

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

WFP News Release

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ON WORLD FOOD DAY, UN WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME HIGHLIGHTS PROGRESS TOWARDS ZERO HUNGER EVEN AS MULTIPLE EMERGENCIES FLARE

BISSAU – Amid several hunger emergencies – both natural and man-made – the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) is marking World Food Day, 16 October, by highlighting both the challenges around the world and the real progress being made toward “zero hunger.”

“Every year, we witness hunger’s devastating effect on families, communities and whole economies,” said WFP Executive Director Ertharin Cousin. “But despite horrific crises engulfing entire regions, we are making real progress in the fight to sustainably and durably end hunger and chronic malnutrition. Thanks to the work we do with our partners on emergency preparedness, support to family farmers, nutritional assistance – particularly in a child’s first 1,000 days – and building the resilience of communities to withstand shocks, millions of people are now better able to focus on building a future free of hunger for themselves and the next generation.”

According to [The State of Food Insecurity in the World 2014](#) report, the total number of hungry people in the world is down by 37 million, to 805 million, and 63 countries have reached international hunger-reduction targets before 2015, proof of the progress possible when governments, humanitarian organizations and the private sector come together to make lasting change.

Recent studies have outlined the devastating effect that hunger and under-nutrition can have on the lives of individuals, communities and national economies. Data from a series of studies called the [Cost of Hunger in Africa](#) has shown that hunger is capable of reducing a nation’s workforce by 9.4% and national GDPs by up to 16.5%, severely limiting a developing country’s ability to make much needed investments and grow.

This shows why the international community must continue to strive towards a world with zero hunger, a world in which children and families can build their futures and farmers can better provide for themselves and help their communities become self-sufficient, Cousin said.

Every year, WFP marks World Food Day alongside the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) in Rome and offices around the world.

The theme for this year's World Food Day is "family farming," one of the many ways WFP is supporting local economies to build self-sufficiency and people to achieve zero hunger in their communities. Here are just a few of the ways WFP is helping an average of 90 million people a year focus on their futures:

- Providing [emergency food assistance](#) to people affected by natural and manmade disasters, such as the outbreak of Ebola in West Africa and the civil conflicts in Syria, Iraq, Central African Republic and South Sudan
- Running or supporting [school meals programmes](#) in remote places, giving roughly 20 million of the poorest children a chance at a brighter future
- Prioritizing the [purchase of food](#) in developing countries and from [family and small-scale farmers](#) to support local economies
- Partnering with [companies and organizations](#) around the world to improve WFP operations, create innovative solutions and raise funds and awareness

WFP in Guinea-Bissau is currently operating a programme which covers the period March 2013 to December 2015, assisting about 160,000 beneficiaries every year. Almost 86,000 school children receive a daily hot meal and more than 12,000 girls benefit from a quarterly take home ration as an incentive for their families to allow the girls to attend classes. Approximately 36,000 women and children receive nutritive products to prevent or treat malnutrition, under nutrition programmes.

In alignment with the priorities set by the Government of Guinea-Bissau, and in collaboration with other partners, WFP is working to increase rice production and its commercialization in the country, by helping to increase cultivated areas and improving the feeder roads connecting the production areas to the markets.

"Whenever possible, WFP purchases local food products from small farmers so as to ensure acceptable and timely deliveries of the food distributed, as well as to support the local markets," said WFP Guinea-Bissau Country Director Ussama Osman.



Additionally, in partnership with FAO, WFP is trying to provide schools with fresh products from school or community gardens in order to diversify schoolchildren's diets and to involve the school and communities in the production of their own food.

More information about what zero hunger can do for people is available at www.wfp.org/WorldFoodDay.

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WFP is the world's largest humanitarian agency fighting hunger worldwide, delivering food in emergencies and working with communities to build resilience. In 2013, WFP assisted more than 80 million people around the world. Follow us on Twitter @wfp_media and @wfp

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