



Children outside Tuo school, Fenualoa, Reef Islands, Solomon Islands. Photo by: Pohopetch

mobile Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping (mVAM)



What is mVAM?

Around the world, the World Food Programme's mobile Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping uses mobile technology to remotely monitor household food security and nutrition and food market-related trends in real-time, providing high-frequency, gender-disaggregated and operationally relevant data that supports humanitarian decision-making.

Objectives of the Project

The project aims to:

1. Assist Governments and national stakeholders in capturing ongoing, timely, and contextualized data on the food security, livelihood, and market situation.
2. Strengthen local capacity to support assessment and monitoring activities.
3. Support government and humanitarian cluster coordination in the Pacific by sharing and disseminating data for risk-informed coordination

The mVAM story

The mVAM project started in 2013 at WFP offices in Goma, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Galkayo, Somalia, with a grant from the Humanitarian Innovation Fund. WFP's first country-wide Short Message Service (SMS) and Interactive Voice Response-based (IVR) food security monitoring system was launched in September 2014, when mVAM was deployed in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone to support the Ebola

emergency response. The system has provided WFP with operational information in emergencies, overcoming obstacles related to restricted access and staff safety. In 2015, WFP deployed the mVAM approach to monitor the food security situation in Iraq and Yemen, and in 2016 it expanded to emergencies in Syria and Nigeria. mVAM operations has spanned over 30 countries and growing.

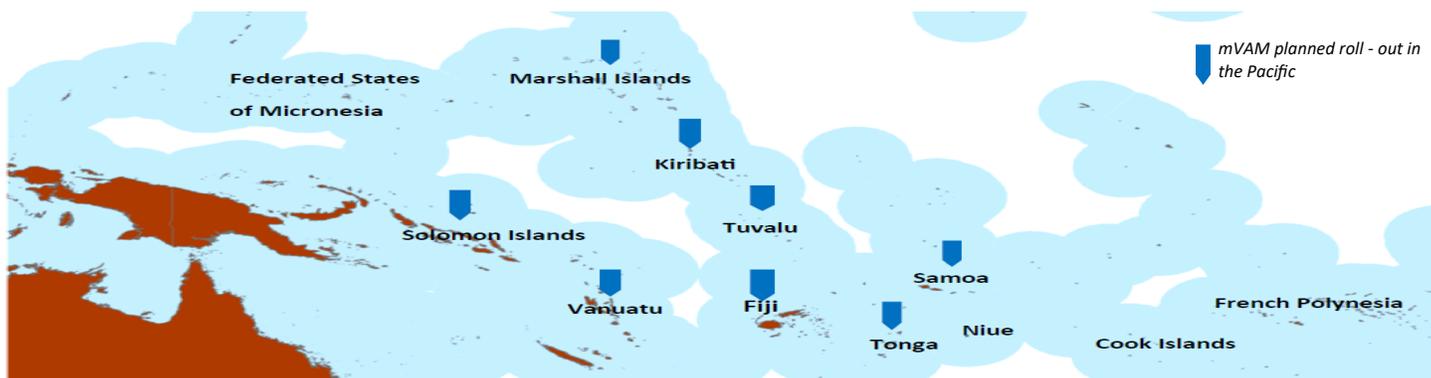
In the Pacific, WFP began mVAM implementation in response to COVID-19 and TC Harold, to ensure the presence of a system to monitor the food security, livelihoods, and market situation.

Why remote data collection?

Collecting primary data on households' food security can be challenging, time consuming and costly – particularly during emergencies and humanitarian crises. Remote data collection is a more flexible and efficient way to collect food security, livelihoods and market information. Also, it allows for frequent monitoring without putting enumerators at risk during the pandemic.

mVAM in numbers

mVAM has proven to be a scalable tool and has the ability to collect large amounts of data (in 2015, more than 100,000 questionnaires were collected using mVAM, a seven-fold increase on the previous year). In the Pacific, WFP will collect data in stages in multiple countries, with the option to expand. Initial target countries include Fiji, Vanuatu, Samoa, Tonga, Tuvalu, Solomon Islands, Kiribati, and Marshall Islands.



How is mVAM data used

mVAM aims to provide relevant, timely and frequent information necessary to design and implement food security programs that supports the UN's Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 2 ' End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture. After each data collection round, analytical bulletins are published , providing near real-time information for advocacy, appeals processes, strategic decision making, programme planning and fine - tuning interventions both by WFP as well as other national and international stakeholders.

mVAM data is routinely used by other humanitarian actors, who use it as a source of secondary data for their own analysis and internal decision-making processes. For instance, the European Commission's Joint Research Centre wrote an extensive analysis of food security and Ebola based on the mVAM data. WFP also has a data sharing agreement with FEWS NET and the International Growth Centre (London School of Economics) which quotes mVAM findings in their reports.

In the Pacific, WFP will work with partners to ensure analysis guides government, regional and national decision makers and Food Security Clusters. Risk-informed decision making is key in strengthening early-warning-early action capabilities.

The Role of Coordination

The relevance of joint work within the regional Pacific Food Security Cluster is now higher than ever, as the COVID-19 pandemic presents the largest setback to accomplishing the region's Sustainable Development Goals Agenda 2030. Members of the food security cluster are now seeking to maximize complementarities and join efforts to support national strategies on COVID-19, and to build local capacities to cope with COVID19 disruptions on food and nutrition. Additionally, WFP, IFAD, and CTA, the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Co-operation plan to implement ongoing market monitoring to address the longer-term economic impacts of COVID-19 on markets through existing platforms. Through this collaboration, it will be possible to reach out to various value chain actors, including farmers and farmer associations, government representatives, private agro-enterprises, community-based organizations, NGOs, and financiers.

Leveraging assessment technologies globally

The technologies that WFP has used for mVAM surveys – including live interviews, text messaging , web surveys, and Interactive Voice Response – make it possible for WFP to collect and deliver critical information about food security to people everywhere. WFP has leveraged these tools to deliver and receive information from the communities it works with.

In the Pacific, WFP plans to leverage digital solutions in new ways to meet the monitoring and guidance needs of governments and the humanitarian community.

Advantages of mVAM's remote surveys:

-  **NO RISKS** No 'boots' on ground' Data collection in hard-to-access areas
-  **FAST** Faster turnaround for data collection and analysis
-  **LOW COST** Surveys are less costly than face-to-face surveys

Open Data

For years, WFP has had food security statistics on its website on an open access basis (WFP VAM [Dataviz](#)). mVAM endeavours to make the data collected by the project 'open' and accessible to people everywhere including through Application Programming Interface (API).

Future of mVAM

Lessons learned from the mVAM project to date inform the project's development as it consolidates and expands to new countries. mVAM continues to explore the use of emerging technologies to reach more vulnerable people and to refine its surveys. Currently, the project is in the process of:

- ◆ Collecting new indicators through mVAM;
- ◆ Implementing new methods to reach people;
- ◆ Integrating mVAM into a Food Security Monitoring System.