



Ready to help

Reaching the right people,
in the right places, fast



World Food Programme



Early warning is early action

Preparedness is an investment against man-made and natural disasters. It means we use our resources wisely and efficiently, and our knowledge to reduce the risk of a bad situation becoming even worse.

When disaster strikes, the clock starts ticking. Time is often our worst enemy. Being as prepared as possible – to save lives and livelihoods – is a top priority for the World Food Programme.

Emergency Preparedness and Response Branch

In times of catastrophe, WFP's Emergency Preparedness and Response Branch is a crucial hub. The hard facts, figures and analysis it has been gathering means we can take informed decisions – quickly getting our food and our expert staff to where they are needed most.





WFP/ricardo Gagnepain/Rwanda

Forewarned is forearmed

Forecasting that an emergency is on its way is vital. WFP is now feeding more than 100 million people worldwide every year – more than it ever has. A quarter of them are in emergency operations. But as we have to adapt to the less predictable weather patterns brought by climate change, many more may suddenly need our help.

Globally, WFP's Emergency Preparedness and Response Officers have developed a comprehensive multi-layered Early Warning System. It uses the most authoritative sources to analyse hazards like floods and droughts and ground-breaking technology to combine them with man-made crises – like conflict. WFP can see when and where the next emergency may be – and plan for it.



Analysing the impact

When a crisis occurs, hundreds of thousands of people can – overnight – have nothing left. WFP urgently needs a Rapid Impact Analysis – to know where to go, or importantly, where not to. The Emergency Preparedness and Response Branch has built strong partnerships with leading scientific, academic and space institutions to provide this. One, called ITHACA – Information Technology for Humanitarian Assistance Cooperation and Action – was created especially for us. We can ask for satellite and other remote images, which our mapping experts overlay with key information – like where people live and where environmental damage has made them more vulnerable. Then, on one clear page, WFP knows where help is needed most.

Fast information, fast response

Emergencies often happen in the world's most remote and inaccessible areas, to its very poorest people. Knowing that information is the key to the best response, WFP's Emergency Preparedness and Response Officers around the world systematically bring essential facts and figures together in one place.

The Emergency Preparedness website puts the right information at the fingertips of the right decision makers. It tells them where food stocks are, what contingency plans have been made, what road they can use to deliver supplies. It saves time, money, effort – and suffering.



Preparing for a pandemic

We are preparing for what could be our biggest emergency – the first global influenza pandemic for over 40 years. The Pandemic Response Unit within the Emergency Preparedness and Response Branch has long been getting contingency plans and medical supplies into place. It has also been training WFP staff how to cope and how to take simple steps – like regularly washing their hands – to reduce the risk of infection. The Unit is working with national governments, UN agencies and the commercial sector to keep supply lines and borders open, to move stocks early into key areas. In a severe pandemic there will be unique challenges, but WFP must be prepared to maintain people’s access to food.



Being prepared means having the information to take good decisions, at the right time.

Being prepared means having the plans in place to help quickly and effectively.

Being prepared means stopping crises becoming emergencies.

Being prepared means reducing the risk of disaster - a key WFP priority.

Being prepared means adapting to climate change and its effect on the most vulnerable people.

**Emergency Preparedness
and Response Branch**

World Food Programme

Via Cesare Giulio Viola, 68/70 – 00148 Rome, Italy
E-mail: Hq.Situation.Room@wfp.org



World Food Programme