



## **MOROCCO TRANSITIONAL INTERIM COUNTRY STRATEGIC PLAN (YEAR 2018)**

<b>Duration</b> (starting date – end date)	<b>1 January 2018 – 31 December 2018</b>
<b>Total cost to WFP</b>	<b>USD 214,000</b>
<b>Gender and Age Marker Code</b>	<b>2a</b>

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Economic and social reforms have contributed significantly to the accomplishments of Morocco in eradicating extreme poverty and eliminating hunger, reducing the percentage of people living in situations of extreme poverty and food poverty to almost zero. Access to food is generally guaranteed in Morocco, however, the country still faces challenges related to malnutrition, long-term food security and sustainable agriculture.

The Capacity Development and Support for the School Meals Programme project (DEV 200494) was launched in July 2013, following the signature of a Memorandum of Understanding between WFP and the Government of Morocco. The project's fifth budget revision allowed for a Government-requested extension of the project for 12 months, from 1 January to 31 December 2017. Budget revision six will further extend the programme until the end of the transitional Interim Country Strategic Plan (transitional-ICSP).

The Morocco transitional-ICSP will contribute to the Strategic Outcome "National institutions in Morocco are enabled to implement effective and efficient school meals and social protection programmes by 2018". To this end, WFP will support the Moroccan government in enhancing its National School Meals Programme, as a vital component of the Vision 2030 education sector reform and the National Nutrition Strategy 2011-2019.

WFP will support its main government partner, the Ministry of National Education and Professional Training, and will work with the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Agriculture, in strengthening regulatory frameworks and tools in the areas of school meals and social protection. The Ministry of National Education and Professional Training will pilot the implementation of innovative school meals modalities based on WFP's recommendations.

The project is aligned with the first pillar of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework 2017-2021, to support the education sector. An enhanced National School Meals Programme can contribute to the attainment of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4, SDG 2 and SDG 17. WFP's foreseen activities under the transitional-ICSP contribute in particular to SDG target 17.9.

WFP will work with the Government of Morocco to coordinate on the scope and timing of the Country Strategic Review, in line with national priorities. WFP will engage with the Rome-based agencies, the United Nation's Food and Agricultural Organization and the International Fund for Agricultural Development, to join efforts during the Country Strategic Review, leveraging on the agencies' expertise and resources in-country.

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# 1. COUNTRY ANALYSIS

## 1.1 COUNTRY CONTEXT

1. Morocco is a lower-middle-income country with relatively positive macroeconomic indicators, generally low inflation and moderately high growth rates averaging 4.5 percent annually over the past 10 years. By adopting a gradual approach to democratization, and introducing a new Constitution in 2011, the country's political landscape has remained comparatively stable.
2. Nevertheless, poverty persists, notably in rural areas where 80 percent of the 14 million rural dwellers depend directly or indirectly on agriculture for their livelihood.<sup>1</sup> About 10 percent of people in rural areas live below the poverty line, and they represent two-thirds of all the poor people in Morocco.<sup>2</sup> Households headed by women, which represent an estimated 12 percent of rural households, are considered the most vulnerable family units in the country.<sup>3</sup>
3. A modern industrial agricultural sector coexists alongside more traditional subsistence-oriented agriculture. Three-quarters of agricultural land in Morocco is exploited under relatively large corporate-type farming. While industrial agriculture is primarily focused on producing food for export, smallholder farmers are mainly supplying food to local markets and for family consumption. More than 70 percent of farmers are tilling farms not exceeding five hectares.<sup>4</sup>
4. The labour participation rate for women in Morocco in 2013 was 25 percent against 73 percent for men, at the same level as in 1990.<sup>5</sup> The share of female youth who are employed is very small, less than 12 percent nationwide and only 5 percent in rural areas.<sup>6</sup> While only 21 percent of women are employed in non-agricultural sectors, women represent a major force in the agricultural sector, which accounts for 52 percent of active women.<sup>7</sup> Despite their key role in agriculture, women lack equitable access to markets and productive assets.
5. Although Morocco has made considerable progress in reducing drop-out rates, 220,000 (26 percent) of 5-year-old boys and girls who should be enrolled in pre-primary school are not attending school, along with nearly 83,000 (2 percent) primary school aged boys and girls and over 255,000 (16 percent) lower secondary school aged boys and girls (16 percent).<sup>8</sup> Whereas there is relative parity in enrolment in primary education (98 percent for boys and 97 percent for girls ages 6-11), the gap widens in secondary education, with 89 percent of boys and 79 percent of girls ages 12-14 attending school nation-wide. This gap is largely explained by high drop-out rates in rural areas, where 44 percent of girls and 26 percent of boys ages 12-14 were out of school in 2012.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ministry of Agriculture Morocco 2008. Plan Maroc Vert.

<sup>2</sup> Ghanem, H. 2015. Agriculture and Rural Development for Inclusive Growth and Food Security in Morocco. Brookings Institute.

<sup>3</sup> Skalili, LH 2001. Women and Poverty in Morocco: The Many Faces of Social Exclusion

<sup>4</sup> Biermayr-Jenzano, P. and Kassam, S. 2014. Understanding gender and poverty dimensions of high value agricultural commodity chains in the Souss-Masaa-Draa region of south-western Morocco.

<sup>5</sup> World Bank 2015. Social Protection and Labour Brief Morocco (Draft).

<sup>6</sup> World Bank 2012. Kingdom of Morocco - Promoting Youth Opportunities and Participation.

<sup>7</sup> World Economic Forum 2014. The Global Gender Gap Report 2014.

<sup>8</sup> UNICEF 2015 Morocco Country Report on Out of School Children [\[online\]](#)

<sup>9</sup> Instance Nationale d'Evaluation (CSEFR) in UNICEF 2015 Morocco Country Report on Out of School Children [\[online\]](#)

## 1.2 PROGRESS TOWARDS SDG 2

### *Progress on SDG 2 targets*

6. ***Access to food:*** Economic and social reforms have contributed significantly to the accomplishments of Morocco in eradicating extreme poverty and eliminating hunger, reducing the percentage of people living in situations of extreme poverty to almost zero.<sup>10</sup> Food poverty was reduced from 4.6 percent in 1985 to 0.1 percent in 2014. Access to food is generally guaranteed in Morocco, but the country faces challenges related to malnutrition, long-term food security and sustainable agriculture. Overall, the observed increases in food security (and prospects of further improvements in the future) are dependent on national efforts to reduce inequality and vulnerability; and disparities in income between regions, urban and rural areas, and between men and women (the estimated average earned income of men and women in 2015 was USD 11,940 and 3,144, respectively).<sup>11</sup>
7. ***End malnutrition:*** The population of Morocco bears a double burden of malnutrition – under nutrition and overweight/obesity. More than half of Morocco’s adult population is overweight (50 percent of men and 59 percent of women), whilst 21 percent of the population suffers from obesity, affecting women in particular (27 percent, compared with 15 percent of men).<sup>12</sup> At the same time, the prevalence of stunting among boys and girls aged 6-59 months, generally caused by chronic malnutrition during pregnancy and infancy, is 15 percent. Micronutrient deficiencies include anaemia (33 percent of the overall population and 35 percent of pregnant women) and vitamin A deficiency (15 percent of boys and girls aged 6-59 months).<sup>13</sup> Poor families are the most affected by the lack of access to adequate food and nutrition.
8. ***Smallholder productivity and incomes:*** The agricultural sector represents 15 percent of Morocco’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP). However, its role in Morocco’s economic and social fabric is larger, since roughly 40 percent of Morocco’s labour force is employed in agriculture. Thirty percent of labour on family farms is provided by women, yet women own only 7 percent of the land in Morocco.<sup>14</sup> The feminisation of agriculture means there is an increasing share of women in the agricultural workforce, but facing lower pay and more constrained access to productive assets compared to men. About 43 percent of Morocco’s population lives in rural areas and their livelihoods are either directly or indirectly dependent on agriculture.<sup>15</sup> Agriculture is particularly important because it provides livelihoods for the majority of the country’s poor.
9. ***Sustainable food systems:*** Agricultural activities currently exert high pressure on soil, water and biodiversity. This is mainly due to the uncontrolled use of and pollution from phosphates and nitrates and wasteful irrigation networks.<sup>16</sup> Drought is a major concern for Moroccan farmers, especially in rain-fed low-lands which experience considerable variation in annual precipitation. In response, Morocco developed The Green Plan (2008-2022), a national agriculture strategy that aims to strengthen the sector’s resilience and

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<sup>10</sup> In June 2015, Morocco received recognition from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) for reaching MDG 1 of cutting extreme poverty and hunger two years ahead of schedule.

<sup>11</sup> World Economic Forum. 2016. Global Gender Gap Report.

<sup>12</sup> World Health Organization, 2016, Diabetes Country Profiles

<sup>13</sup> International Food Policy Research Institute 2015. Nutrition Profile: Morocco.

<sup>14</sup> UN WOMEN. 2014. Spring Forward for Women Programme

<sup>15</sup> Ghanem, H. 2015. Agriculture and Rural Development for Inclusive Growth and Food Security in Morocco. Brookings Institute.

<sup>16</sup> Environmental Performance Review Morocco. 2014. United Nations.

sustainability in the face of land degradation and increased drought frequency, and to improve food security.

### ***Macro-economic environment***

10. Morocco is a lower-middle-income country that experienced steady GDP growth of an average of 4.7 percent between 2010 and 2015, which contributed to eliminating extreme poverty. Despite this economic progress, the country still faces challenges related to unemployment and poverty, particularly in rural areas, as 9 percent of the rural population is still living in or vulnerable to poverty. Low employment rates in Morocco are largely explained by the very low participation of women in the labour force (25 percent in 2013 against 73 percent of men), in particular due to the cultural norms in rural areas, where traditional gender roles which disadvantage women and girls are still prevalent. Agricultural production fluctuates yearly as a result of weather variations, and Morocco relies on international markets to meet its consumption needs. Real GDP is expected to expand by 3.5 percent per year on average in 2017-21.

### ***Key cross-sectorial linkages***

11. Morocco is ranked 123 out of 188 countries on the Human Development Index (HDI 0.647) and as 114 on the Gender Inequality Index (GII 2015: 0.494). The country has engaged in an ambitious sustainable development agenda and has initiated a wide range of reforms with the aim of attaining the SDGs. The international community lauded Morocco for the significant progress it made towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), in particular in eradicating extreme poverty. Cross-sectorial challenges for the attainment of SDG 2 include regional disparities, high unemployment levels (particularly among women), gender inequality and an education sector lagging behind the needs of the modern labour market (literacy rates are 62 and 82 percent for women and men, respectively, while only 53 percent of girls and 59 percent of boys are enrolled in secondary education).<sup>17</sup>

### **1.3. HUNGER GAPS AND CHALLENGES**

12. Morocco has embarked on proactive process of modernisation and democratisation and the adoption of a wide range of policies and programmes to ensure access to nutritious food, notably the National Nutrition Strategy (2011-2019) and the Morocco Green Plan. Considerable challenges nevertheless remain, in particular in relation to access to food and agricultural resilience in face of climate change.
13. The United Nations Special Rapporteur on the right to food, in a 2016 United Nations report reaffirmed that the main challenges to secure the right to food and attain SDG 2 in Morocco were economic inequality and vulnerability, as well as increasing disparities in income between regions, and between urban and rural areas<sup>18</sup>; and that gender inequalities render women particularly vulnerable to food insecurity among poor and vulnerable populations. The Rapporteur recommended making efforts to ensure that the Green Plan benefits all, particularly smallholder and family farmers. Moreover, infrastructure should be improved in remote areas to ensure easy access to markets and attract investment to rural areas. The number of projects that target women and young farmers should be increased.
14. Morocco faces significant food security and agricultural risks related to climate change. Projections indicate that reduced rainfall and higher temperatures will increase risks on

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<sup>17</sup> World Economic Forum. 2016. Global Gender Gap Report.

<sup>18</sup> UN Human Rights Council 2016. Report of the Special Rapporteur on the right to food on her mission to Morocco.

water and environmental resources, already under extensive pressure from population growth, industrialization, tourism and agricultural extension. Morocco is listed by the World Resources Institute (WRI) as most likely to be the nineteenth most water-stressed country by 2040.<sup>19</sup>

## 1.4 KEY COUNTRY PRIORITIES

### *Government priorities*

15. Morocco has engaged in an ambitious sustainable development agenda and initiated a wide range of reforms in recent years with the aim of improving nutrition, education, agriculture and environmental sustainability.
16. The National Nutrition Strategy (2011-2019) outlines a broad approach to improve the nutritional status of the Moroccan population. The strategy calls for the incorporation of nutrition into national development strategies and presents national nutrition goals, which include promoting a balanced diet and a healthy lifestyle in schools and universities, as well as increasing the proportion of boys and girls engaged in physical activities at school from 50 to 80 percent.
17. Morocco's efforts to achieve Zero Hunger align closely with the Green Plan – the national strategy to drive and reform the agricultural sector, promote the integration of agriculture into international markets, and help agriculture achieve sustainable growth. The Green Plan has two main pillars and a variety of intersecting programmes. The first pillar relates to high-yield, intensive and market-related agriculture. The second relates to strengthening small farmers through the promotion of crop yield growth and encouraging a shift towards crops that are better adapted to environmental conditions and market demand.
18. The 2030 Vision for the Education Reform (Vision 2030 Initiative) is part of an effort to address regional disparities, boost academic performance and prepare young Moroccans for the modern labour market. The reform aims to address drop-out rates which, in spite of significant improvements, are still sizeable. The Vision 2030 Initiative reform programme aims to increase access to education and improve the performance of the education system, and to improve literacy and enrolment rates at all levels. The programme further foresees a more nutrition-sensitive approach to Government-provided school meals in boarding and primary schools. Moreover, the Government aims to reduce the number of weekly scholastic hours in order to allocate more time for extracurricular activities, in line with the National Nutrition Strategy (2011-2019).
19. Current social safety nets programmes include: i) energy/food subsidies, ii) education support, iii) non-contributory health, iv) social assistance targeted to particular groups (such as widows, orphans, and disabled); and iv) social funds, mainly to revamp local infrastructure and create revenue generating activities through the National Initiative for Human Development (INDH). The social insurance system in Morocco covers salaried workers only, thus, bringing a disadvantage to women and youth in their access to social insurance, considering the relatively high level of inactivity in these groups.
20. Land degradation, loss of biodiversity and climate change related hazards pose further threats to the country's food security. In response, Morocco has developed a National Strategy and a National Action Plan for Biodiversity, as well as a National Plan of Action to Combat Desertification.

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<sup>19</sup> World Resources Institute 2015 [[online](#)]

21. The Ministry of Solidarity, Women, Family and Social Development work to promote gender equality, notably through the Governmental Plan for Equality (PGE) which seeks to implement the gender principles enshrined in the 2011 constitution.

### *United Nations and other partners*

22. Morocco has shown commitment to the principles of the 2030 Agenda and to attain the SDGs. The country was among the first to submit a National Voluntary Review of the country's capacity to attain the SDGs, and has made sustainable development and integrated part of the wide reform process Morocco has initiated over the past decade. In November 2016, The Moroccan Government hosted in Marrakesh the 22<sup>nd</sup> Conference of the Parties (COP 22) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. The country has shown a high level of engagement in international efforts to mitigate and adapt to climate change.
23. The United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) 2017-2021 for Morocco presents six development pillars jointly formulated by United Nations agencies and the Government of Morocco. These pillars include democratic governance and decentralisation; inclusive and sustainable development; health; education; economic inclusion, reduction of inequalities and vulnerabilities; and inclusive, integrated and sustainable rural development. These pillars are founded on the universal values of human rights, equality and gender equity.
24. The United Nation's Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) assistance to Morocco is set out by the Country Programming Framework (CPF) 2013-2016. The CPF focused on four priority areas, including the promotion of vulnerable groups and women in agriculture and fisheries; sustainable management of natural resources and improved living standards for rural people in the context of adaptation to climate change; food crises management; and promotion of regional and South-South cooperation. The CPF for 2017-2020 is under formulation.
25. In 2015, in collaboration with the Government, the United Nations carried out an extensive review of the national environmental performance, including recommendations for environmental and agricultural policies.<sup>20</sup> The recommendations for the agricultural sector and food security included developing a national strategy for protecting soils, saving water and promoting adaption to climate change (recommendation 13.2).
26. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) initiated a Government-led Education for All National Review in 2015, which concluded that the Government should continue to implement strategies aimed at improving the national education sector. The report commends the Vision 2030 Initiative and recommends the Government to ensure fulfilment of the targets set out in the strategy.
27. Moreover, the USAID-funded Millennium Challenge and the Government of Morocco signed a USD 450 million compact in 2015. The compact focuses on strengthening education and land productivity as a means to improve economic growth and stability in the country.

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## **2. STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS FOR WFP**

### **2.1 WFP'S EXPERIENCE AND LESSONS LEARNED**

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<sup>20</sup>UN ECE and Government of Morocco, 2015. Morocco Environmental Performance Review.

28. In 2013, the Government of Morocco requested WFP's assistance to review the National School Meals Programme (NSMP) as a mean to address dropouts, improve nutrition and strengthen learning, especially in rural areas. In response, WFP designed the Development Project, (DEV 200494) (2013-2017), in order to enhance the technical capacity of education authorities to improve the implementation of their existing programme.
29. Under this project, WFP provided technical assistance and policy advice to the Government of Morocco in four main areas: 1) A comprehensive assessment and review of the existing NSMP; 2) Development of a Plan of Action for the enhancement of the NSMP; 3) Organisation of stakeholders' workshops to discuss the results of the comprehensive assessment and the analysis and presentation of the Plan of Action; and 4) Organisation of study visits to share experiences and foster South-South cooperation.
30. WFP's capacity strengthening activities will continue to be aligned with WFP's Policy on Capacity Development, as well as draw on the evidence, conclusions and recommendations of the 2017 Evaluation on WFP's Policy on Capacity Development. In particular, WFP recognizes the importance of strong monitoring data to inform sound, evidence-based programme design and implementation, and as a foundation for future evaluations.
31. WFP and the Government jointly developed a Plan of Action for the enhancement of the NSMP (2016-2018) in alignment with the first pillar of the Vision 2030 Initiative, which aims to ensure equality of opportunity and combat school dropout and repetition rates. The Government requested WFP to extend its support until December 2018 to provide continued technical assistance and support for the operationalization of the jointly drafted Plan of Action.
32. In line with WFP's efforts to mainstream gender transformative programming, one of the postulates of the Plan of Action states that school meals should favour the long term development of human capital, particularly by contributing to improving girls' enrolment, attendance and participation in learning. The Plan of Action further calls for increased community participation in school meals, notably through parents' associations in school, as well as through the integration of women and men smallholder farmers into the school meals supply chain.
33. The Plan of Action's main recommendations include:
  - Establishment of an inter-ministerial coordination mechanism at the central and regional levels, and strengthening of the legal frameworks;
  - Enhancing community participation and strengthening the capacities of staff involved in school meals implementation at all levels, developing relevant guidelines;
  - Reviewing the geographic distribution of canteens, increasing coverage in most vulnerable areas, particularly for middle schools;
  - Exploring partnerships with the civil society in general and local community-based organisations in particular; and
  - Increasing nutrition related actions, particularly in terms of integrating nutrition education materials into curricula.

## **2.2 OPPORTUNITIES FOR WFP**

34. WFP will continue to support the Government of Morocco with capacity development and technical assistance activities framed under two components: i) strengthen regulatory frameworks and tools in the areas of governance and normative guidelines; and ii) design

pilot activities of new implementation modalities in the area of school meals that are efficient, nutritious, accountable, and support local agricultural development.

35. WFP's capacity development and technical assistance activities to the Government will ensure that gender considerations are taken into account, and that opportunities to empower women and girls are harnessed in programme activities, in accordance with WFP's Gender Policy 2015-2020.
36. The transitional-ICSP is foreseen to cover January to December 2018 and will allow for the continuation of existing capacity strengthening activities, specifically in the design and implementation of national social protection systems which advance food security and nutrition, while discussions are on-going for the launch of the CSR and the subsequent development and approval of WFP's Country Strategic Plan (CSP).

## **2.3 STRATEGIC CHANGES**

37. WFP will work with the Government to facilitate a CSR, in line with national priorities. Recognizing the need to proceed harmoniously through the national CSR, WFP will put in place measures to mitigate any potential institutional risks with the same approach very successfully implemented by the other United Nations agencies working in Morocco.
38. WFP has been supporting national authorities to enhance the Government-run school meals programme. If WFP proceeds to adopt a CSP, focus can be broadened to include other social protection programmes as well as broader sectors related to food security and nutrition. The development of the CSP could present an opportunity to deepen and diversify WFP's partnerships in Morocco, both with Government entities and with other development actors; as well as to advance gender-transformative programming under the WFP Gender Policy and Strategic Plan (2017-2021).

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## **3. WFP STRATEGIC ORIENTATION**

### **3.1 DIRECTION, FOCUS AND INTENDED IMPACTS**

39. The transitional-ICSP will allow for the continuation of the on-going development project 200494. The project's activities aim to strengthen national capacity and provide technical assistance to enable the Government to implement a more equitable, efficient, effective and sustainable school meals programme as an essential component of the Vision 2030 Education Reform; as well as to advance the National Nutrition Strategy (2011-2019), which promotes a balanced diet and a healthy lifestyle in schools and universities. The project strives to ensure compliance with the international school meals quality standards outlined in WFP's School Meals Policy.
40. WFP seeks to support the Ministry of Education's efforts to improve the school meals programme in primary, secondary and boarding schools, which in turn contributes to make mandatory universal schooling for all boys and girls up to the age of 15 a reality; the schooling of girls and boys in rural areas being of particular concern. These efforts have been pursued through a comprehensive assessment and review of the existing NSMP, and the development of a Plan of Action for its enhancement.
41. The Plan of Action for the enhancement of the NSMP acknowledges the importance of promoting gender equality through school meals interventions. WFP advocates for an increase of girl beneficiaries in middle schools, as per the findings of an in-depth

assessment of the NSMP<sup>21</sup>, and to enhance boarding opportunities for girls in the framework of the Government's Tayssir programme.

42. WFP will support the Government in developing innovative, home-grown pilot modalities including the centralised preparation and distribution of school meals. Pilots will pay special attention to foster women's opportunities by encouraging the participation of women-led community based organisations and non-governmental organisations (NGOs); and promote the participation of both women and men local producers in the school meals supply chain and in other activities such as the preparation and delivery of school meals. In particular, pilot experiences will focus on the creation of revenue-generating opportunities for women in rural areas in order to redress discriminatory socio-cultural norms.
43. The project is aligned with the first pillar of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) 2017-2021 to support the education sector. WFP's activities contribute to Morocco's efforts to combat malnutrition, promote food security, support smallholder farmers, and aim to strengthen the Government's capacity to implement the SDGs. The enhanced NSMP can contribute to the attainment of SDG 4, ensuring quality education and SDG 2, achieving Zero Hunger, especially SDG target 2.1 to end hunger by 2030 and ensure access by all people to safe, nutritious and sufficient food all year round.
44. WFP activities under the transitional-ICSP will support the attainment of SDG target 17.9: enhancing international support for implementing effective and targeted capacity building in developing countries to support national plans to implement all SDGs, including through South-South and triangular cooperation.
45. The transitional-ICSP will furthermore allow for WFP to work with the Government to facilitate a CSR, in line with national priorities. A CSR-informed CSP presents an opportunity to deepen and diversify WFP's partnerships in Morocco, both with Government entities and with other development actors.
46. In accordance with the WFP Strategic Plan (2017-2021), Gender Policy (2015-2020 and corporate Gender Action Plan, gender will be integrated throughout development, implementation and monitoring of the CSP, to ensure gender-transformative programmes and policies for a world free of hunger. WFP will thus ensure, inter alia, the sex- and age-disaggregation of all person-related data; the embedding of gender analysis in all assessment, research, technical assistance, knowledge, information management and related work; the mainstreaming of gender across programme, policy and capacity-strengthening initiatives; and the engagement of women, men, girls and boys (and their organizations and institutions) in a manner that is empowering, fosters equitable outcomes and advances gender equality.

### **3.2 STRATEGIC OUTCOMES, FOCUS AREAS, EXPECTED OUTPUTS AND KEY ACTIVITIES**

**STRATEGIC OUTCOME 1:** NATIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN MOROCCO ARE ENABLED TO IMPLEMENT EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT SCHOOL MEALS AND SOCIAL PROTECTION PROGRAMMES BY 2018.

#### ***Outcome description***

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<sup>21</sup> The assessment found there was parity of access to school meals for girls and boys in primary and boarding schools, but a need to increase the proportion of girls in middle school as a means to address the higher dropout rate of girls at that level.

47. Upon request from the Government of Morocco, WFP will continue to support the enhancement of Morocco's NSMP. Current project activities will continue in 2018, with the aim to strengthen national capacity and provide technical assistance to enable the Government to implement a more equitable, efficient, effective and sustainable school meals programme as a vital component of its wider social safety net system. At the same time, WFP will advocate for and aim to facilitate a Zero Hunger CSR, subsequently allowing for WFP's technical assistance to expand to other safety nets, in partnership with all relevant food security stakeholders, to jointly promote Morocco's attainment of SDG 2.
48. WFP will continue to work closely with the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Agriculture and Ministry of Health. WFP will moreover engage with the Ministry of Social Solidarity's Directorate for Women to mainstream a gendered approach into its activities while promoting a coordinated development and implementation of the enhanced NSMP. WFP encourages and facilitates South-South cooperation and study trips, such participation in the Global Child Nutrition Forum events, visits to the Centre of Excellence against Hunger in Brazil, and participation in regional initiatives for school meals in the Middle East and North Africa.
49. This Strategic Outcome contributes to SDG target 17.9 and WFP's Strategic Result 5: Developing countries have strengthened capacity to implement the SDGs.

#### ***Focus Area***

50. The strategic outcome focuses on strengthening the Government's capacity to address the root causes of food insecurity and vulnerability, in particular by improving the conditions for learning among vulnerable populations and offering effective, efficient, gender-responsive and nutrition-sensitive social protection programmes. The primary focus of the outcome is "root causes".

#### ***Expected outputs***

51. The outcome will be delivered through the following outputs:
  - i. Schoolchildren benefit from enhanced capacity of national institutions to implement more effective and efficient school meals programmes in order to promote access to nutritious food, equitable education and equal opportunities. (Tier 3; Category C; SR5; SDGs 4)
  - ii. Schoolchildren benefit from improved design of national regulatory frameworks on school meals programmes in order to promote a balanced diet and a healthy lifestyle. (Tier 3; Category C, I; SR5; SDGs 4)

#### ***Key activities***

52. *Activity 1: Provide policy advice and technical assistance to national institutions implementing school meals and social protection programmes* (activity category 9, institutional capacity strengthening): WFP will work with the Government of Morocco to strengthen regulatory frameworks and tools in the areas of governance and normative guidelines.
53. Activities under this component include the formulation of guidelines for school meals management, including nutrition guidelines for preparation of school meals in primary, secondary and boarding schools. Moreover, WFP will support the Moroccan Government in the design of its pilots of new school meals implementation modalities which are efficient, accountable and support local agricultural development. Enhancements to be

fostered include the optimisation of the school meals value chain, with the outsourcing of some activities; increased nutritional value of school meals; and the promotion of community participation in accordance with WFP's Gender Policy 2015-2020, and in line with Home-Grown School Feeding (HGSF) approaches.

### **3.3. TRANSITION AND EXIT STRATEGIES**

54. The NSMP is funded and managed by the Government of Morocco. The Government ownership of the programme ensures long-term political, financial and institutional support and allows WFP to timely withdraw its technical capacity strengthening activities without reducing the ability of the Government to continue running and enhanced NSMP. The WFP-developed school meals pilot projects will pay special attention to foster sustainable revenue-generating opportunities for women in rural areas that will sustain beyond WFP presence. Moreover, the promotion of community participation will include efforts to encourage the equal participation of women and girls, men and boys in school meals programme implementation and decision-making.

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## **4. IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS**

### **4.1 BENEFICIARY ANALYSIS**

55. WFP's activities in Morocco aim to strengthen national capacity and provide technical assistance to enable the Government to implement a more efficient, effective and sustainable school meals programme. The programme provides meals for 685,000 girls and 742,000 boys in primary, secondary and boarding schools, of which 70 percent are located in rural areas. These schoolchildren are indirect beneficiaries of WFP's capacity strengthening activities in Morocco.
56. Other beneficiaries of capacity strengthening, in particular through the foreseen development of guidelines and subsequent training, include diverse men and women including cooks, staff involved in school meals programme management at central, regional and local level, as well as school staff and community members participating in school meals supply chain and implementation.

### **4.2 TRANSFERS**

#### **CAPACITY STRENGTHENING INCLUDING SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION**

57. A comprehensive education reform is underway, which aims to boost academic performance and prepare young Moroccans for the modern labour market, and to address regional disparities. WFP has successfully advocated for an enhanced NSMP to be leveraged as a social safety net that can guarantee nutritious meals for vulnerable boys and girls in rural areas, and as an essential component of the Vision 2030 Education Reform and the National Nutrition Strategy 2011-2019. As a component of Vision 2030, the School Meals Programme is part of a broader initiative to promote gender equality in education. The NSMP's alignment with national education, agricultural and nutrition strategies contribute to its long-term political support and overall sustainability.
58. The project covered under the transitional-ICSP aims to strengthen the capacity to manage an enhanced NSMP at the central, regional and local levels. By strengthening regulatory frameworks and tools at the central level, WFP aims to increase governance effectiveness and efficiency in the area of school meals. Implementation guidelines for school management, including nutrition guidelines for preparation of school meals in primary, secondary and boarding schools, and a training of trainers approach will ensure that enhanced knowledge about school meals management will be preserved beyond WFP

presence at the regional and local levels. WFP will mainstream gender across all capacity strengthening work.

59. WFP encourages the participation of women-led community based organisations and NGOs to create revenue-generating opportunities for women in rural areas. The inclusion of women and other community members in rural areas into the school meals supply chain, through locally-procured fresh produce and/or in higher value added activities such as the preparation and delivery of school meals, are intended to help communities lead and sustain their own efforts to achieve SDG 2.
60. WFP will continue to foster South-South cooperation throughout the duration of the transitional-ICSP, including with the Centre of Excellence against Hunger in Brazil and with other governments working to improve school meals programmes in the region.

#### **4.3 COUNTRY OFFICE CAPACITY AND PROFILE**

61. WFP activities in Morocco are managed from the WFP Tunisia Country Office in Tunis. Regular missions are undertaken and contracting of appropriate expertise are used to carry out the project activities. An honorary WFP representative based in Rabat liaises with the Government at a strategic level, ensuring a streamlined approach to school meals enhancement in line with national priorities and policy objectives.

#### **4.4 PARTNERSHIPS**

62. WFP will support its main Government partner, the Ministry of Education, in strengthening regulatory frameworks and tools in the areas of school meals governance and normative guidelines. The Ministry of Education will implement the pilots based on WFP's recommendation on innovative school meals programme implementation modalities.
63. In addition to the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health is involved in improving the NSMP through their membership in the National School Meals Steering Committee. This steering committee will continue to carry out both planning and oversight of the implementation of the Plan of Action, with WFP support. The improvement of the NSMP involves the Ministry of Agriculture and Directorate for Women, in particular in designing and implementing school meals pilots. WFP will coordinate with and explore the potential for enhanced partnerships with national and international food security and nutrition stakeholders active in Morocco, especially in the framework of the CSR.
64. WFP will work with the Government to coordinate on the scope and timing of the CSR, in line with national priorities. WFP plans to engage with FAO and International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) to join efforts during the CSR and leverage on the agencies' expertise and resources in-country, ensuring a harmonised analysis of Morocco's efforts towards the attainment of SDG 2 by the three Rome-based agencies. United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and UNESCO will be invited to participate of the CSR, together with other key stakeholders, including relevant United Nations agencies, international organisations, donors, civil society and private sector representatives. WFP will leverage on the CSR consultations to develop a partnership mapping and strategy, in order to identify potential synergies with other programmes and specialised agencies.

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## **5. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT AND EVALUATION**

### **5.1. MONITORING AND EVALUATION ARRANGEMENTS**

65. The project activities have been directed to strengthen the Moroccan Government's capacity for the implementation and management of an improved NSMP at central level. The project's monitoring plan is aligned with the activities and targets outlined by the Plan of Action for the enhancement of the NSMP. All monitoring and evaluation arrangements will be gender-responsive.
66. The performance of the project has and will continue to be monitored and documented through meeting minutes and reports, elaborated by WFP staff supporting the Moroccan Government during key project activities, such as drafting and validating the Plan of Action and the study trip to the WFP Centre of Excellence in Brazil.
67. WFP's honorary representative based in Rabat liaises with the Government at a strategic level and monitor the political and programmatic developments. During the upcoming project phase, WFP will liaise with its Government counterparts and coordinate for a potential decentralised evaluation as a way of increasing evidence to inform strategic direction.
68. In accordance with WFP's Evaluation Policy, the transitional-ICSP will undergo a decentralized evaluation of Activity 1, aligned to stakeholder demand, evidence and learning needs. The evaluation will review and assess the formulation of guidelines for school meals management, including nutrition guidelines for preparation of school meals, as well as WFP's support to the government of Morocco in the design of pilots to test the implementation of innovative school meals modalities. Resources to partially cover the costs of the decentralized evaluation have been budgeted, and any additional resources needed are expected to be secured through the Contingency Evaluation Funding for decentralized evaluation.

## **5.2. RISK MANAGEMENT**

69. Morocco has experienced a relatively high degree of stability since pro-democracy protests in the region ushered constitutional reform, extending powers to the parliament and the Prime Minister. The World Bank foresees that Morocco will be able to accelerate its economic growth rate while maintaining macro-economic stability over the medium-term<sup>22</sup>, and the overall context seems favourable to advance project activities. WFP will maintain close cooperation with its Government counterparts to ensure progress as per the Plan of Action for the enhancement of the NSMP, and in the implementation of any additional activities that may result from the broadening of WFP's scope of intervention which may result from the CSR and the subsequent development of a CSP.
70. Recognizing the need to proceed harmoniously through the national CSR, WFP will put in place measures to mitigate any potential institutional risks with the same approach very successfully implemented by the other United Nations agencies working in Morocco. Possible risks will be mitigated by building on the positive dynamic created in-country, working closely with the Government and other relevant development stakeholders. WFP will proceed with the transitional-ICSP process as a means to facilitate a nationally led, context-specific CSR through the Higher Planning Commission (HCP – Haut Commissariat au Plan), in line with the ongoing commitments from Morocco vis-a-vis the implementation of Agenda 2030.
71. The Capacity Development Project has received Government support and is aligned with Morocco's Vision 2030 Education Sector Reform and the 2011 – 2019 National Nutrition Strategy. WFP expects continued political support, and continued full Government funding for the NSMP, including the implementation of the actions listed in the Plan of

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<sup>22</sup> The World Bank online: <http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/morocco/overview>

Action for the enhancement of the NSMP. Frequent missions by Tunis-based staff, ongoing follow-up by an honorary WFP representative in Rabat and the contracting on the necessary expertise when needed will continue to mitigate coordination-related risks, in particular to avoid programme implementation delays related to the absence of WFP programme staff permanently based in Morocco.

## 6. RESOURCES FOR RESULTS

### 6.1. COUNTRY PORTFOLIO BUDGET

<b>COUNTRY STRATEGIC PLAN INDICATIVE ANNUAL BUDGET REQUIREMENT</b>		
<i>(USD)</i>		
	<b>Year 1 2018</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Strategic Outcome 1</b>	214,000	<b>214,000</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>214,000</b>	<b>214,000</b>

72. Strategic Objective one comprises all the transitional-ICSP activities, for a duration of one year (2018). WFP's corporate commitment of 15 percent of all project funds allocated to, and expended on, gender equality activities will be met.

### 6.2. RESOURCING OUTLOOK

73. The Capacity Development for School Meals in Morocco project (DEV 200494) has been financed by a seed contribution of USD 1.5 million to WFP received in 2012 as part of a partnership between the Government of the Russian Federation and WFP on school meals, fully funding all planned activities.
74. The project's budget revision five was approved in November 2016, extending the project for one year, until end of December 2017. The budget revision was undertaken following a request from the Government of Morocco for continued assistance to enhance the NSMP. Additional funding is not required for the planned activities for the duration of the transitional-ICSP, as the remaining funding of the seed contribution suffices to enable WFP to provide the foreseen technical support for the implementation of Morocco's Plan of Action for the enhancement of the NSMP. WFP has budgeted USD 200,000 of the seed funding for activities in 2018.

### 6.3. RESOURCE MOBILIZATION STRATEGY

75. During the transitional-ICSP period, additional funds will be secured for conducting the CSR, with potential co-funding from FAO and IFAD. WFP will develop a resource mobilization strategy to support the successful implementation of the CSR and potential activities arising from the development of the CSP, including new funding opportunities by international donors, the continued support of the Government of Morocco, and potential private sector contributions.

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**ANNEX I: SUMMARY OF LOGICAL FRAMEWORK OF MOROCCO  
TRANSITIONAL INTERIM COUNTRY STRATEGIC PLAN (YEAR 2018)<sup>23</sup>**

*SEE COMET VERSION*

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<sup>23</sup> All person-related data will be disaggregated by sex and age (and disability as feasible), in accordance with the CRF (2017-2021)

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## ANNEX II: INDICATIVE COST BREAKDOWN

<b>INDICATIVE COST BREAKDOWN ALONG STRATEGIC OUTCOME (USD)</b>		
<b>WFP Strategic Results / SDG Targets</b>	<b>SR 5, SDG 17.9</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>WFP Strategic Outcomes</b>	<b>Strategic Outcome 1</b>	
<b>Transfer</b>	127,007	<b>127,007</b>
<b>Implementation</b>	45,000	<b>45,000</b>
<b>Adjusted DSC (%)</b>	27,993	<b>27,993</b>
<b>Sub-total</b>	200,000	<b>200,000</b>
<b>ISC (7%)</b>	14,000	<b>14,000</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>214,000</b>	<b>214,000</b>

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## ANNEX III: ACRONYMS

### Acronyms used in the document

CSP	–	Country Strategic Plan
COP	–	Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
CPF	–	Country Programming Framework (FAO)
CSR	–	Zero Hunger Country Strategic Review
FAO	–	Food and Agriculture Organization
GDP	–	Gross Domestic Product
GII	–	Gender Inequality Index
HCP	–	Higher Planning Commission
HDI	–	Human Development Index
HGSF	–	Home Grown School Feeding
ICSP	–	Interim Country Strategic Plan
IFAD	–	International Fund for Agricultural Development
INDH	–	National Initiative for Human Development
MDG	–	Millennium Development Goal
NSMP	–	National School Meals Programme
PGE	–	Governmental Plan for Equality
SDG	–	Sustainable Development Goal
SR	–	Strategic Result
UNDAF	–	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNESCO	–	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	–	United Nations Children’s Fund
USAID	–	United States Agency for International Development
WRI	–	World Resources Institute