



Distribution: General

Agenda item 8

Date: 15 May 2019

WFP/EB.A/2019/8-C/1

Original: English

Operational matters – Projects approved
by correspondence

For information

Executive Board documents are available on WFP's website (<https://executiveboard.wfp.org>).

Revision of Iraq transitional interim country strategic plan and corresponding budget increase

	Current	Change	Revised
Duration	1 January 2018– 30 June 2019	1 July 2019– 31 December 2019	1 January 2018– 31 December 2019
Beneficiaries	755 013	223 743	978 756
(USD)			
Total cost	270 304 052	70 785 434	341 089 486
Transfers	225 068 215	60 509 023	285 577 238
Implementation	14 373 450	2 429 483	16 802 934
Adjusted direct support costs	14 364 956	3 526 690	17 891 646
Subtotal	253 806 622	66 465 196	320 271 818
Indirect support costs (6.5 percent)	16 497 430	4 320 238	20 817 668

Gender and age marker* 3 (based on the marker of the transitional interim country strategic plan approved by the Board)

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

Focal points:

M. Hadi
Regional Director
Middle East, North Africa, Eastern Europe
and Central Asia
email: muhannad.hadi@wfp.org

Ms S. Haydock
Country Director
email: sally.haydock@wfp.org

Decision

The Board approved by correspondence the revision of the Iraq transitional interim country strategic plan and corresponding budget increase of USD 70,785,434 outlined in the present document.

14 May 2019

Rationale

1. The first Iraqi parliamentary elections since 2014 took place in May 2018 and were followed by a recount precipitated by allegations of electoral fraud. After months of negotiations, a grand coalition was formed, making possible the election of a Speaker of the Council of Representatives, the appointment of a President and the nomination of a Prime Minister in September 2018. The list of candidates for a new cabinet has been presented to the House of Representatives, but only 18 of 22 ministers have been appointed so far and some of the ministries that are important to WFP activities still lack ministers. Given the political stalemate, the country office has not been able to discuss the direction of a new country strategic plan (CSP) with the new Government. Preparation of the CSP has been postponed and the CSP is now scheduled for presentation at the Executive Board's 2019 second regular session. The country office therefore needs to request that its transitional interim country strategic plan (T-ICSP) be extended until the end of 2019.
2. A second revision of the Iraq T-ICSP, approved by the Board at its 2018 second regular session, extended the duration of WFP's activities from January to June 2019 and provided an opportunity to reconsider the original planning figures from late 2017. Following postponement of the CSP, a third T-ICSP revision was made to provide a budget to cover the period from January to June 2019.
3. The additional six-month extension proposed in this document covers the period from July to December 2019 and enables WFP to align the CSP with the next United Nations development assistance framework (UNDAF) for Iraq. Following a postponement of the planned UNDAF for 2015–2019 because of the humanitarian crisis in Iraq, the United Nations country team started work on a new common country assessment in October 2018, which will inform the preparation of an UNDAF for 2020–2024. The new UNDAF comes at a favourable moment, coinciding with new government cycles for both the Iraqi central Government and Kurdistan regional Government. The country office has been fully engaged in the common country assessment and UNDAF processes, which provided a good opportunity for the incoming Government to engage with the international community and national and subnational stakeholders, review and align itself with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and inform the United Nations of its national development goals.
4. As well as extending activities from July to December 2019, the purpose of this revision is to adjust planning figures for several activities in light of new government priorities and the humanitarian situation in Iraq. The necessary adjustments can be summarized as follows:
 - *Activity 1:* Extension to December 2019 and reduction of planned beneficiary numbers, taking into consideration the ongoing targeting exercise – which is aimed at ensuring that the internally displaced persons who are most in need are targeted for assistance – and the estimated rate at which internally displaced persons are returning to their places of origin.
 - *Activity 2:* Postponement of the three-month school feeding programme to the second half of 2019, from September to December, with an increased number of beneficiaries.

- *Activity 3:* Extension to December 2019 with adjusted monthly numbers of beneficiaries based on the results of a joint vulnerability assessment carried out with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) from August to December 2018.
- *Activity 4:* Extension to December 2019 with an increased number of beneficiaries of Tech for Food activities.
- *Activity 5:* Extension to December 2019 and reduction of planned beneficiary numbers in response to a shortage of partners, continuing access issues and the slow pace of returns of internally displaced persons.
- *Activity 6:* Extension to December 2019.
- *Activities 7–9:* No extension. Cluster activities will be phased out by 31 March 2019 apart from those of the food security cluster, which will be handed over to a sector working mechanism from the *second* quarter of 2019.
- *Activity 10:* Extension to December 2019 with an increased budget to cover the country office's leadership of the interoperability initiative, which was launched in the first quarter of 2019.

Changes

Strategic orientation

5. No changes are being made to the strategic orientation of the T-ICSP through this revision. Based on recommendations derived from a national zero hunger strategic review, the country office has started to formulate a full CSP, which it expects to start implementing in 2020. The purpose of the budget revision is to adjust WFP's engagement in Iraq in ways that facilitate an effective and smooth transition to the longer-term CSP.

Strategic outcomes

Targeting approach and beneficiary analysis

6. With the aim of ensuring that the people in greatest need are targeted for assistance, in December 2018 WFP, UNHCR and non-governmental partners carried out an inter-agency targeting exercise in the refugee camps. WFP and non-governmental partners are also carrying out a vulnerability assessment of the food and personal security of displaced Iraqis in camps. Preliminary results show a decrease in the number of vulnerable internally displaced persons and refugees and the planned beneficiary numbers for activities 1 and 3 have been adjusted accordingly.

Transfer modalities

7. The selection of transfer modalities for all interventions is based on assessments carried out by several WFP units covering the functioning of markets, food availability and physical access to markets. WFP and its partners have also carried out assessments of the security risks facing WFP staff, partners and beneficiaries; programme feasibility, including gender and protection issues; and the ability of financial service providers to operate in the geographical areas covered by WFP activities, including their infrastructure for information and communications technology that supports delivery mechanisms. Based on findings from these assessments, WFP plans to change the transfer modality from family food rations (FFRs) to cash-based transfers (CBTs) in Eastern Anbar in 2019, and will continue to distribute CBTs to 60 percent of the total beneficiaries of activities 1 to 5 while using FFRs and immediate-response rations for some internally displaced persons under activity 1.
8. The food basket for both in-kind assistance and CBTs is meant to cater to the needs of women, men, girls and boys, and issues related to gender, protection and accountability to

affected populations are taken into account in the planning of distributions. WFP's use of mobile money transfers in its CBT programmes has facilitated financial inclusion, benefiting and empowering both women and men.

9. The use of mobile money transfers has also facilitated an increase in the use of common technology platforms. In December 2018 UNHCR used the WFP mobile e-wallet to provide beneficiaries in camps with cash for non-food items. WFP will continue to explore the use of common platforms, working with other United Nations agencies and through the inter-agency cash working group.
10. In order to incorporate nutrition-sensitive programming into all activities the country office, with support from the Regional Bureau, is undertaking an in-depth review of food baskets and rations and an analysis of the food commodities purchased by beneficiaries in refugee camps.

Partnerships

11. As part of its exit strategy, WFP has been enhancing its partnerships with the Government, especially the Ministry of Trade on updating the database for the ministry's public distribution system to incorporate biometric data and enhancing the transparency of its operations with a view to improving the targeting of the most vulnerable citizens. Through the elaboration of a proposal for support from the Green Climate Fund, the country office is strengthening its relationships with the Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Water Resources for WFP resilience activities.
12. WFP is also improving coordination with the public distribution system, the Ministry of Migration and Displacement and the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs in order to ensure that WFP assistance is an appropriate complement to the Government's interventions in support of internally displaced persons.
13. The Ministry of Education has requested WFP's support for an expanded school feeding programme for the 2019/20 school year; WFP will provide school meals in targeted areas while building the capacities of the Government.

Country office capacity

14. The country office aims to improve the gender balance of its human resources and identify strong well-qualified women staff. The heads of country office units will work in coordination with field offices and other United Nations agencies, with support from the Human Resources Division at headquarters for international staff reassignments.

Supply chain challenges

15. The country office procures food from suppliers based in Turkey, which is delivered to the main hubs in Erbil and Baghdad. In the event of temporary closure of the main entry point at Ibrahim Khalil border crossing, alternative supply routes are activated through Jordan or Um Qasr port in the southeast of Iraq.
16. WFP will help ensure that Iraqi institutions can provide immediate emergency responses to future shocks, especially through capacity building for the Ministry of Migration and Displacement aimed at enabling it to cope better with emergencies.

Monitoring and evaluation

17. A decentralized evaluation planned for 2019 will evaluate WFP's support for resilience activities and inform and measure progress in this new element of WFP's work in Iraq.
18. Given the challenging security environment, WFP is using third-party entities to monitor its resilience building and food assistance activities. The monitoring partner will be responsible for monitoring in areas that are inaccessible or of limited accessibility to WFP and United Nations staff.

Accountability to affected populations, protection risks and restrictions related to gender and disability

19. In 2019, WFP will undertake a protection and gender analysis of all activities, with a particular focus on resilience. Findings will inform the development of strategies for fostering women's empowerment and mitigating protection risks. Gender issues and protection risks are also being taken into consideration in the ongoing exercise for the targeting of internally displaced persons. WFP will continue to liaise with protection stakeholders in order to ensure access to food assistance for the most vulnerable people.
20. In line with its commitments to providing accountability to affected populations, WFP will focus on ensuring that community consultations inform the design and implementation of all activities, especially new activities. People who are targeted for WFP assistance will receive accurate and timely information about project activities and their entitlements, and WFP will ensure access to safe complaint and feedback mechanisms that are appropriate to local conditions. A strategy for communication with communities and the enhancement of the existing complaint and feedback mechanism will be undertaken for the internally displaced person targeting exercise, building on the inter-agency complaint and feedback mechanism that is already in place.

Proposed exit strategy

21. As the emergency recedes and conditions improve, responsibility for the coordination of interventions will gradually shift from the cluster system operated by the international humanitarian community to a sectoral working group mechanism operated by local stakeholders, which will be supported by focal points from humanitarian agencies from the second quarter of 2019, with WFP maintaining a minimal level of support throughout 2019. In the forthcoming CSP, WFP will increase its focus on capacity strengthening with the aim of building the Government's ability to manage national programmes and achieve SDGs 2 and 17.

Security and other risks

Challenges to access and security continue to affect WFP operations, especially activity 5. The presence of unexploded ordnance in some of WFP's target areas and regular restrictions on movement imposed by the Iraqi armed forces during anti-terrorism campaigns create delays in the implementation of WFP projects. A major operational risk, which could compromise the quality and timeliness of programmes, is the limited availability and capacity of cooperating partners and financial service providers, particularly in insecure areas. The inability to acquire sufficient and flexible funding for all activities is a strategic risk that the country office is working to mitigate through enhanced partnerships and outreach to donors.

Beneficiaries analysis

TABLE 1: DIRECT BENEFICIARIES BY STRATEGIC OUTCOME, ACTIVITY AND TRANSFER MODALITY							
Strategic outcome	Activity	Period	Women* (18+ years)	Men* (18+ years)	Girls* (0-18 years)	Boys* (0-18 years)	Total
1	1 – CBTS	Current	54 540	54 540	48 480	44 440	202 000
		Increase (decrease)	5 937	4 420	(2 093)	6 499	14 763
		Revised	60 477	58 960	46 387	50 939	216 763
	1 – In-kind food	Current	103 277	103 061	91 802	83 975	382 115
		Increase (decrease)	777	(1 617)	(11 990)	3 669	(9 161)
		Revised	104 054	101 444	79 812	87 644	372 954
	2 – CBTS	Current	-	-	53 800	56 200	110 000
		Increase (decrease)	-	-	86 311	87 889	174 200
		Revised	-	-	140 111	144 089	284 200
2	3 – CBTS	Current	17 903	14 537	13 216	14 418	60 074
		Increase (decrease)	232	3 143	694	857	4 926
		Revised	18 135	17 680	13 910	15 275	65 000
	4 – CBTS	Current	283	283	224	260	1 050
		Increase (decrease)	1 400	1 366	1 075	1 181	5 022
		Revised	1 683	1 649	1 299	1 441	6 072
3	5 – CBTS	Current	23 482	23 481	18 813	21 194	86 970
		Increase (decrease)	9 257	9 023	7 099	7 795	33 174
		Revised	32 739	32 504	25 912	28 989	120 144
Total**	Current	175 859	172 421	207 379	199 354	755 013	
	Increase/decrease	17 603	16 335	81 096	108 709	223 743	
	Revised	193 462	188 756	288 475	308 063	978 756	

* The gender and age breakdown is based on the most recent demographic data available.

** Without overlap among people who are the beneficiaries of more than one activity.

Transfers

TABLE 2: FOOD RATIONS (g/person/day) AND CASH-BASED TRANSFER VALUE (USD/person/day) BY STRATEGIC OUTCOME AND ACTIVITY							
	Strategic outcome 1			Strategic outcome 2		Strategic outcome 3	
	Activity 1		Activity 2	Activity 3	Activity 4	Activity 5	
Beneficiary type	Internally displaced persons			School-children	Syrian refugees	Syrian refugees	Returnees
Modality	In-kind (FFR)	In-kind (immediate-response rations)	CBTs	CBTs	CBTs	CBTs	CBTs
Cereals	333						
Pulses	66						
Oil	30						
Salt	5						
Sugar	33						
Canned chicken		80					
Canned beans		80					
Canned chickpeas		80					
Biscuits		107					
Dates		80					
Bread and cheese							
Milk and fruit							
Total kcal/day							
% kcal from protein							
Cash-based transfers (USD/person/day)			0.57	0.81	0.63	0.45	3.33
Number of feeding days	30	3	30	22	30	22	22

TABLE 3: TOTAL FOOD/CASH-BASED TRANSFER REQUIREMENTS AND VALUE

Food type/ cash-based transfers	Current budget		Increase		Revised budget	
	Total (mt)	Total (USD)	Total (mt)	Total (USD)	Total (mt)	Total (USD)
Cereals	50 952	20 410 344	8 390	2 633 730	59 341	23 044 074
Pulses	10 102	10 000 899	1 659	1 475 969	11 761	11 476 868
Oil and fats	4 592	4 683 791	754	759 720	5 346	5 443 511
Other	6 722	3 993 608	945	305 571	7 667	4 299 179
Total	72 368	39 088 642	11 748	5 174 991	84 116	44 263 632
Cash-based transfers		110 008 310		47 318 912		157 327 222
Total (food and cash-based transfer value)	72 368	149 096 952	11 748	52 493 902	84 116	201 590 854

Cost breakdown

TABLE 4: COST BREAKDOWN OF THE REVISION ONLY (USD)

	Strategic Result 1	Strategic Result 1	Strategic Result 1	Strategic Result 2	Strategic Result 8	Total
	Strategic outcome 1	Strategic outcome 2	Strategic outcome 3	Strategic outcome 4	Strategic outcome 5	
Transfers	39 614 727	6 236 340	14 530 876	-138 186	265 265	60 509 023
Implementation	1 204 691	191 413	735 037	-44 859	343 202	2 429 483
Adjusted direct support costs						3 526 690
Subtotal						66 465 196
Indirect support costs (6.5 percent)						4 320 238
Total						70 785 434

TABLE 5: OVERALL COST BREAKDOWN, AFTER REVISION (USD)

	Strategic Result 1	Strategic Result 1	Strategic Result 1	Strategic Result 2	Strategic Result 8	Total
	Strategic outcome 1	Strategic outcome 2	Strategic outcome 3	Strategic outcome 4	Strategic outcome 5	
Transfers	198 415 643	27 108 991	52 903 685	813 991	6 334 927	285 577 238
Implementation	9 901 924	2 975 395	2 856 832	84 000	984 783	16 802 934
Adjusted direct support costs	12 335 616	1 782 120	3 285 573	53 474	434 863	17 891 646
Subtotal	220 653 183	31 866 506	59 046 090	951 465	7 754 573	320 271 818
Indirect support costs (6.5 percent)	14 342 457	2 071 323	3 837 996	61 845	504 047	20 817 668
Total	234 995 640	33 937 829	62 884 086	1 013 310	8 258 620	341 089 486