD 399 million (EUR 350 million). The EU exceeded this commitment, allocating over USD 572 million (EUR 502 million) from the humanitarian budget for humanitarian food assistance and nutrition. Over half of this amount was provided in the form of cash transfers, including multi-purpose cash transfers¹³, which illustrates its commitment to promote cash as default modality. The EU played a leading role the EU to support improved food security in a long range of countries – with 44 country specific projects, and 3 regional projects. Large proportions of the assistance were provided in Turkey, Yemen, Syria and Mali.

¹³ The EU estimates that at least 1/3 of multi-purpose cash transfers are typically used to cover food and nutrition needs.

EU-funded projects continued to target food insecure or malnourished people as a result of conflict, natural disasters or economic shocks. The COVID-19 pandemic has had a serious impact on food security: trade restrictions and the reduced economic activity have affected both the offer and demand of food. The pandemic has also compromised the delivery of humanitarian assistance, and may affect productivity in future agricultural seasons. In many areas, the consequences of the pandemic come on top of other shocks caused by climate events, conflict and conflict intensification, or the locust crisis in East Africa.

DG ECHO's global response to COVID-19 has also addressed the impact on food security. Programmes have been re-oriented or adapted to the context of the pandemic, and new programmes have been launched to mitigate the compounded impacts of COVID-19 and other shocks.

Finland

In 2020, Finland exceeded its FAC commitment of USD 5.4 million (EUR 6 million) by contributing with a total of USD 18.6 million (EUR 20.5 million). The majority of this contribution, USD 18.6 million, was channeled through WFP in three regional or country operations in Afghanistan, the Sahel and Yemen. Finland's humanitarian assistance remained un-earmarked and untied either as core funding or funding at the level of country or region and does not earmark its contributions for any particular activity or sector.

Finland delivered its food assistance mostly via WFP, with emergency food assistance through WFP amounting to USD 9.5 million (EUR 10.5 million), targeting mainly conflict-affected populations in Afghanistan, Sahel and Yemen.

Some food assistance, voucher or cash components, was also supported through the multi-sectoral operations of Finnish NGOs, for example Finn Church Aid, Save the Children Finland, Fida International and Plan International Finland. In addition, Finland provides support to the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (both ICRC, IFRC and the Finnish Red Cross) and food assistance components are included in these operations.

France

France allocated USD 57.6 million (EUR 50.6 million) to its food assistance program in 2020, a nearly 30 percent increase from 2019. Its core objectives were to reinforce, mainly in post-humanitarian emergency situations, the resilience of populations and to fight against malnutrition. In 2020, 83 projects were carried out in 34 countries, reaching 4.2 million direct beneficiaries. France's 19 priority countries for Official Development Aid received 52% of the funding. In line with France's commitment for gender equality and a feminist diplomacy, more than 80 percent of projects were gender-responsive.

France provided more than 64% of its food assistance program to African countries, particularly in the Sahel (G5 countries, first recipient region, with USD 18.2 million), followed by the Near and Middle East, Asia, Venezuela and Haiti. In Africa, a balance had to be found between appropriate responses to new humanitarian emergencies (especially related to the consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic and the desert locust invasion in East Africa) and the

need to maintain a significant commitment in regions suffering from chronic food insecurity and malnutrition. The Covid-19 crisis motivated a multi-country project implemented by the WFP in Sahel and the West Africa, financed through a “fast-track” procedure. Support for school canteens in Algeria, Haïti, Jordan, Mauritania, Niger and Venezuela was continued in 2020. These projects, which often help small local producers to develop their activities, included training sessions on food diversification for women in charge of preparing and distributing meals. They also provided a response to food security and nutrition issues, as well as education, women's autonomy (decent jobs), local production and social protection. Agricultural training programs were also developed in order to revive local agriculture and promote sustainable agricultural practices, especially in fragile areas sensitive to climate change.

In 2020, the top partner for France remained WFP, with USD 30.95 million (EUR 27.2 million, about 54% of the total amount). France's other partner organizations included ICRC, UNRWA, FAO, UNICEF, UN Women and a range of NGOs. Bilateral cooperation amounted 1.5% of funds (USD 0.91 million / EUR 0.8 million in Haiti).

Japan

Japan contributed approximately USD 225.5 million (JPY 24.8 billion) in 2020, exceeding its annual FAC commitment of approximately USD 90.9 million (USD JPY 10 billion). About 84 percent of Japan's food assistance was implemented via WFP and UNRWA through Grant Aid, Emergency Grant Aid, and others. This is in addition to Japans' Bilateral Food Assistance projects implemented in 14 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa (namely Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Comoros, Republic of Congo, DR Congo, Gambia, Liberia, Mauritania, Niger, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal and Togo), and in Latin America (Haiti).

More broadly, Japan partnered with WFP in response to food needs in Asia (Sri Lanka), Sub-Saharan Africa (Cameroon, Central Africa, Chad, Eswatini, Guinea Bissau, Lesotho, Mozambique and Sierra-Leone) and Middle East (Palestine and Yemen). Japan also worked through WFP to respond to food needs in countries affected by desert locusts through Emergency Grant Aid. Other funds also supported WFP's activities, which includes a variety of assistance for critical humanitarian needs in Syria, the Sahel region and so on. The total amounted to approximately USD 182.3 million (JPY 20.0 billion).

Japan partnered with UNRWA to provide vital food assistance for Palestinian refugees valued at approximately USD 5.9 million (JPY 648 million).

Republic of Korea

In 2020, the Republic of Korea (ROK) met its FAC commitment with contributions that amounted to USD 37 million (46 billion Korean won), for the third consecutive year.

Throughout 2020, the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs of the Republic of Korea (MAFRA) maintained its food assistance to four countries in Africa and the Middle East (Yemen, Ethiopia, Kenya, and Uganda), affected by conflicts and natural disasters, the effects of which were compounded by the COVID-19 pandemic. The rice was processed and supplied by the Government of ROK and was shipped and locally distributed by WFP.

2020 Food Assistance Convention Narrative Report

Despite the difficulties posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Government of ROK donated total of 50,000 metric tons of rice which was distributed in Yemen (19,000 mt), Ethiopia (16,000 mt), Kenya (10,000 mt), and Uganda (5,000 mt). The rice was utilized to maintain pipelines and support for refugees, internally displaced people (IDPs), and school feeding programmes, reaching over three million beneficiaries in 2020. Furthermore, ROK providing Korean rice to the ASEAN countries affected by meteorological disasters such as typhoons, through the ASEAN Plus Three Emergency Rice Reserve (APTERR), an international public rice reserve system with 13 countries to respond to food crises.

Russia Federation

In 2020, the Russian Federation exceeded its annual Food Assistance Convention commitment of USD 15 million with a record food assistance contribution of USD 78.2 million. The greater part of Russian food assistance was distributed among developing countries on bilateral and multilateral basis with WFP as the key multilateral channel for its food aid.

Since 2020, Russia's annual additional contribution to the WFP fund has doubled from USD 10 million to USD 20 million. Half of these funds were allocated to support food security in African countries – Burundi, Djibouti, Somalia, Sierra Leone, the Central African Republic – along with Kyrgyzstan, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Cuba, Lebanon, Nicaragua, Palestine and Tajikistan. Russia also supported humanitarian-development nexus projects which created sustainable school feeding systems in partner countries such as Armenia, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and since 2020 similar projects have been launched in Nicaragua and Cuba.

Furthermore, Russia funded a “Debt for Development” project in Mozambique, through which debt is being converted into a national school feeding programme. In 2020, Mozambique's debt to Russia of USD 8 million was written off. These programmes provide nutritious hot meals to primary schools, including those situated in the poorest rural areas. The programmes improve the learning environments, as well as investments for renovated canteens, training schools for chefs, and is helping schools establishing vegetable gardens. To help avert a food crisis caused by the desert locust invasion in East Africa, in 2020, Russia supported FAO's assistance in South Sudan and Ethiopia for the expansion of ground control and air surveillance operations in addition to pesticides purchase.

Russia also contributed to agricultural support and development programs put in place by UNDP in Central Asian countries (Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan), Armenia, Cuba, Syria and African countries (Guinea, Zimbabwe, and Madagascar). These activities are devoted to strengthen climate resilience of the agro-industrial sector; improve agricultural producers' skills and introduce modern solutions of rational and environmentally friendly land and water use. These projects also focus on adaptation measures from to the socio-economic consequences of COVID-19.

Slovenia

2020 Food Assistance Convention Narrative Report

In 2020, Slovenia exceeded its FAC commitment of USD 34,200 with a total contribution of USD 155,040. Based on the Resolution of International Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Assistance of 2017, food security and access to safe drinking water are one of the priorities of Slovenian humanitarian assistance. Funds were distributed through three main channels, WFP, Slovenian NGO FER and the CERF.

Furthermore, as a part of its global COVID-19 response, Slovenia provided an unearmarked contribution to WFP to address nutrition and food assistance as a consequence of pandemic. At the project level, Slovenia has continued its support to NGO, working in Uganda, focusing on food assistance and nutrition of refugees, with a special focus on vulnerable groups.

Spain

During its first reporting year to the FAC, Spain exceeded its commitment of USD 11.3 million (EUR 10 million), with food assistance and nutrition allocations amounting to USD 16.3 million (EUR 14.3 million). Of this funding, approximately 53 percent was provided to UN partners, 25 percent to ICRC and the remainder 21 percent to the NGOs.

Throughout 2020, Spain maintained its support to populations affected by protracted conflicts, food insecurity and displacement across Africa, the Middle East and Latin America. In addition to supporting health, protection and WASH initiatives through UN and international agencies, Spain provided emergency food assistance mainly to Africa, especially to the Sahrawi refugee crisis as and the Sahel, as well as to Latin America, focusing on the Venezuelan migrant's crisis.

Moreover, Spain provided emergency food assistance through several NGOs following natural disasters, such as the hurricanes Eta and Iota in Central America.

Sweden

In 2020, Sweden's total contribution to WFP amounted to USD \$192.5 million (SEK 1,5 billion). More than half of the total Swedish contribution, SEK 884 million, consisted of multi-year core, un-earmarked funding, most of which was channelled through Sweden's strategic partnership agreement for 2018-2021 with WFP. To further support WFP's response to increasing food insecurity and risk of famine, another additional contribution of SEK 100 million was announced in October 2020. The un-earmarked core funding provided by Sweden allowed WFP to allocate the resources to country-based operations fully in accordance with identified needs. Thus, as the largest donor of un-earmarked funding to WFP, Sweden has assisted WFP to retain its important flexibility in conducting a needs-based distribution and deliverance of humanitarian assistance.

In addition to core funding, through its country-specific allocations to WFP in 2020, Sweden provided funding for humanitarian responses in counties with severe food crises – Sudan, Yemen, the DR, as well as South Sudan – and Mozambique.

Sweden's key responses were implemented through the use of cash interventions, food vouchers, direct food distribution, nutrition interventions, and the strengthening of resilience through support for livestock and agricultural development. Multiple programmes specifically targeted displaced populations, women and girls, and populations struck by natural disasters, particularly Idai cyclone in Southern Africa.

Switzerland

In 2020, Switzerland exceeded its FAC commitment of USD 36.4 million (CHF 34 million) with total contributions amounted to a record high of USD 110.8 million (CHF 104.5 million) increasing its 2019 contribution by USD 25.3 million (CHF 19.9 million). Switzerland increased its funding in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and related socio-economic effects. A total of USD 77.7 million (CHF 73.3 million), 70 percent of Switzerland's FAC contributions towards food assistance, was provided through WFP. Switzerland also provided support to NGOs, and other UN partner organizations such as FAO, UNDP, UNICEF and IOM. In addition, for a total cost of USD 2.3 million (CHF 2.2 million) as eligible under the FAC criteria, 14 experts from the Swiss Humanitarian Aid Unit¹⁴ were seconded to WFP in 2020, providing expertise in cash-based transfer programming (CBT) and social protection, protection, Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and climate risk financing.

Switzerland's holistic approach in addressing global food security challenges continued to integrate humanitarian aid, development cooperation, multilateral instruments, diplomatic measures as well as peace building initiatives wherever feasible. As an observer state of WFP's Executive Board in 2020, Switzerland remained actively involved in the Executive Board's informal consultations and sessions. In particular, Switzerland continued to play a leadership role in supporting WFP in the development and approval of WFP's new Protection policy and maintained the focus of its engagement on specific thematic priorities such as cash and voucher assistance (CVA), social protection & safety nets, resilience building and DRR (including climate risk financing and early action).

In 2020, about 33 percent of Switzerland's contributions under the FAC was allocated to support populations suffering from acute food insecurity and malnutrition in Africa (mainly in South Sudan, Sudan, Nigeria and the Lake Chad region, the central Sahel, Democratic Republic of Congo, and the Horn of Africa). About 17 percent of contributions assisted food insecure populations in Asia (Afghanistan, North Korea, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan). Another 11 percent was allocated for food assistance and nutrition interventions in the Middle East (particularly in Yemen, the Occupied Palestinian Territories and Syria and neighbouring countries) and almost 7 per cent was allocated to the Americas (Haiti, Columbia, Venezuela and Central America). Overall, Switzerland supported food assistance in 35 countries, including Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) and Algeria, the only remaining countries that still received in-kind assistance in the form of Swiss milk products purchased by WFP for a total of USD 1.9 million (CHF 1.8 million).

¹⁴ The Swiss Humanitarian Aid Unit is a roster of around 700 people who can be deployed abroad at short notice.

United States

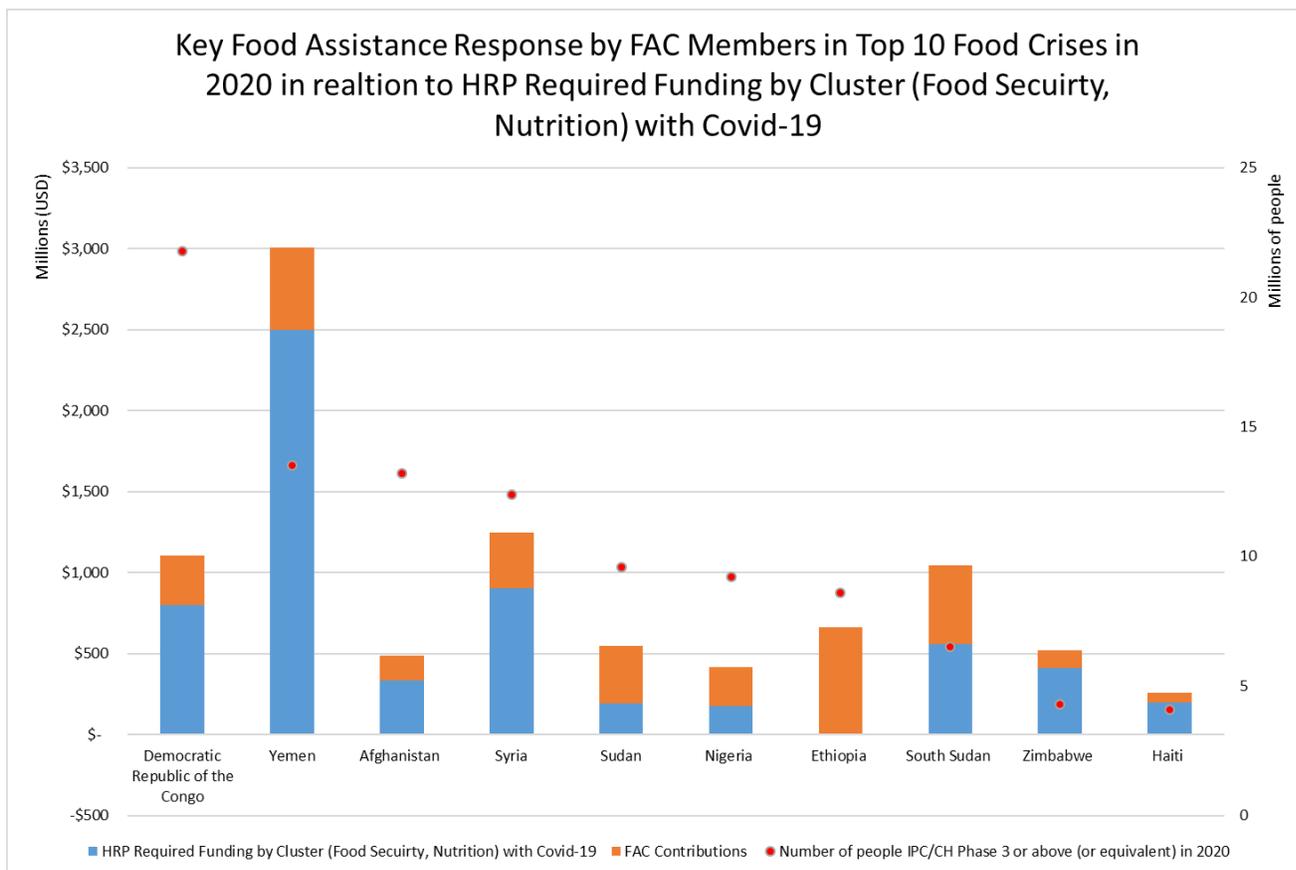
In 2020, the US exceeded its FAC commitment of USD 2.5 billion with food assistance programming totalling nearly USD \$4.8 billion in food assistance, reaching more than 71 million people in 57 countries. About 92 percent of USAID's food assistance addressed emergency needs, while 8 percent was development assistance addressing the underlying and chronic causes of hunger. Proportionally, U.S. in-kind food assistance represented 35 percent of USAID food assistance in 2020, while food purchased outside the United States represented 27 percent. Food vouchers represented 16 percent of food assistance, cash transfers represented 17 percent, and other modalities including twinning and essential complementary activities represented 5 percent.

The US contributions helped provide school meals and supported capacity-building initiatives that improved agricultural production and economic expansion in developing nations. The McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program (McGovern-Dole) continued to fund school meals and education and nutrition programs that are implemented by private-voluntary organizations (PVOs) and other international organizations for women, infants, and children in countries with high food insecurity. The program's statutory objectives are to reduce hunger, increase literacy, and improve the health and dietary practices of school-age children, with an emphasis on girls. USDA's international food assistance programs continued to align with the Feed the Future food security initiative, providing donated U.S. and locally or regionally procured commodities for direct school feeding and U.S. commodities for sale in countries to build food and market systems with the goal of expanding trade and promoting economic growth in participating countries.

Furthermore, USAID has tracked, and continues to track, the impact on food insecurity resulting from COVID-19 and worked with partners to adapt and contextualize existing food assistance programs to fit local needs and improve COVID-19 readiness efforts around the world, in addition to adapting existing programs to respond to increasing needs driven by the pandemic.

KEY FOOD ASSISTANCE RESPONSES BY FAC MEMBERS

Figure 2: Key Food Assistance Response by FAC Members in Top 10 Food Crises



Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)

According to the Global Report on Food Crisis 2021, the DRC was the world’s gravest food crisis in 2020. 33 percent - almost 21.8 million people - of the Congolese population suffered from IPC/CH Phase 3 which is a 40 percent increase compared to 2019 when 15.6 million people were facing similar levels of food insecurity. The DRC was amongst the countries with the highest prevalence of wasted children in 2020, with almost 3.3 million children suffering from acute malnutrition. Protracted conflict and internal displacement contributed to the severity of the DRC’s food crisis in 2020, which is predicted to worsen in 2021.

Through partnerships with various humanitarian actors, Canada, the EU, France, Japan, Sweden, Switzerland and the US made significant contributions towards the provision of urgently required food assistance in the country. The assistance was provided in various ways, including in-kind contributions, food vouchers, unconditional cash transfers, targeted nutrition interventions for pregnant and lactating women, distributions of agricultural inputs etc. Contributions were mainly provided through humanitarian organizations, including WFP, OCHA, and ICRC. Several members also provided support through the CERF and CBPFs.

Yemen

After the DRC, Yemen was the world's second gravest food crisis in 2020. While there was some improvement compared to 2019, 45 percent – almost 13.5 million people - of the Yemeni population suffered from acute food insecurity, of which 16 500 people were in IPC/CH Phase 5. The deteriorating food insecurity was driven by economic decline, conflict, COVID-19, desert locusts, decline in cereal production and flash floods. WFP, as the main provider of food assistance to vulnerable people in Yemen, witnessed a reduction in donor support in 2020 affecting millions of people in the country. Without adequate funding, alarming projections warn of the imminent risk that 47 000 people will face famine-like conditions through mid-2021.

The majority of the FAC Parties including Canada, Denmark, the EU, Finland, France, Japan, the Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland and the US all contributed to addressing food needs in the country.

Afghanistan

The combination of conflicts, droughts, floods, and earthquakes has resulted in four decades of humanitarian crises in Afghanistan. Food insecurity has grown alarmingly due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has resulted in increased food prices, disruption of supply-lines, and increased unemployment in urban centres. In 2020, approximately 13.2 million people or 42 percent of the Afghan population suffered from acute food insecurity. This represented a 17 percent increase compared to 2019 when 11.3 million acute food insecure people were reported in the country.

FAC members – Australia, Canada, Denmark, the EU, Finland, France, Japan, the Russian Federation, Switzerland, and the USA - supported the Afghan people, notably by funding assistance through country based pooled funds in addition to cash, in-kind food distribution, livelihood support and agricultural development, and more. The assistance was provided through both un-earmarked contributions, and targeted interventions for displaced people, returnees, host communities, women, children, drought-affected communities, etc. Key partners were WFP, FAO, UNICEF and a range of NGOs.

Syria (and neighbouring countries/Syrian Refugees)

In its tenth year of crisis, millions of women, men, and children of all ages in Syria continued to face severe impacts on their lives and well-being. In 2020, the GRFC reported that approximately 12.4 million or 60 percent of the Syrian population were food insecure – this represented an alarming 88 percent increase compared to previous reports made in 2019. The COVID-19 socio-economic impact, in addition to compounding insecurity and displacement, economic deterioration, infrastructural damage and inadequacy of basic services have all contributed to increasing food insecurity levels.

Australia, Austria, Canada, Denmark, the EU, France, Japan, the Russian Federation, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and the USA all contributed to address the Syrian humanitarian crisis in

2020. Assistance was predominately funded through various country funds, WFP, UNHCR, UNFPA, ICRC, and various NGOs, and mainly targeted towards IDP's and refugees – particularly women and girls and people with disability – in neighbouring countries through the use of school feeding programmes, food vouchers, cash transfers, etc.

Lebanon

The triple shock of the economic crisis, COVID-19, and the Beirut Port explosion and subsequent deteriorated purchasing power negatively impacted the extent and severity of food insecurity in Lebanon and access to adequate food. Poverty rates doubled from around 28 percent in 2019 to over 55 percent in 2020^[1]. “In 2020, 89% percent of Syrian refugee households were below the Survival Minimum Expenditure Basket, a significant increase of 34% compared to 2019, and the highest level compared to the previous years.”

The majority of FAC Members, including Austria, Canada, Denmark, France, the EU, Russia, Switzerland and the US provided funding to humanitarian partners such as WFP or ACF in the immediate aftermath of the Beirut explosion to support critical food assistance needs, including through cash assistance and logistics capacity response. Vital assistance was also provided through the Lebanon Humanitarian Fund and other country funds.

South Sudan

In 2020, South Sudan was amongst the world's most alarming food crises in 2020 with the highest number of people in Catastrophic acute food security (IPC Phase 5) which increased from zero in May–July 2020 to 105 000 in December 2020. Approximately 55 percent – 6.5 million people – of the South Sudanese population suffered from acute food insecurity. Protracted conflict, desert locust invasion, devastating flooding (worst seen in decades) exacerbated by the socio-economic impact of COVID-19 have pushed the country to the brink of famine. Alarming projections forecast that 60 percent of the population will be acutely food insecure in 2021 – particularly during the lean season – due to the compounding impacts of insecurity and displacement, lasting effects of the 2020 flooding, and increasingly expensive food.

The majority of the FAC Parties including Australia, Canada, the EU, France, Japan, Sweden, the Russian Federation, Switzerland and the US all contributed to improve food security and nutrition in the country through assistance provided to WFP, ICRC, and NGOs.

Ethiopia (Tigray Region)

In 2020, 8.6 million people in Ethiopia (16 percent of the population) were categorized as IPC/CH Phase 3 or above, an increase of 7.5% compared to 2019. Ethiopia faced multiple crises, which included inter-communal conflicts, the desert locust invasion threatening farming and agriculture compounded by the loss of livelihoods exacerbated by COVID-19's impact on

^[1] UNESCWA, August 2020.

remittances, and trade. Since the beginning of the conflict in early November 2020, food security and nutrition in Tigray has worsened, particularly in hard-to-reach areas. With limited humanitarian access and challenging operational context, UN experts alerted that the extremely concerning humanitarian included approximately 350 000 people¹⁵ are acutely threatened by starvation with millions more at risk.

Several FAC members including Canada, Denmark, the EU, France, Japan, the Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation, Sweden, Switzerland, and the USA supported the vulnerable communities in Ethiopia and Ethiopian refugees – who fled the conflict to neighbouring Sudan – by providing humanitarian and livelihoods support through various means. In addition to FAO's rapid response fund SFERA, long-term development and resilience building have been strongly supported. Several members have addressed the root causes of food insecurity through development assistance, building resilience, creating livelihoods, etc. Multiple donor states contributed to the Ethiopian-led Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP). Short-term interventions focused on nutrition and fortified food programmes targeting pregnant and lactating women, as well as children. In-kind food distribution, particularly in drought-affected areas and in refugee and IDP settings, also received significant support. Key partners were the Government of Ethiopia, WFP, FAO, UNHCR, and various NGO's.

Sahel Food and Nutrition Crisis

In 2020, in the Sahel region, around 16.7 million people were in Crisis or worse (CH Phase 3 or above) across fifteen countries. WFP and FAO also warned of an impending famine in northeastern Nigeria and Burkina Faso towards the end of 2020. The prevalence of global acute malnutrition exceeds the threshold of 10% ("high" per WHO) in most regions of Niger, northern Burkina Faso, central and northern Mali, as well as eastern and western Chad. This unprecedented food and nutrition situation is the result of a combination of socio-economic, security and health shocks. The security crisis continues to generate large flows of internally displaced people (IDPs) without livelihoods; Nigeria and Burkina Faso account for 2 million and 1 million IDPs respectively.

With the quickly deteriorating crisis in the Sahel, increasing numbers of people are suffering from widespread food insecurity. Overlapping issues of conflict, climate shocks, poverty, and food insecurity fuel the escalation of the crisis and forcibly displace a growing number of people. COVID-19 further exacerbated needs, pushing more and more people into acute food insecurity.

In response to rising food needs in the Sahel, several FAC Members including France, Canada, Denmark, the EU, Sweden, Switzerland, provided contributions to NGOs, ICRC and UN Partners to improve the food security, nutrition, and resilience of the region.

Bangladesh/Myanmar (Rohingya Crisis)

¹⁵ IPC Acute Food Insecurity Situation May - June 2021 and Projection for July - September 2021

The level of vulnerability of the 855 000 Rohingya refugees who reside in 34 extremely congested camps remains very high as they rely completely on outside life-saving assistance. According to the GRFC, in 2020, approximately 87% of the Rohingya refugees suffered from IPC/CH Phase 3 or above. In addition, there are 600 000 estimated stateless Rohingya in Rakhine State, Myanmar, of which some 144 000 are living in 21 displacement camps as well as among the host community since 2012.

Sustaining the food assistance of this population continues to remain crucial. Various FAC Members including Canada, France, the EU and Spain are supporting the Rohingya refugees through the Joint Response Plan to improve their food security levels.

FORGOTTEN CRISIS AND/OR OTHER AREAS

Cameroon

In 2020, the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) classified Cameroon as the most neglected displacement crisis for the second consecutive year¹⁶. Faced with three concurrent and highly complex humanitarian situations, 2.7 million people were acutely food insecure (IPC 3 and above) and 4.5 percent of children under 5 years suffered from acute malnutrition. Acute food insecurity levels rose sharply in North-West and South-West regions and remained concerning in the Far North. Compounded with climate risks and natural disasters such as, drought, flooding, landslides and fires, humanitarian needs are exacerbated by structural development deficits and chronic vulnerabilities

A limited number of FAC members, such as the US, Canada, France, Japan, Sweden and Switzerland, provided funding for food assistance, prevention and treatment of malnutrition and cash-based transfers to vulnerable people in Cameroon through UN partners such as WFP and UNICEF, ICRC and NGO projects.

Latin America and the Caribbean

In 2020, Latin America and the Caribbean countries were amongst the worst affected by the pandemic worldwide, both in terms of health, livelihoods and food security. In Central America and Haiti, 11.8 million people were acutely food insecure, of which 4.4 million (40 percent of population) were in Haiti. Projections place 45.5 million more people in the region in poverty and an increase in extreme poverty by 28.5 million, with vulnerable groups, such as indigenous and displaced populations, being more severely affected.

The majority of FAC members supported humanitarian assistance in 2020 (including emergency relief following the Eta and Iota hurricanes), to meet the critical needs of the most vulnerable victims of organised violence and social unrest, to reinforce the disaster preparedness capacities in the region as well as for the provision of food assistance and short- to medium-term livelihood recovery and protection.

¹⁶ NRC The world's most neglected displacement crises in 2020

COORDINATION AMONG DONORS

Overall COVID-19 Response

The COVID-19 pandemic and related measures caused widespread disruptions in both global and local food markets and supply chains—leading to system-wide impacts on food security. These intersectional impacts have exacerbated pre-existing inequalities and aggravated food insecurity and malnutrition. The pandemic underscored the importance of increased coordination amongst the international community to support appropriate responses to new humanitarian emergencies (especially related to the consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic and the desert locust invasion in East Africa and Yemen), and to maintain significant support in regions suffering from chronic food insecurity and malnutrition.

All FAC members provided allocations to strengthen the coordinated response to the urgent food and nutrition needs of vulnerable communities – particularly women and girls – as food insecurity and malnutrition was exacerbated by COVID-19. This vital assistance supported the operations of experienced humanitarian partners who faced significant access challenges due to logistical constraints and restricted access, with local partners playing a key role in providing assistance in hard-to-reach communities.

The global disruptions to the aviation and transport systems caused by the pandemic, prevented health and humanitarian responders from reaching affected areas. WFP, working closely with the World Health Organization, the UN system, the NGO community and governments, used its logistics capacity and expertise to provide global air services where commercial capacity was no longer available, ensuring that critical health and humanitarian assistance reaches COVID-affected populations.

Global Network against Food Crises

At the World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul, the European Union, WFP and FAO launched the Global Network against Food Crises (GNFC) in May 2016. The GNFC serves as a forum to inform food security and nutrition decisions by allowing donors and partners to share data and analyses as well as lessons learned and best practices. Special emphasis is set on the humanitarian-development nexus approach and on promoting effective ways to address the root causes of hunger. The GNFC consists of a technical component, with the joint publication of the annual Global Report on Food Crises, which have been an essential component in the production of this report.

In 2020, the Global Network created a new report, the “Hunger Hotspot Analysis”, which will be updated three times per year. This document identifies the worst food crises and their trends, and warns of countries that may be at risk of famine. Furthermore, the Global Network has taken a step forward in engaging at country level (dimension ii). A Technical Support Unit has been created (with EU financial aid) to support this process. The GNFC expects to start engaging in several “pilot” countries in 2021.

Good Humanitarian Donorship

The Good Humanitarian Donorship (GHD) initiative is an informal donor forum and network, which facilitates collective advancement of GHD principles and good practices. It recognizes that, by working together, donors can more effectively encourage and stimulate principled donor behaviour and, by extension, improved humanitarian action. Altogether 42 members of the GHD group endorsed the Principles and Good Practice of Good Humanitarian Donorship which aim to enhance the coherence and effectiveness of donor action, as well as accountability to beneficiaries, implementing organisations and domestic constituencies, with regard to the funding, coordination, follow-up and evaluation of such actions.

In 2020, the GHD decided to continue with the co-chairmanship of Switzerland and EU / ECHO for an additional year (on top of the regular two) due to the uncertainties around COVID-19. The co-chairs focused on three topics during this additional year, building on the achievements of the previous years and continuing to explore new and innovative approaches of financing humanitarian aid. Collaboration with other entities working on innovative financing was actively sought, including through Expert Level Meetings to introduce GHD members to other initiatives. Innovative financing can help better serve affected people, including through leveraging traditional donor funds and close the increasing gap between humanitarian needs and available funding. Finland co-chair the GHD initiative for two years beginning in the second half of 2021.

The benefits of enhanced donor coordination also extend to food-security related programming, including on risk financing. Other innovative funding modalities such as forecast-based financing help support early warning and early action mainstreaming.

Several members expressed their ongoing support to the principles of GHD in the 2020 FAC reports. Commitments to promote un-earmarked, multi-year and flexible funding, as expressed by multiple FAC parties, play a key role in the improvement of the humanitarian-development sector and the efficiency and dollar-value of the interventions.

POLICY INITIATIVES

Disability and Inclusion

Australia welcomes the growing momentum around ensuring the rights and needs of people with disabilities are safeguarded and addressed in humanitarian crises. Australia works closely with partners, such as WFP, to ensure humanitarian action is more inclusive. In 2020, Australia provided a package of technical assistance to support the development and implementation of WFP's Disability Inclusion Roadmap, approved by WFP's Executive Board in November 2020. Australia also provided technical assistance (through Australia Assists) to several partners to develop disability inclusion action plans, sector-specific frameworks and broker new partnerships with local disability organisations.

The European Green Deal

One of the main EU policy developments of 2020 was the Green Deal, a flagship initiative of the new European Commission that took office at the end of 2019. It is a comprehensive strategy (with an accompanying action plan) that cuts across many different policies and aims to “transform the EU into a fair and prosperous society, with a modern, resource-efficient and competitive economy where there are no net emissions of greenhouse gases in 2050 and where economic growth is decoupled from resource use.”

Among the specific policies, the most relevant for food security is the “Farm to Fork Strategy”, presented on May 20, 2020. It contains proposals to achieve a healthier and more sustainable EU Food System. It also includes a chapter aiming at ‘promoting the global transition’, where the EU commits itself to reduce the pressure on biodiversity worldwide, including through prevention of and response to food crises, particularly in fragile contexts, and resilience and risk preparedness activities.

The Grand Bargain

Coming out of the World Humanitarian Summit in 2016, the Grand Bargain is a set of 10 non-binding political commitments that donor governments and humanitarian organizations plan to jointly pursue to strengthen the effectiveness, efficiency, and accountability of humanitarian assistance to people in need. The commitments have been taken forward through eight thematic work streams involving a series of changes in the working practices of donors and humanitarian assistance organizations.

The Grand Bargain commits its signatories to increase the amount of un-earmarked donor funding. In 2020, several FAC-parties provided significant core contributions to international organisations working in the food assistance sector, including OCHA, WFP, FAO, UNICEF, UNRWA, and ICRC among others. Lightly earmarked contributions were also provided to country or activity level, either to various CBPF’s, or to food and nutrition related activities.

Various FAC members including Denmark, Canada, Switzerland continued to support the operational shift towards Grand Bargain commitments towards increased use of cash-based programming, localization and quality funding to deliver efficient protection and assistance to people in need. The Australian Humanitarian Partnership (AHP) – a consortium of six NGOs – has developed in-country governance structures comprised of representatives from local branches of Australian NGOs and local partners in the Pacific. AHP played a key role in responsive programming to Tropical Cyclone Harold and COVID-19 pandemic.

INNOVATIVE APPROACHES TO FOOD ASSISTANCE

Anticipatory action

Anticipatory action allows humanitarian actors to mobilise dedicated funds prior to a forecast hazard on the basis of a pre-agreed protocol defining, inter alia, triggers and activities to be undertaken. A number of different organisations have already piloted anticipatory actions in the framework of different types of crises, mostly for natural hazards, while less for conflict.

2020 was a year where many countries, especially in the Horn of Africa, were hit by a multitude of disasters including COVID-19, floods and locust swarms. To support countries facing locust invasions, FAO, in close collaboration with governments, inter-governmental and UN partners, provided technical and operational assistance for sustained control operations and livelihoods support for the most vulnerable. Various FAC members including Canada, Denmark, the EU, the Russian Federation and Switzerland provided funding to WFP and FAO to support resilience building and anticipatory action against locust swarms on the Horn of Africa and Yemen. In addition, cash assistance was also provided in anticipation of floods in Bangladesh.

School Feeding Programmes

School feeding is the world's most widely provided form of social protection. Schools provide a unique opportunity to coherently address the different causes and consequences of malnutrition. At the same time, School Feeding Programmes facilitate children's access to school, promote gender equity by supporting girls and boys to attend and graduate from school and reduce the risk of child marriage, early pregnancies and gender-based violence, as well as they improve their cognitive development. Educating girls is one of the most effective ways to improve food security: when girls are educated they are more likely to be able to meet the nutritional needs of their children and to head households that are food-secure.

Faced with COVID-19 school closures, school feeding programs adapted to maintain key access to nutritious food for vulnerable children – particularly girls – and provided Take-Home Rations (THR) in lieu of school feeding. THR served as a safety net for crisis-affected households, and mitigated risks of school dropout, child labour and child forced marriage. While school feeding is not a new concept in the humanitarian and development assistance sector, decades of experiences, reviews, and reports have improved the quality of these multisectoral interventions. Various FAC members including Australia, Canada, France, US, Russian Federation, provided support for school feeding interventions in 2020.

BEST PRACTICES AND LESSONS LEARNED IN 2020

Lessons from Multi-Sectoral Resilience Food Security Activities

A recent assessment reviewed 743 separate recommendations from 16 mid-term evaluations (MTEs) of USAID's Resilience Food Security Activities (RFSAs) to identify common themes or trends that could inform future programming. Despite the diversity and variation in the recommendations, several cross-cutting trends emerged from the analysis.

The most common recommendations were to: (i) reduce the number of interventions and focus on those that had a better chance of achieving sustainability; (ii) improve the quality or appropriateness of the technical approaches chosen by the activity; (iii) improve sustainability of interventions; (iv) improve targeting or reach of interventions to better support participants; (v) increase collaboration and information sharing between RFSAs in the same country and with other projects in the same implementation area; (vi) layer and integrate different activity interventions at the household level; and finally, (vii) improve the knowledge and use of baseline data.

Packaging Safety

The Hybrid Film technology, a more resilient packaging material, has been successfully used for corn soy blend (CSB) flour and cornmeal. Preliminary field performance results indicate that by switching to this material, there has been a reduction in torn bags from 2017 (3 percent) to 2020 (0.41 percent), leading to fewer losses and damages. USAID, along with the WFP, is currently looking at collecting more comprehensive field performance data to more accurately measure the impact of this technology in terms of reducing infestation and losses and damages, as well as identifying efficiency gains related to the transportation, warehousing, and handling of these commodities through the supply chain.

Strengthened Localization

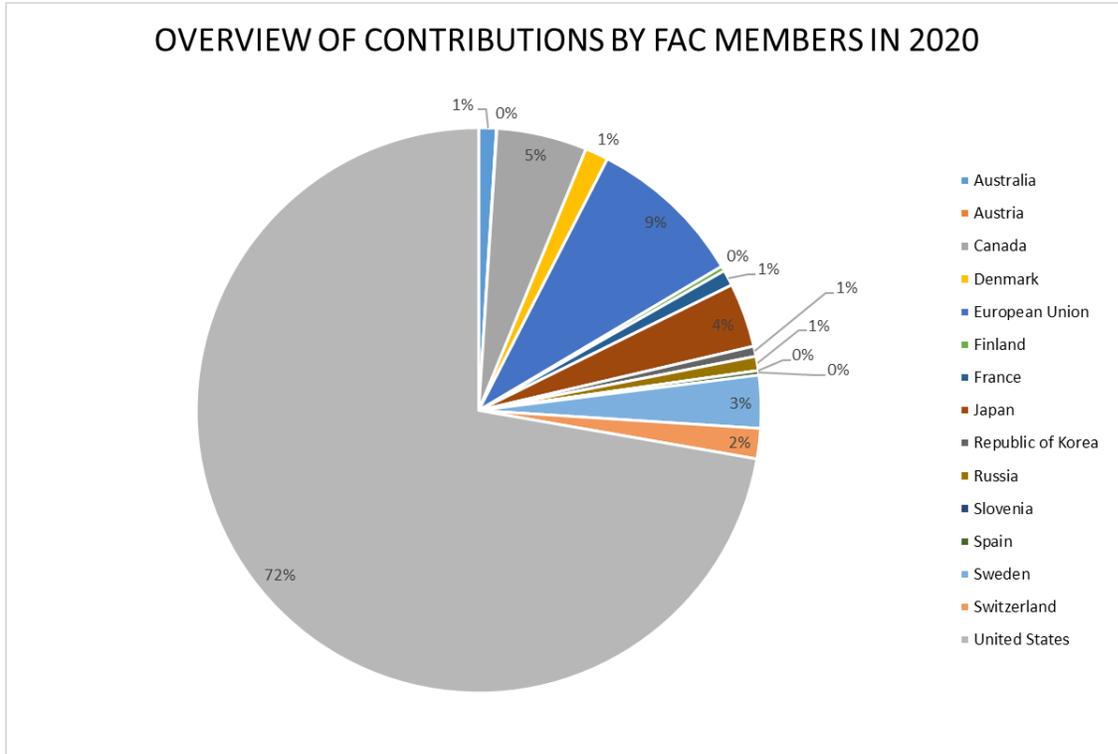
In 2020, the capacity of the international humanitarian community was severely restricted due to COVID-19 travel restrictions. Various FAC Members accelerated efforts to embed localisation into humanitarian and development policy and programming to enable greater local and national leadership in the provision of assistance.

The response to Tropical Cyclone Harold in the Pacific was characterised by strengthened local and national leadership, resulting in more appropriate and relevant assistance. Cluster meetings were led by nationals, and in many cases conducted in local languages. Australia continued to provide technical support and skilled personnel, but with travel restrictions in place this drew much more on in-country capacity or occasionally remote assistance.

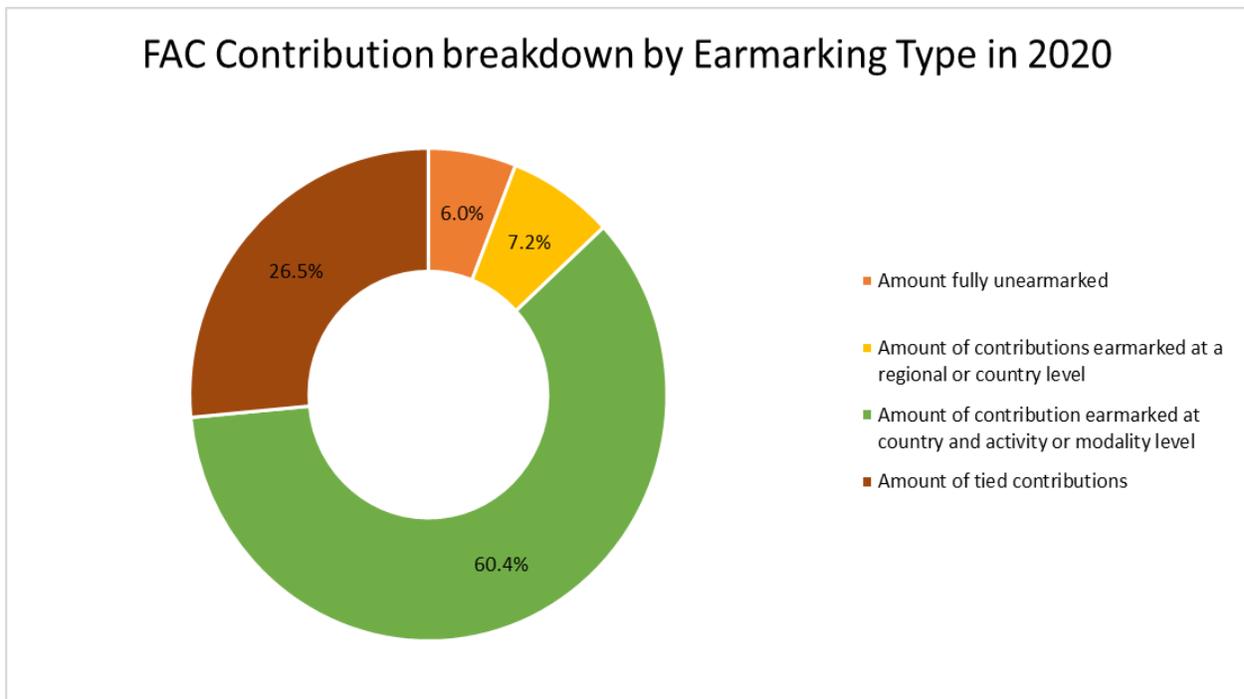
Three-year Consecutive Rice Contribution amidst COVID-19

Even at the peak of the global outbreak of COVID-19 in March-May 2020, Korea continued its rice contribution as planned to prevent the food pipeline break of the recipient countries. Working closely with WFP, Korea ensured that fluctuating market and exchange rates at the peak of the pandemic did not delay the provision of its 2020 rice contribution

Annex 1: Overview of Contributions by FAC Members In 2020



Annex 2: FAC Contribution breakdown by Earmarking Type in 2020



Annex 3: Overview of FAC Contributions by Recipient Country in 2020

