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## Congo country strategic plan (2019–2023)

Duration	1 January 2019–31 December 2023
Total cost to WFP	USD 97,921,641
Gender and age marker*	3

\* <http://gender.manuals.wfp.org/en/gender-toolkit/gender-in-programming/gender-and-age-marker/>.

### Executive summary

The Congo is a resource-rich, food-deficit, middle-income country categorized as having “serious” hunger challenges in the 2017 Global Hunger Index. Food insecurity in the country stems from limited agricultural productivity, widespread vulnerability, recurrent social and political conflict and gender inequalities.

The Government's main development priorities are articulated in the national development plan for 2018–2022, which incorporates plans for achieving all the Sustainable Development Goals, emphasizing education, economic diversification through agriculture and the opportunities offered by digital transformation enabling the use of innovations. Building on its recognized comparative advantages in school feeding, food supply chains, emergency response and safety net systems, WFP is uniquely placed to contribute to the Government's national development priorities. Through the country strategic plan, WFP will also contribute significantly to the interventions and planned results of the United Nations development assistance framework for 2020–2024, which identifies Sustainable Development Goals 2 on zero hunger and 17 on partnerships as foundational drivers of long-term, sustainable development in the Congo.

Informed by the 2018 national zero hunger strategic review, the mid-term evaluation of the WFP country programme for 2015–2018 and lessons learned, WFP will adopt a holistic, nationally driven, shock-responsive and long-term strategy in the Congo that prioritizes work at the humanitarian–development–peace nexus. Through this approach, WFP will address the immediate

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and underlying causes of vulnerability while facilitating the development of national capacities in order to ensure sustainability, national ownership and a progressive handover of interventions to the Government.

Institutional capacity strengthening efforts will emphasize the value of using digital information and management systems in all activities. Gender-transformative and nutrition-sensitive programming will be mainstreamed in all activities. In line with the New Way of Working,<sup>1</sup> WFP will build on enhanced strategic and operational partnerships for greater impact.

To address the main findings from the 2018 zero hunger strategic review, and in accordance with national and United Nations priorities for the Congo, the country strategic plan is structured around four mutually reinforcing strategic outcomes:

- Under strategic outcome 1, WFP will use its crisis response capacities in assisting shock-affected populations, including refugees, internally displaced persons and returnees.
- Under strategic outcome 2, WFP will complement and support national efforts to address vulnerabilities and ensure the delivery of effective social protection interventions.
- Under strategic outcome 3, WFP will strengthen resilience at the national and community levels through the facilitation of market access and climate change adaptation.
- Under strategic outcome 4, WFP will provide logistics services to the humanitarian and development community.

This country strategic plan is aligned with WFP corporate Strategic Results 1, 3 and 8 and will contribute to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals 2 and 17 and to other Sustainable Development Goals related to health, education, gender equality, climate change and sustainability.

### **Draft decision\***

The Board approves the Congo country strategic plan (2019–2023) (WFP/EB.1/2019/8-A/3) at a total cost to WFP of USD 97,921,641.

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<sup>1</sup> United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). 2017. *New Way of Working*. [https://www.unocha.org/sites/unocha/files/NWOW%20Booklet%20low%20res.002\\_0.pdf](https://www.unocha.org/sites/unocha/files/NWOW%20Booklet%20low%20res.002_0.pdf).

\* This is a draft decision. For the final decision adopted by the Board, please refer to the decisions and recommendations document issued at the end of the session.

## 1. Country analysis

### 1.1 Country context

1. The Congo is a resource-rich, food-deficit, middle-income country that has the potential to reach all the targets for Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 2 by 2030. The country continues to face high poverty and inequalities, recurring localized conflict, regional insecurity, macroeconomic instability and high rates of malnutrition and food insecurity. Gender inequalities and disability status have a direct impact on poverty.
2. Oil exports account for 85 percent of government revenue<sup>2</sup> and for the bulk of the Congo's international foreign reserves. The 2014 global oil price slump strained public finances and limited the Government's ability to provide social services and invest in economic growth.
3. A resurgence of hostilities in Pool department in April 2016 had serious humanitarian consequences. The December 2017 cessation-of-hostilities agreement, however, has led to enhanced access for humanitarian actors.
4. Armed conflict in Pool department and the subsequent population displacement have been linked to a range of human rights violations, including extra-judicial killings, beatings, torture and gender-based violence. Displaced women with little or no income who fled without their husbands or partners were particularly affected by violence.
5. External factors play an important role in the country's capacity to eliminate hunger. These include a relatively volatile political and economic context in the region (including in the Central African Republic and the Democratic Republic of the Congo), generating periodic arrivals of new refugees in the Congo.
6. Climate change is expected to aggravate food insecurity and threaten socio-economic stability. The Congo ranks 45th among the countries most vulnerable to climate change and is the 19th least ready to leverage investments for climate adaptation.<sup>3</sup>

### 1.2 Progress towards SDG 2

#### ***Progress towards SDG 2 targets***

7. The Congo continues to be characterized by pockets of acute food insecurity and a high prevalence of chronic malnutrition. The country was categorized as having "serious" hunger challenges in the 2018 Global Hunger Index.<sup>4</sup> Food insecurity levels have either stagnated or increased over the past ten years. Gender inequalities, ethnicity, disability status, geographic location and income level all heavily influence food and nutrition security.
8. The 2014 economic crisis sparked by the oil crisis led to important reductions in government revenue and had serious effects on implementation of the country's ambitious programme for reducing poverty, accelerating growth and diversifying the economy.
9. The recurrence of social and political conflict has affected the Congo's ability to break the cycle of hunger and poverty by forcing people to abandon their land, homes and jobs and discouraging long-term investments. Achievement of SDG 2 is contingent on the national governance system being able to guarantee peace and stability (SDG 16).
10. *Access to food.* The Congo is a food-deficit country whose local production meets only 30 percent of national food needs. Among children under 5, global acute malnutrition has

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<sup>2</sup> Global Edge. 2018. *Republic of Congo: Economy*. <https://globaledge.msu.edu/countries/republic-of-congo/economy>.

<sup>3</sup> Notre Dame Global Adaptation Initiative. 2018. *Country Index*. <https://gain.nd.edu/our-work/country-index/>.

<sup>4</sup> Global Hunger Index. 2018. <http://www.globalhungerindex.org/>.

been estimated at 8.1 percent and the chronic malnutrition rate at 21.1 percent.<sup>5</sup> In 2014, 14 percent of the population was classified as food-insecure;<sup>6</sup> in 2016, 15 percent of households reported poor or limited food consumption, with a significant difference between rural areas (30 percent) and urban areas (7 percent).<sup>7</sup> Women-headed households are more affected by food insecurity: 15 percent are food-insecure compared with 10 percent of households headed by men. This difference is due to gender inequalities, which hinder women's access to food and financial resources.<sup>8</sup>

11. The arrival of 50,000 refugees from the Central African Republic at the end of 2013 exacerbated hunger issues in the northern part of the Congo. As of January 2019, some 15,000 of these refugees remain in the Likouala department. Because of limited prospects for self-sufficiency, WFP assistance remains an essential food source for refugees. Post-distribution monitoring results have shown that 30 percent of assisted refugees suffer from poor or borderline food consumption and are vulnerable to food insecurity.<sup>9</sup> The prevalence of moderate acute malnutrition among refugee children under 5 assisted by WFP decreased from 7.6 percent in January 2015 to 4.1 percent in August 2017.
12. Hostilities in Pool department resulted in massive population displacement and a serious humanitarian emergency. In May 2017, an assessment revealed an alarming prevalence of acute malnutrition among displaced children under 5, at 17 percent, with more than one in two households affected by food insecurity.<sup>10</sup> Displaced households headed by women were more affected by food insecurity (54.4 percent) than those headed by men (32.5 percent).<sup>11</sup> At the end of 2017, the number of people in need of food assistance in Pool was estimated at 160,000.<sup>12</sup> More recent findings underscore the continued precariousness of the nutrition situation: in May 2018, screening in the Kindamba district found the prevalence of global acute malnutrition to reach 20 percent, while WFP post-distribution monitoring results from October 2018 indicated that prevalence was 10 percent among displaced children and 12 percent among children from host communities.
13. *Ending malnutrition.* The Congo faces a triple burden of malnutrition among children under 5, with the coexistence of stunting (affecting 21.3 percent), overweight (affecting 5.9 percent) and micronutrient deficiencies of iron, vitamin A and iodine). The diets of only 6 percent of children aged 6–23 months meet requirements for minimum dietary diversity.<sup>13</sup> Despite a decrease in stunting prevalence from 34 percent in 2005 to 21 percent in 2014,<sup>14</sup> the nutrition situation remains worrying. The prevalence rates of the main forms of malnutrition are above thresholds set by the World Health Organization (WHO) and represent a significant public health concern in the country.

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<sup>5</sup> Government of the Congo and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). 2014–2015. Multiple-indicator cluster survey.

<sup>6</sup> WFP and Government of the Congo, 2014. Comprehensive food security and vulnerability analysis.

<sup>7</sup> WFP and Government of the Congo. 2016. Fortification Rapid Assessment Tool (FRAT) survey.

<sup>8</sup> World Bank. 2017. *Republic of Congo, Poverty Assessment Report*. <https://elibrary.worldbank.org/doi/abs/10.1596/28302>.

<sup>9</sup> In 2017, WFP assisted 17,995 refugees in the Congo, of whom 53 percent were women and girls and 52 percent were children.

<sup>10</sup> Joint Government and United Nations food and nutrition security assessment, 2017.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>12</sup> OCHA. 2018. *Congo, Department of Pool, Humanitarian Response and Early Recovery Plan, May 2018*. <https://reliefweb.int/report/congo/congo-department-pool-humanitarian-response-plan-and-early-recovery-february-2018>. Sex- and age-disaggregated data are not available.

<sup>13</sup> Government of the Congo and UNICEF. 2014–2015. Multiple-indicator cluster survey; Government of the Congo. 2017. National Policy on Food Security and Nutrition (not available online).

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

14. An analysis of chronic malnutrition shows that rural areas are more affected than urban ones, that the poorest people are four times more affected than the rich, and that girls are more affected than boys.<sup>15</sup>
15. Major contributors to malnutrition in the Congo include diseases such as malaria, diarrhoea and acute respiratory infections, poor knowledge of nutrition and feeding practices, and limited access to nutrients. A close link has been established between a woman's level of formal education and the nutrition status of her children<sup>16</sup> because a lack of education can lead to inadequate feeding practices. An adequate period of exclusive breastfeeding remains uncommon with only 32.9 percent of children below 6 months being exclusively breastfed.<sup>17</sup>
16. The Government of the Congo is a member of the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) movement and WFP and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) are supporting its implementation of SUN initiatives, which is coordinated by the President's office.
17. *Smallholder productivity and incomes.* The country has more than 10 million ha of arable land, nearly 90 percent of which remains uncultivated.<sup>18</sup> Agriculture's contribution to the economy has declined steadily over the years, dropping from 23.6 percent of gross domestic product in 1960 to 8.7 percent in 2016, according to the World Bank.<sup>19</sup>
18. Since the closure of several Congolese agricultural and agro-industrial companies, agricultural production has been limited to household subsistence production and cash crops such as beans, sugar cane, cocoa and coffee. Most food processing is artisanal and food storage and transformation practices are often inadequate, resulting in loss of produce and nutrients.
19. A zero hunger strategic review conducted in 2018 highlighted a large disparity between consumption trends and local agricultural production, leading to a high dependence on imports.<sup>20</sup> Fishing remains mainly artisanal, but has great potential for supporting livelihoods, particularly for women, who perform most fish processing and commerce.
20. Climate change is disrupting the development of agricultural systems and livelihoods in the country, particularly those dependent on rainfed agriculture and natural resources. Temperatures are increasing and crop production declines during dry years. Less frequent but more intense precipitation increases the risk of flooding, affects agricultural production cycles and contributes to soil degradation.<sup>21</sup> The limited availability of climate and weather information also impedes smallholder farmers' adoption of sustainable agricultural practices. Consultations with communities identified the drying up of main river arteries and small streams near villages as a major negative effect of climate change, reducing fishing and limiting access to markets.

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<sup>15</sup> Renewed Efforts Against Child Hunger and Malnutrition in the Republic of Congo, National Implementation Plan, 2013.

<sup>16</sup> Centre national de la statistique et des études économiques (CNSEE). 2012. *Enquête démographique et de santé du Congo (EDSC-II) 2011–2012*. <https://dhsprogram.com/pubs/pdf/PR19/PR19.pdf>.

<sup>17</sup> Government of the Congo and UNICEF. 2014–2015. Multiple indicator cluster survey.

<sup>18</sup> Ministry of Economy, Planning, Territorial Management and Integration. 2011. *Document de stratégie pour la croissance, l'emploi et la réduction de la pauvreté (DSCERP 2012–2016)*.

[https://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Project-and-Operations/Congo\\_-\\_Document\\_de\\_stratégie\\_pour\\_la\\_croissance\\_l\\_emploi\\_et\\_la\\_réduction\\_de\\_la\\_pauvreté\\_\\_DSCERP\\_2012-2016\\_.pdf](https://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Project-and-Operations/Congo_-_Document_de_stratégie_pour_la_croissance_l_emploi_et_la_réduction_de_la_pauvreté__DSCERP_2012-2016_.pdf).

<sup>19</sup> World Bank. 2017. *Republic of Congo, Poverty Assessment Report*. <https://elibrary.worldbank.org/doi/abs/10.1596/28302>.

<sup>20</sup> Zero hunger strategic review.

<sup>21</sup> Climate Service Center. 2013. *Climate Change Scenarios for the Congo Basin*. [https://www.climate-service-center.de/imperia/md/content/csc/csc-report11\\_optimized.pdf](https://www.climate-service-center.de/imperia/md/content/csc/csc-report11_optimized.pdf).

21. Low population density, urbanization (the urban population rose from 32 percent of the total in 1960 to 66 percent in 2016)<sup>22</sup> and the ageing of rural infrastructure have combined to make smallholder agriculture unprofitable, spurring further urban migration, especially among young people. The Government has emphasized the need to increase sustainable production while enhancing farmers' financial and physical access to profitable markets.<sup>23</sup>
22. While women play an important role in agriculture, they face gender-specific barriers to landownership and access to credit, agricultural inputs and labour and are often restricted to less profitable agricultural activities.<sup>24</sup> Agriculture, including forestry, employs about 40 percent of the labour force. Women and girls represent 70 percent of this group but own only 25 percent of agricultural land, usually in smallholdings. In rural areas culture and traditional practices result in women focusing on subsistence farming and domestic and childcare work.
23. *Sustainable food systems.* The zero hunger strategic review found that food systems in the Congo remain unsustainable, inefficient and vulnerable to climate change. The national development plan (NDP) and the United Nations development assistance framework (UNDAF) reflect the renewed commitment of the Government and its partners to sustainably increasing agricultural productivity and the supply of agricultural products from both smallholders and agro-industries.
24. Recommendations resulting from the zero hunger strategic review emphasize the need to ensure the availability and accessibility of food while safeguarding the environment and fostering the economic empowerment of farmers, women, smallholders, young people and indigenous peoples.

### **Macroeconomic environment**

25. Like many natural resource-based economies, the economy of the Congo faced declines in many sectors following the discovery of oil. Sectors other than oil, including agriculture and manufacturing, shrank because of reduced competitiveness, rendering the country a net importer of both food and non-food commodities.
26. Economic conditions significantly deteriorated in 2014 with a 60 percent drop in oil prices and a reduction in the oil industry's production capacity. As a result, annual growth in gross domestic product decreased from 6 percent in 2014 to -2.8 percent in 2016. While this has led to important reductions in government revenue and had serious effects on implementation of the country's ambitious programme for achieving the SDGs, the Government remains committed to making the Congo an emerging economy by 2025, as outlined in the "Congo Vision 2025".

### **Key cross-sector linkages**

27. The Congo obtained scores of 0.203 on the Social Institutions and Gender Index,<sup>25</sup> 0.934 on the Gender Development Index<sup>26</sup> and 0.578 on the Gender Inequality Index,<sup>27</sup> These scores reflect the medium to high gender inequality in the Congo, which results from the

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<sup>22</sup> World Bank. 2016. Indicators: Agriculture and Rural Development. <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator>.

<sup>23</sup> Government of the Congo. 2017. National Policy on Food Security and Nutrition. (Not available online.)

<sup>24</sup> World Bank. 2017. *Republic of Congo – Poverty assessment report*. <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/887551503511141038/Republic-of-Congo-Poverty-assessment-report-education-jobs-and-social-protection-for-a-sustainable-reduction-of-poverty>.

<sup>25</sup> <https://www.genderindex.org>.

<sup>26</sup> <http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/gender-development-index-gdi>.

<sup>27</sup> <http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/gender-inequality-index-gii>.

discriminatory family code, limited respect for women's physical integrity,<sup>28</sup> women's restricted access to political space<sup>29</sup> and education<sup>30</sup> and their unequal control over economic resources.<sup>31</sup> While women experience inequality, violence and discrimination, people living with HIV, disabilities or albinism, indigenous communities, people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or intersex, young people and elderly people also experience marginalization.

28. The challenges faced by young people in the Congo include child labour, which affects 23 percent of children aged 5–14 years, and high rates of violence and abuse. Girls face additional forms of violence: 33 percent of women in the Congo marry before the age of 18 and many girls endure female genital mutilation, generally between the ages of 8 and 12, even though it is illegal. Limited information on sexual and reproductive health, harmful cultural practices and limited access to contraceptives are related to teenage pregnancy and early marriage. Young people between the ages of 15 and 29 have limited access to formal wage labour.
29. An unknown number of indigenous people live in the forests: estimates of the indigenous population of the Congo vary widely from 2 to 10 percent of the total. Indigenous people face serious levels of discrimination and their access to public services is limited. While available statistics are incomplete, illiteracy rates are known to be high among indigenous children and, according to the Ministry of Social Affairs and Humanitarian Action, 65 percent of indigenous children aged 12 to 15 years are not enrolled in school, compared with a national average of 39 percent.<sup>32</sup>
30. The education system in the Congo is weak, with low performance in terms of access, quality, efficiency and achievement. According to the World Bank, only 43 percent of students starting grade 6 achieve minimum acceptable scores in French and only 34 percent reach the minimum acceptable level in mathematics. Despite public education being free for children aged 6 to 19 years, many families, especially those of indigenous people and smallholder farmers, cannot afford the associated costs of a child's enrolment in school. Enrolment rates of girls and boys are almost equal at the primary level, but important differences appear after age 17, with only 66 percent of girls enrolled compared with 76 percent of boys.

### 1.3 Hunger gaps and challenges

31. The zero hunger strategic review and the national policy on food and nutrition security highlight several challenges to achieving food and nutrition security in the Congo, including a shortage of quality local food sufficient to meet consumers' needs; a lack of available information on good practices in food use, nutrition and hygiene; inadequate resilience to shocks; insufficient applied research; and inadequate laws and enforcement. Cross-cutting challenges include poverty, particularly among indigenous people, and gender inequalities.
32. Consultations with communities and partners conducted during the zero hunger strategic review and country strategic plan (CSP) formulation processes identified the following challenges to achieving zero hunger by 2030:
  - *Inadequate quantity and quality of production.* Major challenges persist in connecting farmers in remote areas to markets and addressing inequalities in women's access to

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<sup>28</sup> Attitudes towards violence against women, rape, female genital mutilation and limited reproductive autonomy were all identified as challenges.

<sup>29</sup> Women hold 19.4 percent of seats on the national senate and 11.3 percent of seats on the national assembly.

<sup>30</sup> Literacy is higher among boys (85.7 percent) than girls (76.9 percent), and girls spend fewer years in school.

<sup>31</sup> Men have a higher gross national income per capita than women, and more men participate in the labour force.

<sup>32</sup> Ministry of Social Affairs.



land. The physical isolation of smallholder farmers is compounded by the poor state of rural infrastructure, including roads and processing facilities, the impacts of climate change and environmental degradation, and a lack of support from the Government. Smallholder farmers also face high post-harvest losses as a result of having inadequate equipment and materials and a lack of storage facilities.

- *Poor data and knowledge management* hamper the planning, implementation and monitoring of projects by all actors. A lack of real-time data on food security and nutrition disaggregated by sex and age limits actors' ability to accurately target the most vulnerable people, review actions and achieve cost-efficiency, effectiveness and equity. Limited research protocols are in place for evidence building, especially with respect to environmental and climate issues.
- *Difficulties in scaling up and properly coordinating social protection schemes*, including for nutrition, and linking them to local producers. Current programmes are highly fragmented and rely on poor targeting methods. As a result, they do not generate the resilience to shocks needed by the most vulnerable people, who still represent close to half of the Congo's population.
- *Unequal knowledge of feeding and basic water, sanitation and hygiene practices* leads to high chronic malnutrition and micronutrient deficiencies, with young children and their mothers at particular risk. The Government and its partners acknowledge the urgency of adopting a nutrition-sensitive and gender-responsive approach to addressing this issue in all sectors and of integrating beneficiaries and their communities into project design and implementation.
- *Gender inequalities and discriminatory and prejudicial practices* predispose women, girls and marginalized groups to hunger and poverty. Indigenous people are particularly affected by violations of basic rights and greater barriers to sustainable livelihoods. Addressing systemic and socio-cultural inequalities related to gender, age and ethnicity is a prerequisite to the achievement of SDG 2.

## 1.4 Country priorities

### Government

33. The Government's NDP for 2018–2022 incorporates targeted strategies for the achievement of each SDG. Informed by the national zero hunger strategic review, the NDP identifies education and economic diversification as drivers of development, sets the aim of boosting agricultural production in order to strengthen the food security and economic inclusion of the poorest people, particularly rural women and minorities, and identifies digital transformation and gender equality as opportunities for growth.
34. The economic decline that started in 2014 has resulted in significant underfinancing of interventions for food and nutrition security. Food and nutrition priorities for the Congo are, however, set out in policies and programmes that complement the NDP:
  - The *national programme for agricultural investment and food and nutrition security* for 2015–2019 promotes growth and diversification of the agriculture sector with the aim of enhancing agricultural techniques and scaling up innovations to facilitate agriculture and market access.
  - the *national policy on social protection* (2017) is focused on improving and expanding access to social protection services, including food, nutrition, health care and education.
  - the *national school feeding policy* developed in 2016 in collaboration with WFP commits the Government to designing, developing and rolling out a national school feeding programme that uses local nutritious foods.



35. The Government became a member of the SUN movement in 2013, and in 2017 set up a committee tasked with facilitating consultations and coordinating interventions that address food insecurity and malnutrition.
36. Consultations with the ministries of social affairs, primary education and gender, United Nations agencies and civil society organizations identified the tackling of gender-based violence, the enhancement of sexual and reproductive health services and knowledge, social and behaviour change communication, the empowerment of women in agriculture and girls' engagement in formal education as priorities.

### **United Nations and other partners**

37. The United Nations common country analysis conducted in July 2018 incorporated major findings from the zero hunger strategic review and identified five main factors that hinder development in the Congo: an inadequately diversified economy that is excessively dependent on oil; weak institutions and management of resources; insufficient agricultural production; inadequate access to education and health services; and the negative effects of climate change on natural resource management.<sup>33</sup>
38. Results from the analysis informed the development of the UNDAF for 2020–2024, which will steer the efforts of the United Nations country team to improve education and diversify the economy. The UNDAF identifies SDGs 2 and 17 as foundational objectives for the achievement of the objectives of the 2030 Agenda in the Congo. In accordance with national priorities, UNDAF outcomes are aimed at achieving a more effective governance system; improved and more accessible education, health and social protection services; and food security and economic diversification driven by sustainable agricultural development.
39. Technical and strategic consultations stressed supply chains and data management as priority areas of work and collaboration for the United Nations country team.
40. Civil society organizations such as Azur Development and RENAFCC are committed to developing and implementing gender-transformative actions in humanitarian and development work.

## **2. Strategic implications for WFP**

### **2.1 WFP's experience and lessons learned**

41. The 2013 country portfolio evaluation and the mid-term evaluation of WFP's country programme for 2015–2018 commended the integration of gender and protection issues into all components of WFP's work and WFP's ability to target beneficiaries as a result of close collaboration with the Government at the central and local levels and with targeted communities. However, the evaluations noted that no specific action has been taken to empower women in their communities.
42. WFP's capacity to respond to humanitarian crises was deemed outstanding and enabled the organization to position itself as a reliable partner with a strong comparative advantage. In collaboration with the ministry responsible for humanitarian action, in 2017 WFP deployed its corporate digital beneficiary and transfer management platform, SCOPE, in order to enhance its response to the crisis in Pool department. Given its strong field presence, robust data systems and proven expertise in school feeding and social protection, WFP's comparative advantages extend to enabling longer-term food security interventions.
43. During the zero hunger strategic review process, community consultations with local authorities and households across the country revealed changes in eating habits, with the consumption of imported commodities increasing even in rural areas. Poor food security

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<sup>33</sup> Office of the United Nations Resident Coordinator. 2018. *Bilan commun de pays en République du Congo*.

and nutrition were also a concern, resulting from a lack of roads and market infrastructure and limited access to land, especially for women. Consultations stressed the importance of involving communities throughout the whole programme cycle in order to improve targeting and accountability.

44. Evidence from evaluations and the zero hunger strategic review point to five major lessons, in response to which WFP will carry out five major actions under the CSP. WFP will establish a strategic approach to capacity strengthening with a view to shifting the implementation of programmes to the Government by 2030 and achieving sustainability, especially for school feeding and safety nets; advocate for increased financial and political engagement from the Government in order to increase ownership and enable handover; enhance school feeding through local purchases and gender-transformative complementary activities; improve monitoring and evaluation systems so that timely and disaggregated data inform decision making; and enhance synergies between emergency response and disaster risk reduction efforts, and between local agriculture and school feeding.

## **2.2 Opportunities for WFP**

45. In order to strengthen governance for food and nutrition security, WFP's long-term strategy for supporting the Government has the aim of providing institutions with the expertise and tools required for WFP to gradually hand over its programmes. WFP will work with national authorities in preparing, advocating, implementing and coordinating policies and plans for food and nutrition security, emphasizing gender, nutrition-sensitive and protection dimensions. WFP will focus on leveraging technology in order to improve national data and information management processes for vulnerability analysis and targeting, monitoring and evaluation and coordination in the areas of social protection, emergency preparedness and crisis response.
46. WFP will continue to work with the Government on scaling up and improving the management of national safety nets, including Lisungi, a national programme that targets poor people in urban areas. The use of SCOPE and other digital innovations will be at the core of WFP's work.
47. WFP contributed to the development of the national school feeding policy, which is aimed at establishing a home-grown school feeding programme for all primary schools in the Congo by 2025. WFP will facilitate the attainment of this vision by leveraging its decades of experience with school feeding in the Congo and its emerging work on market access for smallholders in order to promote local purchases of nutritious food for school meals.
48. Tackling gender inequalities is key to sustainable progress towards zero hunger in the Congo. To address the gender-related causes of hunger and poverty, WFP will seek to follow a gender-transformative approach in all its programmes, preventing gender-discriminatory practices and promoting equitable access to resources. WFP will increase its engagement with the ministry responsible for women's development and with other partners that have expertise in and are committed to the achievement of gender equality in the Congo.

## **2.3 Strategic changes**

49. Guided by national strategies and priorities, WFP will shift from being an operational partner to become a strategic partner that supports the Government in strengthening its capacities. Actions will include transferring the analytical, technical, financial and operational skills required for the scale up and institutionalization of mechanisms for social protection, particularly school feeding and safety nets, emergency preparedness and crisis response. WFP will introduce expertise and new systems that actors in the Congo can adapt, adopt and scale up, and will encourage local innovations aimed at tackling the root causes of food and nutrition insecurity.

50. WFP will focus on linking food purchases for school feeding to local agricultural development activities in order to diversify the composition of school meals and enhance their nutritional value. WFP will engage with the ministries responsible for agriculture and education with a view to ensuring that they acquire the expertise to manage local food procurement independently. WFP will also tap into local procurement opportunities offered by agribusiness and smallholders in order to procure emergency food rations.
51. WFP will expand the reach of its pilot project for increasing the market access of smallholders and reducing post-harvest losses. The scope of the programme will also be extended with the aim of strengthening community resilience through climate adaptation measures.
52. WFP will take a leading role within the humanitarian and development community in the Congo in enhancing supply chains in order to meet increasing needs, enabling WFP and its partners to achieve economies of scale, improve coordination and address systemic supply chain challenges.

### **3. WFP strategic orientation**

#### **3.1 Direction, focus and intended impacts**

53. WFP's strategy in the Congo is to empower people and communities and support the Government in achieving zero hunger by 2030. The CSP will contribute primarily to SDG 2 on ending hunger and SDG 17 on partnering for sustainable development, and to other SDGs related to health, education, gender equality, climate change and sustainability. WFP's activities have been designed so that, by the end of the CSP period, the Congolese population will benefit from increased opportunities to exit poverty and hunger in a sustainable manner, enhanced knowledge and awareness of improved health-related practices, and reduced gender and social inequalities. Realization of the strategy relies on the attainment of the United Nations' shared vision of increased justice and stability and stronger institutions by 2030.
54. The CSP for 2019–2023 is aligned with the NDP and the UNDAF:
  - WFP's crisis response and early recovery activities will support the national commitment to protecting the most vulnerable people, contribute to the harmonization of humanitarian efforts (UNDAF outcome 1) and help crisis-affected communities shift towards resilience building (UNDAF outcome 4).
  - The school feeding programme, in collaboration with UNICEF and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), will contribute to increasing access to quality education in support of the first pillar of the NDP and UNDAF outcome 2.
  - In collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), WFP will promote sustainable agricultural techniques and advocate for climate risk management and energy saving practices in support of NDP pillar 2 and UNDAF outcome 4.
  - By investing increasingly in the building of national capacities for better social protection systems, emergency preparedness, crisis response and agricultural planning, WFP will reinforce its support for all NDP pillars and for UNDAF outcomes 1, 2, 3 and 4.
55. The effects that conflict and poverty have on gender roles, relations, responsibilities and control over resources are well known and WFP is committed to maximizing the gender-transformative impact of its programmes. WFP will seek strategic and operational partnerships with United Nations agencies and civil society organizations that are committed to and have capacities for working towards gender equality. WFP has zero tolerance for

sexual harassment, exploitation or abuse and will work to protect its employees and beneficiaries.

56. This CSP includes nutrition-sensitive interventions under all strategic outcomes. WFP will work to build awareness and foster behaviour change regarding nutrition, feeding, health and hygiene practices in order to support the prevention of malnutrition throughout the country. In line with WFP's environmental policy (2017), all activities will apply environmental and social safeguards aimed at avoiding, minimizing or mitigating potential unwanted impacts.
57. The CSP for 2019–2023 will focus on:
- *strategic outcome 1* on maintaining crisis response capacities in order to assist internally displaced persons, refugees from other countries in the region and other shock-affected groups;
  - *strategic outcome 2* on complementing and supporting national efforts to address vulnerabilities and ensure the delivery of effective social protection interventions;
  - *strategic outcome 3* on strengthening resilience at the national and community levels through enhanced market access and climate change adaptation measures; and
  - *strategic outcome 4* on providing logistics services to the humanitarian and development community.
58. These mutually reinforcing outcomes will directly address the underlying causes of food and nutrition insecurity (which are crisis under strategic outcome 1 and inadequate food production under strategic outcome 3), while contributing to the building of national capacities for effectively assisting the most vulnerable people (under strategic outcomes 2 and 4). Early recovery assistance will be provided to crisis-affected people (outcome 1) in preparation for a transition to resilience building activities (outcome 3). Increased local procurement for both home-grown school feeding (outcome 2) and emergency food assistance (outcome 1) will foster agricultural development and therefore the resilience of rural communities (outcome 3). Digital innovations will enhance national capacities for programme management (outcome 2) in order to increase the effectiveness of all food and nutrition security interventions.

### **3.2 Strategic outcomes, focus areas, expected outputs and key activities**

#### ***Strategic outcome 1: Food-insecure people affected by shocks have access to adequate food all year***

59. Work under strategic outcome 1 will be focused on assisting vulnerable people, including refugees, internally displaced persons, returnees and indigenous people, affected by conflict, natural disasters or other shocks and stresses such as epidemics or climate shocks. Beneficiaries will be targeted on the basis of their vulnerability as assessed through gender analyses; the specific nutrition needs and priorities of women, men, girls and boys will be addressed through nutrition-specific and -sensitive assistance.

#### ***Focus area***

60. Strategic outcome 1 is focused on the provision of life saving and early recovery assistance to crisis-affected people. Its focus area is therefore emergency response.

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

61. This strategic outcome will be achieved through four outputs:
- Vulnerable people affected by crisis (tier 1 beneficiaries) receive sufficient cash-based and/or food transfers to enable them to meet their basic food and nutrition requirements.

- Vulnerable people affected by crisis (tier 1 beneficiaries) benefit from the creation or rehabilitation of productive assets that support the transition towards resilience and self-reliance.
- Moderately malnourished children and pregnant and lactating women and girls affected by crisis (tier 1 beneficiaries) receive specialized nutritious products for treating malnutrition and improving their nutrition status.
- Vulnerable households (tier 2 beneficiaries) benefit from improved knowledge of nutrition, care practices and healthy diets that enhance their food consumption and nutrition status.

### **Key activity**

#### *Activity 1: Provide unconditional and/or conditional food and nutrition assistance to people affected by shocks*

62. Each year, 75,000 crisis-affected vulnerable people in Pool, Bouenza and Likouala departments<sup>34</sup> will receive unconditional or conditional food or cash-based assistance that meets their immediate needs and contributes to early recovery, thereby building and reinforcing social cohesion in these fragile areas. WFP's work in Pool is undertaken in coordination with the UNDP-led disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme and prioritizes community-level work with ex-combatants and others that are most affected by the conflict.
63. The delivery of WFP assistance will rely on SCOPE and other digital tools such as satellite imagery and mobile data and data visualization software. WFP will cooperate and coordinate with the Ministry of Social Affairs and Humanitarian Action in order to ensure cohesive crisis response interventions.
64. WFP will progressively incorporate more locally sourced commodities in its food rations, thus creating linkages to strategic outcome 3. The selection of the transfer modality – cash-based transfers (CBTs) or food – will be based on analyses of efficiency, effectiveness and equity and informed by assessments of markets, supply chains and gender dynamics in the areas of intervention.
65. To support the early recovery of targeted people in areas affected by armed conflict or natural disaster, WFP will implement food assistance for assets activities aimed at rehabilitating food production chains and supporting the transition to resilience building (strategic outcome 3). WFP will work with local authorities in order to ensure that activities are implemented in accordance with social and environmental regulations.
66. WFP's mechanisms for obtaining feedback on food distributions will be complemented by innovative tools, such as the Microsoft Azure development platform, for capturing information on different vulnerabilities. For instance, WFP will collect and map data on gender-based violence and refer survivors (predominantly women and girls) to specialized services for care and support. WFP will expand the cash for dignity project that it implements with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) in order to enable women and girls to obtain basic items for their sexual and reproductive health needs. Local women will be empowered through peer education on sexual and reproductive health rights that enables them to link their communities to health services. These actions will ensure that complementary gender-transformative actions accompany WFP's core emergency work.
67. Nutrition-specific and -sensitive interventions will address the nutrition needs of vulnerable women, men, girls and boys. Supplementary nutritious foods will be distributed monthly for treating moderate acute malnutrition among children aged 6–59 months and pregnant and

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<sup>34</sup> Of these people, 60 percent will be women and girls and 19 percent children under 5.

lactating women and girls in targeted communities. To ensure that positive results can be maintained, food distributions will be accompanied by social and behaviour change communications and demonstrations of measures for preventing malnutrition that target both men and women. The focus will be on infant and young child feeding practices, care practices, hygiene and food preparation. WFP will explore the use of rapid automated mobile text messaging services for the systematic sharing of nutrition and gender-transformative messages.

***Strategic outcome 2: Equitable national social protection interventions effectively target vulnerable populations, including school-age children, with sustained access to safe and nutritious food***

68. Activities under strategic outcome 2 will enhance human capital in the Congo by supporting the development and implementation of national social protection mechanisms. WFP will work with relevant ministries and other partners at the national, district and community levels in order to ensure that social protection interventions are effective, equitable and sustained by sound data and technologies.

***Focus area***

69. Strategic outcome 2 is focused on addressing the root causes of hunger and food insecurity and improving national institutions and systems for social protection.

***Expected outputs***

70. This strategic outcome will be achieved through five outputs:

- Primary school-age children (tier 1 beneficiaries) receive a meal every day that they attend school in order to improve their access to food and nutrition and their education.
- Primary-school children (tier 1 beneficiaries) in pilot schools benefit from the availability of diverse, locally purchased foods through school meals.
- Vulnerable children (tier 3 beneficiaries) benefit from the Government's increased capacity to develop and implement the national school feeding policy.
- Food-insecure households (tier 3 beneficiaries) benefit from the Government's increased capacity to develop and implement targeted social protection programmes, enabling them to meet their basic food and nutrition needs.
- Vulnerable children (tier 2 beneficiaries) benefit from increased community capacity in safe food preparation and storage.

***Key activities***

*Activity 2: Provide safe, adequate and nutritious school meals to targeted schoolchildren*

71. Activity 2 will contribute to the rollout of the national school feeding programme and will incorporate a "home-grown" component in line with the NDP and the national school feeding policy.
72. Daily school meals will be provided for the duration of the school year (180 days) to 132,000 school-age children in the departments most exposed to malnutrition (Bouenza, Lékoumou, Niari, Pool, Plateaux, Cuvette and Likouala). Schools for indigenous children and schools in rural areas will be prioritized because of their pupils' greater vulnerability to food insecurity. The programme will target girls and boys equally (given the existing gender parity in primary school enrolment), and 12 percent of the targeted children will be indigenous.
73. WFP will leverage its home-grown school feeding pilot with a view to diversifying school menus, encouraging the consumption of local foods, advancing women's economic empowerment and developing a system that can be brought to scale and integrated into the

national school feeding programme. WFP will test the distribution of CBTs to schools in order to enable the schools to make daily purchases of nutritious fresh produce from local markets. Lessons learned throughout the pilot will be integrated into the programme in order to strengthen it while it is progressively expanded.

74. To ensure that implementation meets quality standards, a school management committee will be established for each of the schools supported by WFP. Equal participation of men and women in these committees will be promoted. Community engagement will be encouraged with the aim of fostering long-term sustainability.

*Activity 3: Provide technical support to the Government for improved implementation of shock-responsive social protection interventions*

75. Through this activity, WFP will address gaps in the capacities, tools and processes of government institutions in order to improve the design and delivery of national social protection programmes.
76. A first component of the activity has the aim of introducing tools and systems that support the implementation of national social protection interventions. WFP will expand its successful collaboration with the Government on SCOPE and mobile vulnerability analysis and mapping and will introduce digital data and information management tools for supporting the Ministry of Social Affairs and Humanitarian Action in operating equitable social protection programmes that can be scaled up in emergencies. In collaboration with the WFP Innovation Accelerator, the country office will design, test and develop new solutions adapted to various situations.
77. Areas of work and innovation will include vulnerability analysis and targeting (with data disaggregated by sex and age), the mapping of floods, beneficiary registration and the collection, analysis, management and reporting of data on food and cash-based transfers. In collaboration with the World Bank and other partners, WFP will develop a multi-year work plan for the establishment of a single beneficiary registry for Lisungi, the national safety net system. WFP will also explore and expand the use of mobile data, satellite imagery and optical character recognition technologies.
78. The second component of this activity relates to enhancing the institutional and technical capacities of government bodies involved in the roll-out of the implementation of the national school feeding policy. WFP will support the newly created national directorate for school feeding through advocacy, the building of partnerships and the establishment of effective processes for implementing the school feeding programme. The focus will be on strengthening technical and functional capacities in the monitoring and managing the supply and distribution of school meals through the introduction of innovative digital solutions for collection and analysis of data from schools.
79. WFP acknowledges that schoolchildren face unique challenges, including barriers to their access to education, harmful cultural practices and sexual harassment. School management committees will be sensitized on issues related to education, gender, health and nutrition, sexual, reproductive and health rights and environmental issues.
80. School management committees will also be trained in the management of food commodities, including storage, security issues and distribution, and on sustainable techniques for food preparation, such as the use of energy-saving stoves.

***Strategic outcome 3: Targeted smallholder farmers and communities benefit from productive and sustainable livelihoods that support nutrition value chains***

81. Activities under strategic outcome 3 will support smallholder farmers in moving up the value chain, and communities in adapting to climate change and managing climate and weather-related shocks and stresses.



**Focus area**

82. Strategic outcome 3 is focused on building the resilience of smallholder agricultural systems.

**Expected outputs**

83. This strategic outcome will be achieved through three outputs:

- Targeted smallholder farmers (tier 2 beneficiaries) employ diversified, sustainable agricultural practices in order to improve their productivity, incomes, livelihoods and nutrition.
- Targeted smallholder farmers (tier 2 beneficiaries) benefit from enhanced adaptive capacities through better understanding of the impacts of climate change and variability, risk management and the adoption of improved, climate-resilient practices.
- Targeted smallholder farmers (tier 2 beneficiaries) benefit from increased access to storage infrastructure that results in reduced post-harvest losses and increased access to markets and incomes.

**Key activity**

*Activity 4: Provide smallholder farmers with analytical and technical support and equipment aimed at encouraging market-oriented and climate-resilient production and livelihoods*

84. This activity will target 2,000 smallholder farmers (70 percent of whom will be women) across five departments (Bouenza, Pool, Plateaux, Sangha and Likouala) that are currently unable to generate surpluses in production because of physical and economic isolation and the effects of climate change. For this activity, WFP will build on the pilot project for providing a comprehensive support package to smallholders in Bouenza, which it is implementing with the other Rome-based agencies.
85. WFP will provide a stable outlet for quality produce and encourage investments in agriculture by purchasing local foods for distribution in activities 1 and 2. WFP will also explore digital solutions for enabling more transparent and dynamic market transactions.
86. To enhance smallholder farmers' access to the marketplace, WFP will facilitate the establishment, organization and capacity development of farmer cooperatives; help smallholder farmers obtain access to affordable financial resources through local savings and loan groups and the provision of good quality locally produced farming inputs; establish or repair storage and processing facilities, including through the piloting of hermetic silos; and improve post-harvest handling practices. Possibilities for improving the transformation of local products, including the fortification of cassava, will be explored.
87. In collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture, WFP will directly provide technical assistance for sustainable production techniques and climate adaptation measures. The promotion of diverse value chains, combined with improved access to climate services and training on food consumption behaviours, will contribute to better management of natural resources and climate and weather variability and to enhanced nutrition. Environmental and social safeguards will be put in place in order to avoid the overextension of cultivated areas and other unwanted impacts. To improve the planning and management of resilience building initiatives, WFP will train government and development partners at the district level on seasonal livelihood programming and community-based participatory planning processes.
88. In collaboration with government institutions and the other Rome-based agencies, WFP will help to build evidence on the impacts of climate change on the livelihoods and food security of different communities. WFP will support the production and dissemination of climate and weather services for informing local agricultural planning and the management of climate risks.

89. Women smallholder farmers have limited access to land, financial resources and agricultural tools. WFP will target women smallholders participating in farmer cooperatives by fostering their access to decision making roles through the provision of training in financial literacy, marketing and asset management. WFP will also conduct participatory research with a view to identifying and addressing the gender-specific barriers faced by women smallholder farmers and will ensure collaboration with its partners on addressing specific needs in areas where it does not have expertise. These gender-transformative steps will ensure that WFP's core work is complemented by activities that contribute to gender equality.

***Strategic outcome 4: Humanitarian and development actors and national systems have access to WFP expertise and services***

90. Activities under strategic outcome 4 will contribute to the achievement of SDG 17 by supporting humanitarian and development partners in assisting vulnerable people through effective supply chain services.

***Focus area***

91. Strategic outcome 4 is focused on maintaining effective and agile assistance for crisis-affected people by providing supply chain services to the humanitarian and development community. Its focus area is therefore crisis response.

***Expected output***

92. This strategic outcome will be achieved through one output:
- On-demand supply chain services are provided, and assets are maintained and upgraded as needed, enabling stakeholders to leverage supply chain assets and systems.

***Key activity***

*Activity 5: Provide on-demand supply chain services for partners*

93. This activity will leverage WFP's recognized supply chain expertise and infrastructure in the Congo in order to help humanitarian and development actors assist their target populations effectively and efficiently. WFP will support United Nations agencies, the Government and other partners by providing on-demand supply chain services, including for procurement and the management of vehicles, transportation, distribution and warehousing, through the use of a cost recovery model.
94. WFP will provide support for strengthening the coordination, efficiency and effectiveness of the national supply chain system. It will work on identifying common challenges and harmonizing procedures and solutions; strengthening common services and delivery mechanisms by engaging with national institutions and private companies for the benefit of the larger supply chain community in the Congo; and identifying and leveraging inter-agency synergies.
95. Partners will also be provided with training in core areas of the supply chain such as the receipt and handling of food and relief items, food safety and quality, warehousing, outsourcing and contracting.

**3.3 Transition and exit strategies**

96. WFP will support the Government in achieving self-sustained food and nutrition security by 2030. WFP will continue to implement programmes directly while increasingly transferring tools, knowledge and expertise. The CSP is designed to support the Government in assuming a leadership role in the prevention and assessment of food and nutrition insecurity and the planning of responses, progressively reducing the need for external technical and financial assistance. Specific handover opportunities have been identified through in-depth consultations with government and other partners.

97. WFP envisions that by the end of the five-year CSP period, its interventions will have contributed to the Ministry of Social Affairs and Humanitarian Action being able to rely on digital solutions that ensure improved quality and accessibility of social protection services and to engage in more early warning and response activities. Over the same period, the Ministry of Education's new directorate for school feeding will assume greater responsibility for implementing and funding the national school feeding programme.
98. During implementation of the CSP, WFP will introduce systems for local agriculture that can be scaled up in order to drive change in the country, creating opportunities for emerging private agro-industries to supply WFP operations in the Congo and neighbouring countries and to sustain the national home-grown school feeding programme.
99. Following the CSP, WFP's handover strategy for 2024–2030 will have the aim of ensuring that evidence-based national social protection and emergency response programmes for food and nutrition security operate at full scale; a sustainable home-grown school feeding programme serves as a catalyst for social cohesion and food security in rural areas; food systems are integrated, resilient and sustainable and supply nutritious foods; and adequate supply chain infrastructure and capacities are available at the local level.
100. Gender inequalities are a barrier to sustainable progress towards zero hunger. In implementing the CSP, WFP will follow gender-transformative approaches that tackle inequalities while fostering equitable processes as a key step in the long-term process of transition and exit.

## 4. Implementation arrangements

### 4.1 Beneficiary analysis

TABLE 1: BENEFICIARIES BY STRATEGIC OUTCOME AND ACTIVITY (ALL YEARS)						
Strategic outcome	Activity	Girls	Boys	Women	Men	Total
1	1	25 486	25 557	67 045	63 012	<b>181 100</b>
2	2	66 000	66 000	0	0	<b>132 000</b>
	3	-	-	-	-	-
3	4	-	-	1 400	700	<b>2 000</b>
4	5	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total without overlap</b>		<b>91 486</b>	<b>91 557</b>	<b>68 445</b>	<b>63 712</b>	<b>315 100</b>

101. The design of CSP activities is informed by the findings of participatory needs assessments, evaluations and consultations with target population groups, including internally displaced persons, refugees, smallholders, indigenous people, teachers and schoolchildren. The approach followed ensured the participation of men, women, boys and girls.
102. Averaging 75,000 people a year, the planned number of crisis-affected people assisted under activity 1 will vary from year to year in accordance with the projected numbers of people in need. These numbers change rapidly given the long-lasting political instability and recurrent epidemics in neighbouring countries. WFP will maintain operational flexibility in order to accommodate fluctuations in the number of beneficiaries throughout implementation of the CSP.
103. Activity 2 will target 80,000 school-age children a year across seven departments. In total, 132,000 children will receive school meals during implementation of the CSP.

104. Activity 4 will address the various constraints that affect resilience building capacities among communities in the five departments with the highest potential for agriculture, which are targeted for activity 2. Capacity strengthening activities will directly target 2,000 smallholder farmers.
105. Work on strengthening policies and systems under the CSP will indirectly benefit the whole country. In particular, activities 3 and 5 will benefit people in situations of vulnerability, including to food and nutrition insecurity.
106. Through its portfolio of work, WFP seeks to engage and benefit women, men, girls and boys equitably and to contribute to gender equality. Sex- and age-disaggregated data will be analysed in order to support evidence-based programming for tackling the inequities and inequalities that undermine food security and nutrition.

## 4.2 Transfers

### *Food and cash-based transfers*

	Strategic outcome 1						Strategic outcome 2	
	Activity 1						Activity 2	
	General distribution		MAM treatment-PLW/G	MAM treatment - children aged 6-59 months	Asset creation (FFA)		School meals	
	Food	CBTs	Food	Food	Food	CBTs	Food	CBTs
Cereals	400				400		150	
Pulses	120				120		40	
Oil	30		25		30		15	
Salt	5				5		5	
Canned fish							30	
SuperCereal			250					
Plumpy'Sup				100				
Total kcal/day	2 100	2 100	954	544	2 100	2 100	901	901
% kcal from protein	11	11	16	10	11	11	12	12
Cash-based transfers (USD/person/day)		0.60				0.60		0.30
Number of feeding days per year	180	180	90	90	36	36	180	180

FFA = food assistance for assets; MAM = moderate acute malnutrition; PLW/G = pregnant and lactating women and girls.

<b>TABLE 3: TOTAL FOOD/CASH-BASED TRANSFER REQUIREMENTS AND VALUES</b>		
<b>Food type/cash-based transfers</b>	<b>Total (mt)</b>	<b>Total (USD)</b>
Cereals	14 194	6 528 634
Pulses	3 950	2 904 783
Oil and fats	1 367	1 510 521
Mixed and blended foods	1 118	1 615 320
Others	2 220	4 641 746
<b>Total (food)</b>	<b>22 848</b>	<b>17 201 004</b>
Cash-based transfers		16 097 400
<b>Total (food and CBT value)</b>	<b>22 848</b>	<b>33 298 404</b>

107. Emergency food assistance will be provided through both in-kind food and CBT modalities, informed by gender-sensitive assessments of security issues and markets and the outlook for supply pipelines. Should activity 1 be underfunded, WFP will prioritize the most vulnerable people and areas. All adjustments will be coordinated with the United Nations country team and the Ministry of Social Affairs and Humanitarian Action.
108. School meal rations will be aligned with the requirements of the national school feeding policy. The CBT modality for school feeding will be progressively extended to additional areas based on assessments of local markets and supply chains.
109. WFP will increasingly leverage local procurement opportunities for activities 1 and 2, increasing its local procurement from 1.7 percent of total commodities in 2019 to 3.6 percent in 2023.

#### **Capacity strengthening including South-South cooperation**

110. Capacity strengthening of national institutions is an assistance modality under all four strategic outcomes. Under outcomes 1, 2 and 3, the design of capacity strengthening activities will be informed by joint assessments of needs and gaps and work plans for the provision of capacity support. Under strategic outcome 4, capacity strengthening services will be provided to partners on demand.
111. WFP's engagement in capacity strengthening in the Congo will include:
- transfer of knowledge and expertise to the Government for the effective delivery of humanitarian assistance under strategic outcome 1;
  - sharing of tools, skills and processes for implementing national social protection programmes, including the national home-grown school feeding programme and safety nets, under strategic outcome 2;
  - reinforcement of advocacy on the response to climate change and the improvement of agricultural planning processes at the national and district levels under outcome 3; and
  - establishment of an effective supply chain structure and provision of on-demand training to partners under strategic outcome 4.
112. WFP is committed to remaining up-to-date with current and emerging trends in technology in order to assess their potential for addressing context-specific challenges in the Congo and to promote local innovation and technological development.

113. In alignment with government priorities, WFP will promote opportunities for South–South cooperation, including with the Centre of Excellence Against Hunger in Brazil on home-grown school feeding, the Centre of Excellence in China on support for smallholders’ value chains and the Global Post Harvest Knowledge and Operations Centre in Uganda on the reduction of post-harvest losses.

#### **4.3 Supply chain**

114. WFP will optimize its efficiency in the delivery of food for activities 1 and 2. Given the limited transport capacity of the Government and national transport companies, WFP will use a combination of commercial transport services and its own fleet.
115. WFP’s supply chain for CBTs will be strengthened, including through the mapping and assessment of retail supply chains and more rigorous monitoring. WFP will gradually increase the local procurement of food for supplying its operations and will strengthen the management of market information and the capacities of suppliers.
116. The country office supply chain team will work with other WFP functions, in order to support smallholder farmers (activity 4) by providing equipment and technical assistance for post-harvest handling and quality control.
117. The country office supply chain team will take the lead within the humanitarian and development community in providing capacity strengthening on supply chain management to partners and service providers (activity 5).

#### **4.4 Country office capacity and profile**

118. WFP’s country office will be expanded and adapted to deliver the intended outcomes of the CSP. A recruitment plan has been developed and will contribute to the achievement of office targets for sustainability. The plan includes the aim of increasing the proportion of women staff in the office from 28 percent in 2018 to 35 percent by 2021. New positions will be filled gradually starting in January 2019, as resources become available. A new communication strategy has been developed aimed at ensuring that qualified women candidates are attracted to WFP.
119. Enhancing staff wellness will remain a priority. Core investments for improving working conditions at both the country office and sub-offices have already been made in 2018. Follow up on and maintenance of these improvements will be ensured throughout the duration of the CSP. WFP will engage increasingly in activities for promoting psychological and physical health in order to advance the health, wellbeing and engagement of employees.

#### **4.5 Partnerships**

120. Building on the participatory process adopted for its formulation, the CSP will be implemented in collaboration with key government institutions, including the ministries of plan, statistics and regional integration, social affairs and humanitarian action, primary education and alphabetization, and agriculture, livestock and fishing. WFP will foster the adoption of the best available solutions for supporting the Government and other partners in delivering on the national development plan.
121. Partnerships with United Nations agencies and partners in the field will be critical in progressing towards zero hunger. With the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), UNICEF and UNFPA, the focus will be on delivering holistic assistance to crisis-affected populations. Strong collaboration with UNICEF and UNESCO will drive the implementation of the school feeding programme. Coordination among the Rome-based agencies will be crucial for delivering an effective resilience building package for vulnerable smallholders. WFP works alongside UNICEF on nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive interventions, including by coordinating complementary responses to moderate and severe

acute malnutrition among crisis-affected populations, in line with their respective corporate mandates.

122. WFP's expertise in logistics and back-office services will be leveraged through partnerships for shared storage and office space and the maintenance of United Nations Humanitarian Air Service flights. The use of WFP's digital tools such as SCOPE will be at the core of collaboration within the United Nations country team for shared data management and targeting.
123. For each strategic outcome, current and prospective partners and their priorities have been mapped and analysed and a strategy and action plan for defining partners' engagement and resource mobilization have been developed.
124. WFP will continue to develop partnerships with local youth and entrepreneurial groups with a view to fostering innovation and digitization in the Congo. Technology and ideas will also be sourced internationally, building on the work of the WFP Innovation Accelerator.
125. WFP will also seek to build strong relationships with organizations involved in the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment.

## **5 Performance management and evaluation**

### **5.1 Monitoring and evaluation arrangements**

126. The country office will develop a comprehensive gender-responsive monitoring and evaluation strategy, including a monitoring, review and evaluation plan. The strategy will contribute to improved programme implementation, efficiency, accountability, learning, sustainability and technical support for the Government.
127. Following recommendations from the 2018 evaluation of WFP's country programme in the Congo, the country office monitoring and evaluation team will review existing data collection and data analysis tools and methods. WFP will focus on digitizing data at their source in order to improve real-time analyses and responsive decision making. Existing tools that will be mainstreamed include the mobile Open Data Kit and Mobile Data Collection and Analytics platforms, ArcGIS for mapping and Tableau for data visualization. New projects include the development of remote monitoring systems that use third-party call centres, the introduction of MEZA technology for photo capture and the transmission of digital data on health, Cloud to Street for an early flood warning system, and Azure Development for vulnerability mapping and messaging.
128. Processes, outputs, outcomes and performance will be regularly monitored and analysed in yearly, half-yearly and monthly reports. Post-distribution monitoring for each of the programmes implemented under strategic outcome 1 will be conducted once every six months. Process monitoring missions will be carried out and the school feeding programme will be subject to a mid-term evaluation in 2020 and a final evaluation in 2022. A review of the pilot project for smallholder farmers and a baseline survey for strategic outcome 3 will be conducted before the project is expanded in 2019. Bi-annual satisfaction surveys will be conducted for services provided under strategic outcome 4, using digital technology.
129. The CSP will undergo an independent country strategic plan evaluation in 2023, which will be complemented by a decentralized mid-term evaluation of the school feeding programme in 2020, a mid-term review of the CSP in 2021 and a decentralized final evaluation of the school feeding programme in 2022.
130. The successful beneficiary feedback mechanism that was set up in 2017 for activities that provide assistance through CBTs will be strengthened and extended to other activities. Sex- and age-disaggregated data will be collected for each outcome, and gender-responsive performance monitoring and analyses will be conducted.



## 5.2 Risk management

131. National socio-political instability represents a major risk for both WFP staff and operations. The resumption of conflict in the lead up to the next political elections in 2021 would affect the accessibility and security of core operational areas throughout the country.
132. Bordering the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Central African Republic, the Congo is affected by the volatile regional situation. The spill-over of conflicts from elsewhere in the region would result in a spike of new arrivals of refugees into the Congo and affect WFP operations. All WFP programmes will be designed and implemented to allow scaling up and down, including through supply chain preparedness. WFP closely monitors national and regional risks, relying on strong collaboration with UNHCR and WHO.
133. The success of CSP implementation will be contingent on the Government's continued engagement and leadership in order to maintain the alignment of WFP and government priorities. Deterioration of the national financial situation and lack of coordination among national institutions remain potential risks. WFP is developing a new portfolio of donors and will advocate for consistency of action in this regard.
134. Gender inequalities, if not addressed, also pose a risk to sustainable progress towards zero hunger. In response, as part of CSP implementation, WFP will advocate and prioritize resources for activities that promote gender equality.

## 6 Resources for results

### 6.1 Country portfolio budget

<b>Strategic outcome</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>Total</b>
1	15 924 965	5 946 869	5 870 869	5 871 994	2 747 722	<b>36 362 419</b>
2	8 161 496	8 914 691	8 616 103	9 188 902	8 963 326	<b>43 844 517</b>
3	2 837 612	2 972 110	3 046 894	3 042 066	3 072 732	<b>14 971 414</b>
4	501 049	543 992	604 054	540 736	553 460	<b>2 743 290</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>27 425 122</b>	<b>18 377 662</b>	<b>18 137 921</b>	<b>18 643 696</b>	<b>15 337 240</b>	<b>97 921 641</b>

135. The budget for implementing the CSP from 2019 until 2023 is USD 97.9 million and is based on expected requirements and resourcing prospects, relying on strong, continuous relations with traditional and emerging donors.
136. Financial resources have been allocated to the implementation of activities that tackle gender inequalities and contribute to progress towards gender equality.

### 6.2 Resourcing outlook

137. Limited government funding, primarily caused by the 2014 economic and fiscal crisis, significantly affected WFP's ability to implement its planned programme of work from 2015 to 2018. The Government has committed to continuing to contribute staff, buildings and warehouses to WFP throughout implementation of the CSP in 2019–2023 and has confirmed its intention of increasing its financial support as soon as public finances allow.
138. Given the macroeconomic constraints, WFP's resourcing strategy for the CSP is based on a diversified portfolio of donors and partners. Analysis of WFP funding trends shows that the international community is responsive to emergencies in the Congo and provides the country with stable support. Consultations with resource partners have resulted in current

and new donors engaging and expressing interest in supporting the development projects included in the CSP, reflecting the momentum for resilience building throughout the region.

139. Significant funding for food and nutrition assistance under strategic outcome 1 is expected to be maintained, and multi-year funding has been secured for activities under strategic outcome 2. Work towards strategic outcome 3 on livelihood support is expected to benefit from increasing South-South cooperation and emerging opportunities related to programmes that address climate change.
140. In the event of resource shortfalls, WFP will prioritize life-saving assistance under strategic outcome 1 and school feeding under strategic outcome 2.

### **6.3 Resource mobilization strategy**

141. WFP is seeking to secure additional multi-year funding in order to increase financial predictability and sustain long-term results and projects, particularly under strategic outcomes 2 and 3. WFP will encourage donors to confirm contributions early and will continue to use advance financing in order to ensure the continuity of supplies. With the objective of developing a sound and evidence-based resource mobilization strategy, WFP will focus on strengthening its monitoring and evaluation system with a view to demonstrating the impact of WFP operations and supporting the timely mobilization of resources.
142. WFP already has solid relationships with other United Nations agencies. Throughout implementation of the CSP, it will continue to seek joint programming and resource mobilization opportunities. Jointly with the Government, WFP will also strengthen the engagement of private sector entities in funding and advocacy, leveraging emerging opportunities in the agribusiness and oil extraction sectors. WFP will also seek partnerships with development banks and climate funds.

**ANNEX I****LOGICAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE CONGO COUNTRY STRATEGIC PLAN (2019–2023)****Strategic Goal 1: Support countries to achieve zero hunger****Strategic Objective 1: End hunger by protecting access to food****Strategic Result 1: Everyone has access to food****Strategic outcome 1: Food-insecure people affected by shocks have access to adequate food all year**

Outcome category: Maintained/enhanced individual and household access to adequate food

Nutrition sensitive

Focus area: crisis response

**Assumptions**

Gradual repatriation of CAR refugees

New refugee inflows from DRC

Internal displacement due to political instability

Ongoing coordination with UNICEF, UNFPA and UNHCR

**Outcome indicators**

Consumption-based Coping Strategy Index (Average)

Dietary Diversity Score

Food Consumption Score

Food Expenditure Share

MAM Treatment Default rate

MAM Treatment Mortality rate

MAM Treatment Non-response rate

MAM Treatment Recovery rate

Proportion of children 6–23 months of age who receive a minimum acceptable diet

Proportion of eligible population that participates in programme (coverage)

Proportion of target population that participates in an adequate number of distributions (adherence)

Proportion of the population in targeted communities reporting benefits from an enhanced asset base

### **Activities and outputs**

#### **1. Provide unconditional and/or conditional food and nutrition assistance to people affected by shocks (category 1; modality food/CBT) (URT: Unconditional resource transfers to support access to food)**

Moderately malnourished children and pregnant and lactating women and girls affected by crisis (tier 1 beneficiaries) receive specialized nutritious products for treating malnutrition and improving their nutrition status (A: Resources transferred)

Moderately malnourished children and pregnant and lactating women and girls affected by crisis (tier 1 beneficiaries) receive specialized nutritious products for treating malnutrition and improving their nutrition status (B: Nutritious foods provided)

Vulnerable households (tier 2 beneficiaries) benefit from improved knowledge of nutrition, care practices and healthy diets that enhance their food consumption and nutrition status (C: Capacity development and technical support provided)

Vulnerable households (tier 2 beneficiaries) benefit from improved knowledge of nutrition, care practices and healthy diets that enhance their food consumption and nutrition status (E: Advocacy and education provided)

Vulnerable people affected by crisis (tier 1 beneficiaries) benefit from the creation or rehabilitation of productive assets that support the transition towards resilience and self-reliance (A: Resources transferred)

Vulnerable people affected by crisis (tier 1 beneficiaries) benefit from the creation or rehabilitation of productive assets that support the transition towards resilience and self-reliance (C: Capacity development and technical support provided)

Vulnerable people affected by crisis (tier 1 beneficiaries) benefit from the creation or rehabilitation of productive assets that support the transition towards resilience and self-reliance (D: Assets created)

Vulnerable people affected by crisis (tier 1 beneficiaries) receive sufficient cash-based and/or food transfers to enable them to meet their basic food and nutrition requirements (A: Resources transferred)

Vulnerable people affected by crisis (tier 1 beneficiaries) receive sufficient cash-based and/or food transfers to enable them to meet their basic food and nutrition requirements (C: Capacity development and technical support provided)

**Strategic outcome 2: Equitable national social protection interventions effectively target vulnerable populations, including school-aged children, with sustained access to safe and nutritious food**

Outcome category: Enhanced social and public-sector capacity to assist populations facing acute, transitory or chronic food insecurity

Focus area: root causes

**Assumptions**

Lack of funding

Effective inter-ministerial collaboration

Peace is maintained in the country

**Outcome indicators**

Attendance rate

Drop-out rate

Enrolment rate

Gender ratio

National Capacity Index (School meals)

Pass rate

Retention rate

## **Activities and outputs**

### **2. Provide safe, adequate and nutritious school meals to targeted schoolchildren (SMP: School meal activities)**

Primary school-age children (tier 1 beneficiaries) receive a meal every day that they attend school in order to improve their access to food and nutrition and their education (A: Resources transferred)

Primary school-age children (tier 1 beneficiaries) receive a meal every day that they attend school in order to improve their access to food and nutrition and their education (C: Capacity development and technical support provided)

Primary-school children (tier 1 beneficiaries) in pilot schools benefit from the availability of diverse, locally purchased foods through school meals (A: Resources transferred)

Primary-school children (tier 1 beneficiaries) in pilot schools benefit from the availability of diverse, locally purchased foods through school meals (C: Capacity development and technical support provided)

Vulnerable children (tier 2 beneficiaries) benefit from increased community capacity in safe food preparation and storage (A: Resources transferred)

Vulnerable children (tier 2 beneficiaries) benefit from increased community capacity in safe food preparation and storage (C: Capacity development and technical support provided)

### **3. Provide technical support to the Government for improved implementation of shock-responsive social protection interventions (CSI: Institutional capacity strengthening activities)**

Food-insecure households (tier 3 beneficiaries) benefit from the Government's increased capacity to develop and implement targeted social protection programmes, enabling them to meet their basic food and nutrition needs (C: Capacity development and technical support provided)

Vulnerable children (tier 3 beneficiaries) benefit from the Government's increased capacity to develop and implement the national school feeding policy (C: Capacity development and technical support provided)

**Strategic Objective 3: Achieve food security****Strategic Result 3: Smallholders have improved food security and nutrition****Strategic outcome 3: Targeted smallholder farmers and communities benefit from productive and sustainable livelihoods which support nutrition value chains**

Outcome category: Increased smallholder production and sales

Focus area: resilience building

**Assumptions**

Lack of funding

Poor coordination between partners

Lack of government capacity counterpart

**Outcome indicators**

Consumption-based Coping Strategy Index (Average)

Food Consumption Score

Food expenditure share

Percentage of smallholder farmers selling through WFP-supported farmer aggregation systems

Percentage of WFP food procured from pro-smallholder farmer aggregation systems

Value and volume of pro-smallholder sales through WFP-supported aggregation systems

**Activities and outputs****4. Provide smallholder farmers with analytical and technical support and equipment aimed at encouraging market-oriented and climate-resilient production and livelihoods (CSB: Individual capacity strengthening activities)**

Targeted smallholder farmers (tier 2 beneficiaries) benefit from enhanced adaptive capacities through better understanding of the impacts of climate change and variability, risk management and the adoption of improved, climate-resilient practices (C: Capacity development and technical support provided)



Targeted smallholder farmers (tier 2 beneficiaries) benefit from increased access to storage infrastructure that results in reduced post-harvest losses and increased access to market and incomes (C: Capacity development and technical support provided)

Targeted smallholder farmers (tier 2 beneficiaries) employ diversified, sustainable agricultural practices in order to improve their productivity, incomes, livelihoods and nutrition (F: Purchases from smallholders completed)

## **Strategic Goal 2: Partner to support implementation of the SDGs**

### **Strategic Objective 4: Support SDG implementation**

#### **Strategic Result 5: Development countries have strengthened capacity to implement the SDGs**

#### **Strategic outcome 4: Humanitarian and development actors and national systems have access to WFP expertise and services**

Outcome category: Partners' demand for quality services fulfilled

Focus area: crisis response

### **Assumptions**

Lack of infrastructures

Sharing WFP skills to other stakeholders

No disruption in WFP supply chain capacity

### **Outcome indicators**

User satisfaction rate

### **Activities and outputs**

#### **5. Provide on-demand supply chain services for partners (CPA: Service provision and platforms activities)**

On-demand supply chain services are provided, and assets are maintained and upgraded as needed, enabling stakeholders to leverage supply chain assets and systems (H: Shared services and platforms provided)

**Strategic Goal 1: Support countries to achieve zero hunger****C.1. Affected populations are able to hold WFP and partners accountable for meeting their hunger needs in a manner that reflects their views and preferences****Cross-cutting indicators**

C.1.1: Proportion of assisted people informed about the programme (who is included, what people will receive, length of assistance)

**C.2. Affected populations are able to benefit from WFP programmes in a manner that ensures and promotes their safety, dignity and integrity****Cross-cutting indicators**

C.2.1: Proportion of targeted people receiving assistance without safety challenges

**C.3. Improved gender equality and women's empowerment among WFP-assisted population****Cross-cutting indicators**

C.3.1: Proportion of households where women, men, or both women and men make decisions on the use of food/cash/vouchers, disaggregated by transfer modality

C.3.2: Proportion of food assistance decision-making entity – committees, boards, teams, etc. – members who are women

C.3.3: Type of transfer (food, cash, voucher, no compensation) received by participants in WFP activities, disaggregated by sex and type of activity

**C.4. Targeted communities benefit from WFP programmes in a manner that does not harm the environment****Cross-cutting indicators**

C.4.1: Proportion of activities for which environmental risks have been screened and, as required, mitigation actions identified (enhanced methodology)

## ANNEX II

INDICATIVE COST BREAKDOWN (USD)					
	Strategic Result 1/ SDG target 2.1	Strategic Result 1/ SDG target 2.1	Strategic Result 3/ SDG target 2.3	Strategic Result 5/SDG target 17.16	Total
	Strategic outcome 1	Strategic outcome 2	Strategic outcome 3	Strategic outcome 4	
Transfers	25 693 202	30 920 017	11 059 392	2 152 576	<b>69 825 187</b>
Implementation	5 375 637	6 032 292	1 561 015	159 673	<b>13 128 617</b>
Adjusted direct support costs	3 074 277	4 216 251	1 437 259	263 610	<b>8 991 398</b>
<b>Subtotal</b>	34 143 117	41 168 561	14 057 666	2 575 859	<b>91 945 203</b>
Indirect support costs (6.5%)	2 219 303	2 675 956	913 748	167 431	<b>5 976 438</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>36 362 419</b>	<b>43 844 517</b>	<b>14 971 414</b>	<b>2 743 290</b>	<b>97 921 641</b>

**Acronyms used in the document**

CBT	cash-based transfer
CSP	country strategic plan
MAM	moderate acute malnutrition
NDP	national development plan
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SUN	Scaling Up Nutrition
UNDAF	United Nations development assistance framework
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund