

# UN World Food Program

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## In News

This year's **Nobel Peace Prize** has been awarded to the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP), commending its efforts to combat world hunger. The UN body was also praised for **bettering conditions for peace and preventing the use of hunger as a weapon of war**. The Nobel Committee said the WFP's work was an endeavor that all the nations of the world should be able to endorse and support.

## More About UN World Food Program

- **Founded in 1961, the WFP delivers food assistance to vulnerable communities, particularly those affected by war.**
- It was **created at the behest of the administration of US President Dwight D Eisenhower** to provide food aid through the UN system, which was still in its infancy. The programme has intervened in several global emergencies since. Last year alone, the WFP said it **assisted 97 million people across 88 countries.**
- **Governments are the principle source of its funding** – its largest donations coming from the **US, Germany and the UK**. Money is also given to the WFP from corporations and individuals.
- The programme's overarching goal is to bolster peace and stability by **promoting food security and improved nutrition**. To this end the WFP is involved with a range of projects, including ones to **strengthen food supply chains, local markets and resilience to local climate risks.**
- Two of its main current areas of work are:
  - **Yemen:** The WFP feeds 13 million people – almost half of

Yemen's population – as the country grapples with civil war and endemic poverty. It says it urgently needs more than \$500m (\$385m) to ensure uninterrupted food assistance until March 2021.

. **South Sudan:** Since gaining independence from Sudan in 2011, areas of South Sudan have been racked by hunger and poverty, spurred by inter-ethnic violence. The WFP provides food aid to half a million people, cash assistance, school meals and treatment for malnutrition.

- Despite its latest accolade from the Nobel Prize Committee, the WFP has been under the spotlight in the past – not always for positive reasons. Early in its history, the group was also **accused of bolstering the US economy by buying its produce.** The WFP has since tried to **strike a balance between purchasing locally and avoiding any potential inflation of food prices.**
- WFP is governed by a 36-member Executive Board. It **works closely with its two Rome-based sister organizations, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the International Fund for Agricultural Development.** WFP partners with more than 1,000 national and international NGOs to provide food assistance and tackle the underlying causes of hunger.
- WFP raised a record-breaking US\$8 billion in 2019. WFP has **more than 17,000 staff worldwide of whom over 90% are based in the countries where the agency provides assistance.**