

programmes that improve food security, nutrition and social protection by 2021". To achieve this, WFP will support the Government of Morocco in enhancing its National School Meals Programme as a vital component of the Vision 2030 education sector reform and the national nutrition strategy for 2011–2019.

WFP will support its main government partner, the Ministry of National Education, Vocational Training, Higher Education and Scientific Research, in strengthening regulatory frameworks and tools for school meals and social protection. The Ministry will pilot innovative school meals modalities based on WFP recommendations.

The country strategic plan is aligned with the first pillar of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework for 2017–2021, which supports the education sector. An enhanced National School Meals Programme could contribute to the attainment of Sustainable Development Goals 4, on ensuring quality education, 2, on achieving zero hunger and 17, on partnerships aimed at achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. The activities under the country strategic plan will contribute to Sustainable Development Goals Target 17.9, which concerns enhancing international support for implementing effective and targeted capacity building in developing countries to support national plans to implement all Sustainable Development Goals, including through North–South, South–South and triangular cooperation.

WFP will work with the other Rome-based agencies – the United Nations' Food and Agricultural Organization and the International Fund for Agricultural Development – to follow up on the implementation of the recommendations of the country strategic review, making the most of their respective expertise and in-country resources.

Draft decision*

The Board approves the Morocco country strategic plan (2019–2021) (WFP/EB.A/2019/8-A/8/Rev.1) at a total cost to WFP of USD 400,000.

* 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. Morocco is a lower-middle-income country with relatively good macroeconomic indicators, generally low inflation and moderately high economic growth, averaging 4 percent per year over the past ten years. With the gradual adoption of democracy and the introduction of a new constitution in 2011, the country's political situation remains stable. Electoral laws have undergone significant changes to increase the political participation of women, and the share of women in the House of Representatives rose from 17 to 20.5 percent after the 2016 election. Women are present in decision-making positions, although in insufficient numbers.¹
2. Despite economic progress, poverty persists, notably in rural areas, where 80 percent of the country's rural population of 14 million people depend directly or indirectly on agriculture for their livelihoods.² A modern industrial agricultural sector coexists alongside more traditional subsistence agriculture. Three quarters of agricultural land in Morocco is used for relatively large-scale industrial farming primarily producing food for export, while smallholder farmers mainly supply food to local markets and for family consumption. More than 70 percent of farmers cultivate plots of no more than 5 ha.³
3. There is a great imbalance in the share of women and men classified as "contributing family workers", with 12.5 percent of men and 47.3 percent of women in this category. Women lack equitable access to markets and productive assets.⁴ Households headed by women are considered the most vulnerable family units in the country, because women's low-income jobs and higher rate of illiteracy prevent most of them from improving or maintaining their living standards after divorce or widowhood.
4. Morocco has made considerable progress in reducing school dropout rates and increasing enrolment: more than 95 percent of primary school-age children are currently enrolled (98 percent of boys and 97 percent of girls aged 6–11). Yet the education system faces significant challenges. Dropout rates are still high, and only 53 percent of students enrolled in middle school continue on to high school. Less than 15 percent of first grade students are likely to graduate from high school. Low levels of daily attendance, teacher absenteeism and a multilingual environment at school contribute to the country's low literacy rates. Those unable to complete a high school education have far fewer employment opportunities.⁵

¹ Stereotypes persist in which women's role is limited to the family and the private sphere and men's role is oriented outwards towards the public sphere. See United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. 2017. *Counting (on) women in politics: Experiences from Morocco & Tunisia*. Available from <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000246962>.

² Ministry of Agriculture, Maritime Fisheries, Rural Development, Water and Forests. *Plan Maroc Vert*. (<http://www.agriculture.gov.ma/pages/la-strategie>) (in French). Sex and age- disaggregated data are unavailable.

³ Biermayr-Jenzano, P. and Kassam, S. 2014. *Understanding gender and poverty dimensions of high value agricultural commodity chains in the Souss-Masaa-Draa region of southwestern Morocco*. Available from http://www.academia.edu/21172719/Understanding_gender_and_poverty_dimensions_of_high_value_agricultural_commodity_chains_in_the_Souss-Masaa-Draa_region_of_southwestern_Morocco. Sex and age- disaggregated data unavailable.

⁴ World Economic Forum. 2017. *The Global Gender Gap Report 2017*. Available at http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GGGR_2017.pdf.

⁵ United States Agency for International Development. 2018. Morocco education webpage (<https://www.usaid.gov/morocco/education>).

5. Whereas there is relative gender parity in enrolment in primary education, the gap widens in secondary education. In 2017, 124,000 girls and 82,000 boys of lower secondary school age were out of school; at upper secondary school level, the corresponding figures were 282,000 girls and 234,000 boys.⁶ This gap is largely explained by high dropout rates in rural areas, driven in some cases by family labour or participation in the work force.⁷

1.2 Progress towards SDG 2

Targets

6. *Access to food.* Economic and social reforms have contributed significantly to Morocco's progress in eradicating extreme poverty and eliminating hunger, reducing the proportion of people living in situations of extreme poverty to almost zero. In 2014, only 0.6 percent of the rural population suffered from food poverty, meaning that they were unable to obtain sufficient food of adequate quality to constitute a healthy diet.⁸ Access to food is generally guaranteed in Morocco, but the country faces challenges related to malnutrition, long-term food security and sustainable agriculture. The observed increases in food security and the prospects for further improvement depend on national efforts to reduce inequality, vulnerability and disparities in income between regions, urban and rural areas and men and women.
7. *End malnutrition.* The population of Morocco bears a double burden of malnutrition, experiencing both undernutrition and overweight and obesity. More than half of Morocco's adult population is overweight (50 percent of men and 59 percent of women), with 21 percent suffering from obesity; 27 percent of women are obese, compared with 15 percent of men.⁹ At the same time, the prevalence of stunting among children aged 6–59 months is 15 percent, mainly as a result of chronic malnutrition affecting infants and pregnant women and girls. Micronutrient deficiencies include anaemia, which affects 33 percent of the overall population and 35 percent of pregnant women and girls, and vitamin A deficiency, which affects 15 percent of children aged 6–59 months.¹⁰ Poor families are the most likely to lack adequate food and nutrition.
8. *Smallholder productivity and incomes.* Although the agriculture sector accounts for only 15 percent of gross domestic product (GDP), approximately 40 percent of Morocco's labour force is employed in agriculture, which provides livelihoods for most of the country's poor people. Women generally work at very low levels in agriculture value chains, carrying out mainly basic farming activities. Women account for an increasing share of the agricultural workforce: agriculture provides 59.2 percent of female and 34.2 percent of male employment. Yet women continue to face lower pay – or, as for many family labourers, no pay at all – and less access to productive assets compared with men. Thirty percent of the labour on family farms is provided by women, but women own only 7 percent of the land.¹¹

⁶ UNESCO Institute for Statistics. 2017. See <http://data.uis.unesco.org>.

⁷ Instance Nationale d'Evaluation (CSEFR), in United Nations Children's Fund. 2015. *Morocco Country Report on Out of School Children Available (in French) at* http://www.oosci-mena.org/uploads/1/wysiwyg/151218_Morocco_report_French_Preview_FINAL.pdf.

⁸ Saidi, A., and Diouri, M. 2017. "Food self-sufficiency under the Green-Morocco Plan". *Journal of Experimental Biology and Agricultural Sciences*, pp:33–40. Available at <https://halshs.archives-ouvertes.fr/halshs-01613992/document>.

⁹ World Health Organization. 2016. *Morocco Diabetes country profiles 2016*. Available at https://www.who.int/diabetes/country-profiles/mar_en.pdf. No data available on girls and boys.

¹⁰ International Food Policy Research Institute. 2015. *2015 Nutrition country profile: Morocco*. Available at <http://www.ifpri.org/publication/nutrition-country-profile-morocco>.

¹¹ United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. 2014. *Spring Forward for Women Programme* (<https://spring-forward.unwomen.org/en/countries/morocco>).

9. *Sustainable food systems.* Agricultural activities put high pressure on soil, water and biodiversity. This is mainly due to pollution caused by the uncontrolled use of phosphates and nitrates and wasteful irrigation networks. Drought is a major concern for Moroccan farmers, especially in rainfed lowlands, which experience considerable variation in annual precipitation. In response, the Government developed the Green-Morocco Plan (2008–2020) (*Plan Maroc Vert*), a national agriculture strategy that has the aim of improving food security and promoting inclusive economic growth through strengthening the resilience, sustainability and competitiveness of the agriculture sector and tackling structural inequalities. This Plan will be further extended over the coming years under a second phase focused on the creation of employment in rural areas through the development of collective lands.

Macroeconomic environment

10. Morocco has experienced steady GDP growth of an average of 4 percent over the past 10 years, which has contributed to eliminating extreme poverty. Morocco's economic growth experienced a slowdown in 2018 despite an unexpected increase in cereal production. GDP growth slowed from 3.5 percent in the first quarter of 2017 to 3.2 percent in the same period of 2018. On the supply side, the economic slowdown is mainly due to a sharp decline in agricultural value-added growth, from 14.8 percent in the first quarter of 2017 to 2.5 percent in the first quarter of 2018, which is only partially compensated for by the otherwise good performance of non-agricultural activities.
11. Despite economic progress, the country still faces challenges related to unemployment and poverty, particularly in rural areas, where 9 percent of the population lives in or is vulnerable to poverty. Low employment rates are largely explained by the very low participation of women in the labour force, often caused by cultural norms in rural areas, where traditional gender roles that disadvantage women and girls are still prevalent. Women and girls are therefore more susceptible to poverty and food insecurity. Agricultural production fluctuates yearly as a result of weather variations, and Morocco relies on international markets to meet its consumption needs. Real GDP is expected to expand by an average of 3.5 percent per year between 2017 and 2021.

Key cross-sector linkages

12. Morocco is ranked 123rd of 188 countries on the 2017 Human Development Index and 119th on the 2017 Gender Inequality Index. The country has an ambitious sustainable development agenda and has initiated a wide range of reforms with the aim of attaining the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The international community lauded Morocco for the significant progress it made towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals, in particular in eradicating extreme poverty. Cross-sector challenges to the attainment of SDG 2 include regional disparities, high unemployment levels (particularly among women), gender inequalities and an education sector lagging behind the needs of the modern labour market, which results in literacy rates of 59 percent for women and 80 percent for men.¹²

1.3 Hunger gaps and challenges

13. Economic inequality and vulnerability and increasing disparities in income between regions, urban and rural areas and men and women are major challenges that need to be addressed in order for Morocco to attain SDG 2. Among poor and vulnerable populations, gender inequalities render women particularly vulnerable to food insecurity, and more programmes and projects that target women and young farmers are needed.

¹² World Economic Forum. 2017. The Global Gender Gap Report 2017. Available at http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GGGR_2017.pdf.

Land degradation, loss of biodiversity and climate-change-related hazards pose further threats to the country's food security. Rural infrastructure must be improved to ensure access to markets and to attract investment.¹³

14. A strategic review of the food and nutrition situation in Morocco was conducted between May and December 2018 and a number of gaps were indentified, as described in the following paragraphs.
15. There are large disparities between the food consumption patterns of the most vulnerable, such as people living in households headed by women, and those who are better off economically. Food accounts for an average of 37 percent of yearly per capita expenditure: 50.3 percent for the poorest 10 percent, and 25.9 percent for the wealthiest 10 percent. Anaemia and deficiencies of iodine and vitamins (notably vitamins A, B9 and D) are prevalent, as are other manifestations of undernutrition (including in pregnant women and girls) and of obesity.
16. Work towards the main objectives of the national nutrition strategy for 2011–2019¹⁴ should be leveraged in order to improve the food and nutrition situation. The objectives of the strategy include:
 - eradicating protein and energy undernutrition;
 - promoting infant and young child nutrition;
 - preventing micronutrient deficiencies; and
 - advancing nutrition education and promoting healthy lifestyles.
17. In spite of the progress driven by the Green-Morocco Plan, the yields of strategic crops¹⁵ are insufficient to meet the needs of the country, particularly in years of rainfall deficit. Food availability depends on the domestic production system with imports to fill shortfalls. The main imported products are cereals, particularly wheat, sugar and oils. Imported food meets from 40 to 60 percent of requirements.
18. Morocco's agro-industry sector has significant potential for development. The following readjustments of the Green-Morocco Plan would help to strengthen food production while improving performance in agricultural value chains:
 - increasing the focus on enhancing food security and reducing climate hazards to the extent possible;
 - revising supply chain models to foster cooperation among farmers while also allowing for greater inclusion and equity; and
 - increasing the territorial integration of agricultural programmes so that activities in the same geographic area are coherent and complementary and thus improve synergies and maximize impact.

¹³ United Nations Human Rights Council. 2016. *Report of the Special Rapporteur on the right to food on her mission to Morocco (Advance edited version)*. Available at <https://www.ohchr.org/en/issues/food/pages/annual.aspx> or [click here](#).

¹⁴ The National Nutrition Strategy for 2011–2019 sets out a broad approach to improving nutrition levels in the country. See <https://extranet.who.int/nutrition/gina/sites/default/files/MAR%202011%20Strategie%20Nationale%20de%20Nutrition.pdf> (in French).

¹⁵ Strategic crops are those identified by the Government as being essential for national food security, notably cereals and oilseeds.

19. In addition to the agricultural, agro-industrial and other public policies that affect the value chain, sound macroeconomic policies are crucial for economic growth, increased incomes and mitigation of the risks of changes in food prices.

1.4 Key country priorities

Government

20. Morocco has adopted an ambitious agenda for sustainable development, initiating a wide range of reforms in recent years with the aim of improving nutrition, agriculture, education and environmental sustainability. The National Strategy for the Modernisation of Training Systems and Agricultural Research aims to contribute to overcoming the challenges of food security. The strategy has led the National Institute of Agronomic Research to restructure its research programmes by productive sectors to cover all value chains and cross-cutting areas to ensure the sustainability of production systems for natural resources (water, soil and biodiversity). The national nutrition strategy (2011–2019) outlines a broad strategy for improving the nutrition status of the population that calls for the incorporation of nutrition considerations into national development strategies. Morocco's efforts to achieve SDG 2 are closely aligned with the Green-Morocco Plan's two main pillars: high-yield, intensive agriculture; and the strengthening of small-scale farmers through the promotion of increases in crop yields, encouraging a shift towards crops that are better adapted to prevailing environmental conditions and market demand.
21. Vision 2030 is a programme to reform the education sector as part of national efforts to address regional disparities in education, boost academic performance and prepare young Moroccans for the modern labour market. The reform foresees a more nutrition-sensitive approach to the Government's provision of meals for children attending boarding and primary schools and calls for positive discrimination in education to favour vulnerable girls and boys in rural areas in order to reduce territorial disparities and advance gender equality.
22. National safety net programmes include energy and food subsidies; support for education; non-contributory¹⁶ health services and social assistance for vulnerable groups such as widows, orphans and persons with disabilities; and social funds, mainly for the rehabilitation of local infrastructure and the launching of revenue-generating activities through the national initiative for human development.
23. The Government fully funds and manages a large-scale National School Meals Programme (NSMP), which constitutes a central component of the portfolio of safety nets for education support managed by the Ministry of National Education, Vocational Training, Higher Education and Scientific Research. The portfolio includes:
 - conditional cash transfers (*tayssir* or *facilités*), which are provided to beneficiary households once a month and range from MAD 60 to MAD 140 (USD 6–15) per child depending on the stage of schooling of the student;
 - the Royal Family's "One Million School Bags" initiative, through which school bags, books and supplies are distributed to approximately 4 million students;
 - transport to and from school for 50,000 children in remote areas, with an annual budget of about USD 8 million; and
 - residential facilities, 160,000 primary and secondary school students with accommodation that is close to their schools.

¹⁶ Non-contributory services are provided at no charge to their recipients.

24. With an annual budget of approximately USD 100 million, the NSMP is the largest social support programme managed by the Ministry of National Education. It benefits about 1.4 million children (660,000 girls and 740,000 boys), of whom 1.2 million are in primary schools and 200,000 in middle and high schools, including boarding schools. About 70 percent of beneficiaries live in rural areas. In boarding schools, children are provided with three meals a day to cover their daily nutritional requirements in full, while primary school children receive one snack which is designed to provide 30–40 percent of their daily energy intake.
25. The Ministry of Solidarity, Women, Family and Social Development promotes gender equality, notably through a government plan for equality that aims to ensure adherence to the gender principles enshrined in the 2011 constitution.
26. To address the risks associated with climate change, the Government has developed a national strategy and action plan for biodiversity and a national plan of action for combatting desertification.

United Nations and other partners

27. Morocco has shown its commitment to the principles of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and to attaining the SDGs. The country was among the first to submit a national voluntary review of its capacity to attain the SDGs, and it has made sustainable development an integrated part of its wide-reaching reform process of the past decade. In November 2016, the Moroccan Government hosted the 22nd Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. The country has shown a high level of engagement in international efforts to mitigate and adapt to climate change.
28. The United Nations Development Assistance Framework for Morocco for 2017–2021 (UNDAF) comprises six development pillars jointly formulated by United Nations agencies and the Government of Morocco: democratic governance and decentralization; inclusive and sustainable development; health; education; economic inclusion, reduction of inequalities and vulnerabilities; and inclusive, integrated and sustainable rural development. The pillars are founded on the universal values of human rights, gender equity and equality.
29. Assistance to Morocco by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) is set out in an FAO country programming framework for 2017–2020. The framework has three priority areas: sustainable, inclusive and effective development of Morocco's agriculture and forestry systems; sustainable, inclusive and integrated management of natural resources and fragile spaces facing climate change; and promotion of South–South and triangular cooperation to achieve food security, reduce poverty and manage natural resources sustainably.
30. In 2015, in collaboration with the Government, the United Nations carried out an extensive review of Morocco's national environmental performance; the report setting out the results of the review includes recommendations for environmental and agricultural policies,¹⁷ including a call for the development of a national strategy for protecting soils, saving water and promoting adaptation to climate change (recommendation 13.2).

¹⁷ United Nations Economic Commission for Europe and Government of Morocco. 2014. Morocco Environmental Performance Review. Available from <https://www.unece.org/environmental-policy/environmental-performance-reviews/enveprpublications/environmental-performance-reviews/2014/environmental-performance-review-of-morocco/docs.html>.

31. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) initiated a Government-led national review of education in 2015, which concluded that the Government should continue to implement strategies aimed at improving the national education sector. The report commends the Vision 2030 initiative and recommends that the Government ensure fulfilment of the initiative's targets.
32. The United States of America foreign aid agency Millennium Challenge Corporation and the Government of Morocco signed a USD 450 million compact in 2015. The compact focuses on strengthening education and land productivity as a means of improving economic growth and stability in the country.

2. Strategic implications for WFP

2.1 WFP's experience and lessons learned

33. In 2013 the Government of Morocco requested WFP's assistance in reviewing the NSMP as a means of addressing dropout rates, improving nutrition and strengthening learning, especially in rural areas. In response, WFP designed development project 200494 (2013–2017) with the aim of enhancing the technical capacity of education authorities to improve implementation of the government-managed NSMP, which is fully funded from national sources. Through development project 200494, WFP provided technical assistance and policy advice to the Government in four main areas: a comprehensive assessment and review of the NSMP; development of a plan of action for enhancement of the NSMP; workshops for stakeholders; and study visits for the sharing of experiences and the fostering of South–South cooperation. Major WFP achievements through the development project included the following:
 - A comprehensive assessment was carried out comprising a Systems Approach for Better Education Results report on school feeding, a cost analysis and a review of nutrition in the NSMP. A workshop was held where findings from the comprehensive assessment were summarized and recommendations for the design and implementation of a plan of action for improving the NSMP were presented.
 - WFP and the Government jointly developed a plan of action for the enhancement of the NSMP in accordance with the first pillar of Vision 2030, which has the aim of ensuring equality of opportunity and addressing school dropout and repetition rates. WFP drafted the plan of action, which was validated in July 2016 during a meeting of the National School Meals Steering Committee presided over by the Minister of National Education and formally sets the direction for the implementation of a sustainable school meals strategy.
 - The plan of action states that school meals should foster the long-term development of human capital, particularly by contributing to improvements in girls' enrolment and attendance and participation in learning. It also calls for increased community participation in the NSMP, notably through parents' associations at schools and through the integration of women and men smallholder farmers into the supply chain for school meals.
 - South–South cooperation was fostered through study visits for government officials to the Russian Federation in 2014, the Global Child Nutrition Forum in Cabo Verde in 2015 and WFP's Centre of Excellence Against Hunger in Brazil in 2016.
34. WFP supported the development of a ministerial decree outlining Morocco's school feeding policy and setting out the specific objectives of the NSMP: improving access to education, nutrition and health; advancing social protection and gender equality; and supporting smallholder farming through local procurement, in line with a home-grown school meals approach.

35. WFP's capacity-strengthening activities continued under the transitional interim country strategic plan (ICSP) for 2018. As with this country strategic plan (CSP), the activities were designed in accordance with WFP's policy on capacity development and informed by evidence, conclusions and recommendations from a 2017 evaluation of WFP's policy on capacity development, a regional evaluation synthesis report for the regional bureau in Cairo covering the period from 2013 to 2017, and a 2015 operation evaluation of WFP's Tunisia development project DEV 200493, entitled "Capacity Development in the Framework of the School Feeding Programme".¹⁸ Some of the key recommendations that have informed this CSP are as follows:
- Pay increased attention to gender and improve technical approaches to the issue in analysis, activities, monitoring and reporting.
 - Improve approaches to capacity strengthening through more defined and explicit strategies, approaches and intended results, based on stronger and more comprehensive capacity analysis.
 - Enhance WFP's internal capability to support national capacity strengthening processes.
 - Create and implement a handover plan as part of the transfer of responsibilities to partners.
36. All of WFP's activities in Morocco have been managed from the Tunisia country office, which has resulted in an operation that has a "light footprint" in that it requires limited inputs while achieving outputs of high strategic importance. The arrangement also provides a concrete example of how WFP could operate in the future when delivering government capacity-strengthening services in the root causes focus area and is consistent with preliminary findings from the ongoing review of regional and multi-country offices in the United Nations Development System.

2.2 Opportunities for WFP

37. This CSP provides WFP with a low-cost strategic opportunity to refine its provision of capacity strengthening aimed at enhancing government-run national school meal programmes in middle-income countries. The targeted scope of the CSP will allow WFP to consolidate the positive momentum of its partnership with the Government, follow up on previous commitments and develop a proof of concept for promoting the adoption of WFP's innovative and equitable approaches to sustainable school meal activities. Development of the CSP could also present an opportunity to advance gender-transformative programming in accordance with the WFP Gender Policy (2015-2020) and the WFP Strategic Plan (2017-2021).
38. The CSP will cover the period from July 2019 to December 2021, allowing the continuation of capacity-strengthening activities, with a focus on enhancement of the NSMP in partnership with the Ministry of National Education. WFP's engagement with the Government has broadened during the national strategic review process, with new and strengthened relationships with the ministries responsible for governance and general affairs; solidarity, women, family and social development; agriculture; and health and social affairs and with other entities linked to the NSMP, the national nutrition strategy, the Green-Morocco Plan and the national Initiative for Human Development. The CSP will provide an opportunity to assess the potential for WFP to provide further support in other

¹⁸ WFP Office of Evaluation. 2015. *Evaluation Operation: Tunisia Development Project 200493 – Capacity Development in the Framework of the School Feeding Programme (December 2012–June 2015): Final Evaluation Report*. Available (in French) from <https://www.wfp.org/content/tunisia-dev-200493-development-sustainable-school-feeding-2012-2015-operation-evaluation-ter>.

areas of food security, nutrition and social protection, provided that the Government strengthens its commitment further, including through the co-funding of WFP activities.

39. WFP will leverage its work on the strengthening of government capacities in Morocco and other countries in the Middle East and North Africa in order to facilitate the sharing of experiences and to derive enhanced programme benefits from South–South cooperation in the region and beyond. Using evidence generated from pilot school feeding activities to be designed by WFP and implemented by the Government – including a central kitchen pilot and the outsourcing of daily meal preparation to community-based organizations led by women in rural areas – WFP can explore with the Government the need to address the double burden of malnutrition and to tackle gender inequalities. This will be done through the adoption of innovative systems and practices for the school meals programme that take into consideration gender dynamics and the nutrition-related vulnerabilities that are specific to women and girls and for addressing malnutrition as a factor in the control of non-communicable diseases.

2.3 Strategic changes

40. Through the CSP, WFP will respond to the Government's request for policy advice and technical assistance in support of the operationalization of recommendations developed during the implementation of development project 200494, which ran from 2013 to 2017, and the transitional ICSP covering 2018, including:
 - Establishing inter-ministerial coordination mechanisms at the central and regional levels and strengthening legal frameworks;
 - Enhancing community participation and strengthening the capacities of staff involved in school meals implementation at all levels and developing relevant guidelines;
 - Reviewing the geographic distribution of canteens, increasing coverage in most vulnerable areas, particularly for middle schools;
 - Exploring partnerships with civil society, particularly local community-based organizations; and
 - Increasing nutrition-related actions, particularly the integration of nutrition education materials into curricula.
41. WFP will implement a work plan for the delivery of outputs that have been agreed with the Government under the leadership of the Ministry of National Education.
42. WFP will use its capacity strengthening work in Morocco and other countries in the region as a way of facilitating the sharing of experiences and enriching programmes through South–South cooperation in the region and globally.
43. The CSP will be launched with a contribution from WFP's private sector partner, the Stop Hunger endowment fund, within the framework of the Stop Hunger/WFP transformational, multi-year partnership, which started in 2014 and focuses on sustainable school meals (Pillar I), the empowerment of women (Pillar II) and training in food quality and safety. This contribution will aim to support scalable, government-managed innovative solutions for sustainable school meal activities that promote equality while empowering the women engaged in the school meal supply chain.
44. The CSP will build on WFP's experience in providing technical assistance and policy advice, particularly for the promotion of locally sourced, home-grown school feeding. Sodexo will contribute in-kind technical expertise for the design of a central kitchen pilot, on fresh produce procurement and supply chain management, and for the development of training, information, education and communication materials. It is expected that the contribution

from the private sector will be complemented by contributions from traditional donors, which will be integrated with investments made by the Government.

45. WFP is already providing the national authorities with support for the enhancement of the NSMP and the development and implementation of innovative modalities for school meal activities. Once the CSP has been adopted, WFP will seek to diversify its donor base, including through dialogue on potential contributions from the Government.

3. WFP strategic orientation

3.1 Direction, focus and intended impacts

46. Recognizing WFP's value in providing advice on and support for capacity strengthening in Morocco, the Government requires that WFP continue to provide policy advice and technical assistance. This will be done through a CSP that is limited to one strategic outcome and one activity. The following features of the CSP will allow WFP to deliver the capacity-strengthening outputs that the Government expects:
- Support for the design and piloting of innovative and gender-transformative school feeding modalities, including the outsourcing of school meal preparation to women-led community-based organizations, that will facilitate more efficient use of existing school infrastructure and the introduction of a centralized kitchen school feeding model that will be fully owned, managed and implemented by the Government; and
 - Further policy advice and technical assistance, including the development of guidelines for the management of school feeding and for the preparation of school meals in primary, secondary and boarding schools.
47. In implementing the CSP, which has a duration of two and a half years, from July 2019 to December 2021, WFP will support the operationalization of recommendations developed during the implementation of development project 200494¹⁹ and the transitional ICSP (2018). This timeframe will also allow investments in institutional capacity strengthening made by WFP and the Government since 2014 to reach maturity through the implementation of a robust work plan of activities defined in agreement with the Government and carried out under the leadership of the Ministry of National Education.
48. Within the framework of the CSP, WFP will support the Government in developing innovative, gender-transformative pilot modalities for home-grown school meals. During the piloting, WFP will foster opportunities for women by encouraging the participation of women-led community-based organizations and non-governmental organizations and promoting the equitable participation of both women and men local producers in the school meal supply chain and in other activities such as the preparation and delivery of school meals. In particular, pilot interventions will support the creation of revenue generating opportunities for women in rural areas in order to redress discriminatory socio-cultural norms. In doing so, care will be taken to support, rather than worsen, women's unpaid care and domestic work. WFP will continue to foster South-South cooperation throughout the implementation of the CSP, including cooperation with the Centre of Excellence Against Hunger in Brazil and with other governments working to improve school meal programmes in the Middle East and North Africa region.

¹⁹ The relevant recommendations are as follows: regarding the innovations that the CSP proposes for linking school meals to local agricultural production, particularly from rural women, that WFP and its partners conduct a detailed analysis of the capacities of and constraints faced by local women producers in supplying school canteens reliably and cost-effectively and develop an approach that would support the development of a supply chain based on local production; and that monitoring and evaluation tools be developed to measure the results of the pilot projects and focus schools, to identify and measure factors of success or failure and to draw reliable conclusions regarding the possibility of replicating the innovations on a larger scale.

49. WFP's programme of work in Morocco is consistent with the first pillar of the UNDAF, on support for the education sector, and the timeframe of the CSP will allow WFP to align its programming fully with the UNDAF cycle. WFP's activities will contribute to Morocco's efforts to combat malnutrition, promote food security and support smallholder farmers, strengthening the Government's capacity to achieve the SDGs. The enhanced NSMP will have the potential to contribute to the attainment of SDG 4, on ensuring quality education, and SDG 2, on achieving zero hunger, especially SDG Target 2.1 on ending hunger by 2030 and ensuring that all people have access to sufficient safe and nutritious food all year.
50. WFP will collaborate with FAO and the International Fund for Agricultural Development with a view to leveraging the expertise and in-country resources of each agency and harmonizing efforts to attain SDG 2 by the three Rome-based agencies. WFP will continue to liaise with the United Nations country team, particularly with UNESCO and the United Nations Children's Fund on providing support for education sector reform, and with other major stakeholders, including international organizations, donors, civil society organizations and private sector entities. WFP will build on inputs received during consultations on the national strategic review in order to identify potential synergies with other programmes and specialized agencies.
51. WFP's activities under the CSP will support the attainment of SDG Target 17.9, on enhancing international support for implementing effective and targeted capacity building activities in developing countries that support national plans for achieving all the SDGs, including through South-South and triangular cooperation.

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

Strategic outcome 1: National institutions in Morocco have strengthened capacity to implement enhanced school meal programmes that improve food security, nutrition and social protection by 2021

52. Upon request from the Government of Morocco and in consultation with partners and key stakeholders within the ministries of education, agriculture and health, WFP will continue to support the enhancement of Morocco's NSMP. Activities will aim to strengthen national capacity and provide technical assistance to enable the Government to implement a more equitable, efficient, effective and sustainable school meals programme as a vital component of its wider social safety net system.
53. WFP will work closely with the ministries of education, agriculture and health. It will also engage with the Ministry of Social Solidarity's Directorate for Women's Affairs, Equity and Gender to mainstream gender into its activities, in a manner designed to reduce inequities and inequalities, while promoting a coordinated development and implementation of the enhanced NSMP. WFP encourages and facilitates South-South cooperation and study trips, such as participation in Global Child Nutrition Forum events, visits to the Centre of Excellence against Hunger in Brazil and participation in regional initiatives for school meals in the Middle East and North Africa.
54. This strategic outcome contributes to SDG Target 17.9 and WFP Strategic Result 5: Developing countries have strengthened capacities to implement the SDGs.

Focus area

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

Expected outputs

56. The strategic outcome will be achieved through the following two outputs:
- Schoolchildren and smallholder farmers in targeted areas benefit from the enhanced capacity of national institutions to implement more effective, efficient and innovative school meal programmes that promote nutritious diets, equal opportunities and community participation.
 - Schoolchildren benefit from the improved design of national regulatory frameworks for school meal programmes that stimulate social and behaviour change.

Key activity

Activity 1: Provide policy advice and technical assistance to the national institutions that implement school meal and social protection programmes.

57. WFP will work with the Government of Morocco to pilot innovative, equitable school meal modalities and strengthen regulatory frameworks and tools.
58. Activity 1 includes the formulation of guidelines for school meal management. WFP will also work with the Moroccan Government in the design of pilot school meal implementation modalities that are efficient, accountable and gender-transformative and that support local agricultural development. These efforts will entail:
- Supporting the outsourcing of the preparation of daily meals to community-based organizations led by women in rural areas. Their engagement in value-added activities such as the preparation and delivery of school meals can help create revenue-generating opportunities, thereby contributing to the economic empowerment of women and supporting women's entrepreneurship, notably in rural areas. WFP will work with the Government to select the district and communities where this initiative will be piloted and to identify and train the community-based organizations and local partners. Continued support will be provided to train, equip and finance the women's groups so that they can successfully set up and manage their businesses.
 - Providing technical assistance in the design and potential implementation of a central kitchen pilot, which will be fully owned, managed and implemented by the Government. A model school kitchen will be designed, taking into consideration international best practices, cost-benefit considerations and food safety and hygiene. The central kitchen will serve as a model that the Government may test and subsequently scale up.
59. Through the CSP, WFP will aim to promote the integration of smallholder farmers – equitably women and men – into the school meals supply chain. WFP's recommendations will aim to ensure that some of the produce used to prepare school meals is sourced from local smallholder farming and that meals will be nutritious and diversified using locally available products. The CSP will also explore how this approach can support the creation of small service businesses, such as providers of transportation for meal distribution.

3.3 Transition and exit strategies

60. The NSMP is funded and managed by the Government of Morocco. Government ownership of the programme ensures long-term political, financial and institutional support and will allow WFP to withdraw its technical capacity-strengthening activities in the future without reducing the ability of the Government to continue running and improving the NSMP. The WFP-developed school meal pilot activities will seek to foster sustainable revenue generating opportunities for women in rural areas that will last beyond WFP's presence in the country. Moreover, the promotion of inclusive community participation will include efforts to encourage the equal participation of women and girls, men and boys in school

meal programme implementation and decision making to improve the nutrition outcomes of schoolchildren and foster the gender equality and empowerment of women needed for sustained food security and nutrition.

4 Implementation arrangements

4.1 Beneficiary analysis

61. WFP's activities in Morocco aim to strengthen national capacity and provide technical assistance to enable the Government to implement a more efficient, effective, equitable and sustainable school meal programme. Thus, the direct beneficiary of WFP's capacity-strengthening activities is the Government, particularly the Ministry of National Education. The programme provides meals for 685,000 girls and 742,000 boys in primary, secondary and boarding schools, 70 percent of which are in rural areas. These schoolchildren are indirect beneficiaries of WFP's capacity strengthening activities in Morocco.
62. Other beneficiaries of capacity strengthening – and particularly training – include men and women such as cooks; staff involved in school meal programme management at the central, regional and local level; and school staff and community members who take part in school meal supply chains.

4.2 Transfers

Capacity strengthening including South-South cooperation

63. Comprehensive education reform is under way. It aims to boost academic performance, prepare young Moroccans for the modern labour market and address regional disparities. WFP has successfully advocated an enhanced NSMP to be used as a social safety net that can guarantee nutritious meals for vulnerable boys and girls in rural areas and as an essential component of the Vision 2030 education reform and the national nutrition strategy for 2011–2019. As a component of Vision 2030, the NSMP is part of a broader initiative to promote gender equality in education. Its alignment with national education, agricultural and nutrition strategies contributes to its long-term political support and overall sustainability.
64. The CSP aims to strengthen the national capacity to manage an enhanced NSMP at the central, regional and local levels. By strengthening regulatory frameworks and tools at the central level, WFP aims to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of school meal governance. Implementation guidelines for school management, and a train the trainers approach will ensure that deeper knowledge of school meal management will be preserved beyond WFP's presence at the regional and local levels. WFP will mainstream gender across all capacity-strengthening work.
65. In order to deliver on planned capacity-strengthening activities, WFP will build on its technical assistance and policy advice to promote locally sourced, home-grown school meals. WFP will also leverage Sodexo's in-country presence and expertise in the areas of mass catering, supply chain management and food safety and quality. This collaborative approach is expected to result in the design and implementation of an innovative school feeding modality, consisting of outsourcing the preparation of daily meals to community-based organizations led by women in rural areas and the design of a central kitchen pilot. The women who participate in training and food preparation will be offered opportunities to develop entrepreneurial skills to run their kitchens as businesses. This is in the spirit of the Stop Hunger – WFP partnership's long-term goal to support the professionalization and empowerment of women, equipping them with skills and a certification that in turn could increase their ability to find formal employment.

66. WFP encourages the participation of non-governmental organizations and women-led community-based organizations²⁰ in order to create revenue-generating opportunities for women in rural areas. The inclusion of women and other community members in the school meal supply chain is intended to help communities lead and sustain their own efforts to achieve SDG 2.
67. WFP will continue to foster South–South cooperation throughout the CSP, including with the Centre of Excellence against Hunger in Brazil and with other governments working to improve school meal programmes in the region.

4.3 Country office capacity and profile

68. WFP activities in Morocco are managed from the WFP Tunisia country office in Tunis. Regular missions are undertaken and appropriate experts are contracted to carry out the activities. An honorary WFP representative based in Rabat liaises with the Government at a strategic level, ensuring a streamlined approach to school meal enhancement in line with national priorities and policy objectives.

4.4 Partnerships

69. WFP will support its main government partner, the Ministry of National Education, in strengthening regulatory frameworks and tools in the areas of school meal governance and normative guidelines. The Ministry of National Education will implement pilots based on WFP recommendations on innovative school meal programme implementation modalities. During the first phase of the CSP, the technical assistance component for pilot modalities will be developed in partnership with Stop Hunger.
70. In addition to the Ministry of National Education, the Ministry of Health is involved in improving the NSMP through its participation in the National School Meals Steering Committee. This committee will continue to plan and oversee the implementation of activities aimed at enhancing the NSMP, with WFP support. The work to improve the NSMP will also involve the Ministry of Agriculture, Maritime Fisheries, Rural Development, Water and Forests and the Directorate for Women’s Affairs, Equity and Gender, particularly in the design and implementation of pilots. The foreseen pilot activities include outsourcing of the preparation of daily meals to community-based organizations led by women in rural areas, and providing support for the design of a central kitchen model.
71. WFP will coordinate with and seek to enhance its partnerships with national and international food security and nutrition stakeholders in Morocco, in particular partnership to increase the focus on improving food security and reducing climate hazards within the framework of the Green-Morocco Plan, including through South–South cooperation, in line with recommendations set out in the strategic review. WFP will continue to foster synergies with other programmes and specialized agencies and collaborate where possible with the key stakeholders engaged in the strategic review, including relevant United Nations agencies, international organizations, donors and civil society and private sector representatives. This will be done in line with the UNDAF pillars on inclusive and sustainable development, health, education, economic inclusion, reduction of inequalities and vulnerabilities and inclusive, integrated and sustainable rural development.
72. In particular, WFP will engage with the other Rome-based agencies to follow up on the implementation of the recommendations of the strategic review, building on the expertise and in-country experience of all three agencies.

²⁰ WFP will work with the Government to select the region, districts and communities and to identify and train the community-based organizations and local partners. Continued support will be provided in order to train, equip and potentially finance the women’s groups to facilitate their successful planning and management of school meals preparation.

5. Performance management and evaluation

5.1 Monitoring and evaluation arrangements

73. WFP activities will be managed from the Tunisia country office in Tunis. Regular missions by WFP staff and the contracting of a project coordinator to be based in Morocco will ensure the successful implementation of proposed activities under the overall supervision of WFP's Head of Office in Tunisia. An honorary representative of WFP based in Rabat will continue to liaise with the Government regarding issues of strategic importance and to monitor developments in policies and programmes. Monitoring will align with the Revised WFP Corporate Results Framework (2017–2021).
74. During the CSP, WFP will seek to strengthen gender-responsive monitoring and evaluation in order to ensure that CSP activities meet the particular needs of women, men, girls and boys. WFP will support the Government in developing and implementing a robust monitoring and evaluation plan as part of the design of the pilot activities so that robust evidence is generated to inform a potential scale-up of piloted modalities. Activities will be monitored and documented, including through meeting minutes and reports drawn up by the WFP staff members who support the Government in their implementation.
75. During the first phase of CSP implementation, WFP will liaise with its government counterparts on the timing and scope of a country strategic plan evaluation, which will be commissioned by WFP's independent Office of Evaluation during the second half of the CSP. The evaluation will be tailored to the tight focus and limited scale of WFP activities in Morocco and will serve as a means of generating evidence to inform future strategic direction, identifying lessons learned, success factors and risks related to the scale-up of activities and ensuring a smooth handover of activities to national authorities.

5.2 Risk management

76. In line with corporate best practice, this CSP includes a detailed risk matrix that describes the main risks identified and the mitigation actions that WFP will put in place.

Contextual risks

77. Resistance to the advancement of gender equality poses a risk to the lasting changes needed to ensure the attainment of sustainable food and nutrition security in Morocco and may dampen the impact of the CSP activities. WFP works to advance gender equality and the empowerment of women in all its capacity strengthening activities.
78. WFP's limited in-country footprint and budget could call into question the relevance of WFP's presence in Morocco. To counter this, WFP will continue to reinforce its role as technical adviser in support of the enhancement of a nationally owned, fully Government-funded school feeding programme and work to ensure a seamless handover and exit strategy. WFP will also strive to reach agreement with the Government on a timely and effective capacity strengthening work plan in order to maintain its existing strong commitment and respond to the Government's request for continued technical assistance and policy advice. WFP will engage a project coordinator based in Morocco to manage pilot activities and will continue to rely on partnerships with the Government and the United Nations country team to harness the multiplier effects of its capacity-strengthening activities and to maintain its relevance.
79. To mitigate the risk of relying on a single source of private sector funding at the launch of the CSP, WFP will seek to diversify its donor base to include government donors, in particular through the co-financing of activities by the host Government. WFP will ensure that safeguards remain in place to avoid any potential conflict of interest in relation to Stop Hunger's funding of WFP activities. WFP is of the view that Stop Hunger has put in place appropriate separation mechanisms and that all its activities are conducted in a way that

prevents conflicts of interest and are consistent with a framework of corporate social responsibility rather than the pursuit of commercial interests.

80. The activities started under development project 200494 and continued under the transitional ICSP have received government support and are aligned with Morocco's Vision 2030 education sector reform and the national nutrition strategy for 2011–2019. WFP expects continued political support and continued full government funding for the NSMP. WFP will continue to foster a strong working relationship with technical counterparts at the mid-management level of government entities in order to ensure that operational support for its activities continues even in the case of changes in leadership.

6. Resources for results

6.1 Country portfolio budget

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total
	2019	2020	2021	
Strategic outcome 1	69 221	244 365	86 415	400 000
Total	69 221	244 365	86 415	400 000

81. Strategic outcome 1 comprises all CSP activities, for a duration of two and a half years from July 2019 to December 2021. Adequate funds will be allocated to activities that foster gender equality.

6.2 Resourcing outlook

82. The CSP will be launched with a contribution from WFP's private sector partner, the Stop Hunger endowment, which will cover 80 percent of the operational needs for the first two years of the CSP. WFP will seek to mobilize complementary resources from international donors, which will be integrated with the ongoing investments made by the Government, which fully funds the national school feeding programme,²¹ with a view to improving meals in primary, secondary and boarding schools.

6.3 Resource mobilization strategy

83. Since 2014, WFP has been providing the national authorities with school meals-related support. Once the CSP has been adopted, WFP will engage in dialogue on potential contributions from the Government. In addition, WFP will support cross-sectoral efforts to mobilize resources, including efforts to secure new funding from international donors and the private sector and to cultivate the continued political, strategic and technical engagement of the Government.
84. WFP will build on its partnership with national authorities to engage with other interested partners. Through its resource mobilization efforts, WFP will aim to support the scale-up and continuation of CSP activities, in line with national priorities and building on the lessons learned during the design and implementation of pilot projects.

²¹ In 2019, the Government increased its financial allocation to school meals by 43 percent, from MAD 1.4 to MAD 2.0 per meal in primary schools and from MAD 7 to MAD 10 per meal in secondary and boarding schools.

ANNEX I**LOGICAL FRAMEWORK FOR MOROCCO COUNTRY STRATEGIC PLAN (2019–2021)****Strategic Goal 2: Partner to support implementation of the SDGs****Strategic Objective 4: Support SDG implementation****Strategic Result 5: Developing countries have strengthened capacity to implement the SDGs****Strategic outcome 1: National institutions in Morocco have strengthened capacity to implement enhanced school meal programmes that improve food security, nutrition and social protection by 2021**

Outcome category: Enhanced capacities of public- and private-sector institutions and systems, including local responders, to identify, target and assist food-insecure and nutritionally vulnerable populations

Focus area: Root causes

Assumption:

WFP will continue to work closely with national authorities including the Ministry of National Education

Outcome indicators

SABER School feeding national capacity (new)

Activity and outputs**Provide policy advice and technical assistance to the national institutions that implement school meal and social protection programmes. (CSI: Institutional capacity strengthening activities)**

Schoolchildren and smallholder farmers in targeted areas benefit from the enhanced capacity of national institutions to implement more effective, efficient and innovative school meal programmes that promote nutritious diets, equal opportunities and community participation. (C: Capacity development and technical support provided)

Schoolchildren benefit from the improved design of national regulatory frameworks for school meal programmes that stimulate social and behaviour change (C: Capacity development and technical support provided)

ANNEX II

INDICATIVE COST BREAKDOWN BY STRATEGIC OUTCOME (USD)		
	Strategic Result 5/ SDG target 17.9	Total
	Strategic outcome 1	
Focus area	Root causes	
Transfers	241 942	241 942
Implementation	80 000	80 000
Adjusted direct support costs	53 645	53 645
Subtotal	375 587	375 587
Indirect support costs (6.5%)	24 413	24 413
Total	400 000	400 000

Acronyms used in the document

CSP	country strategic plan
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GDP	gross domestic product
MAD	Moroccan dirham
NSMP	National School Meals Programme
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
ICSP	interim country strategic plan
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization