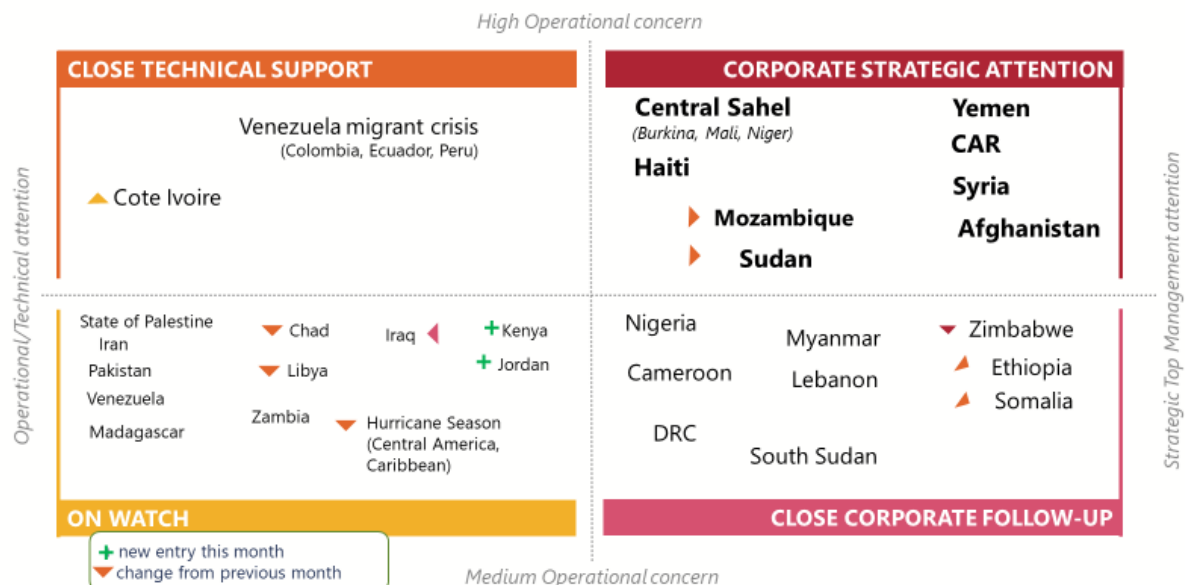


Corporate Alert System prioritization September 2020

Narrative as of 15th September

CAS COUNTRY MATRIX September 15, 2020



Corporate Strategic Attention

CENTRAL SAHEL (Mali, Burkina, Niger)

Risks: Further deterioration of the security context, characterized by increasing targeting of civilians by state forces, self-defence groups and community-based militias, and infighting between NSAG are potentially exposing civilians and humanitarians to more risk (intimidation, IEDs, abductions, terror attacks etc.). An attack on Ivoirian soil killing 12 defence and security personnel at Kafolo on the border of Burkina Faso in June illustrates the expansion and the spill over of the conflict towards coastal countries. The 2020 spike in extrajudicial killings by Security Forces, predominantly affecting the Fulani community, is expected to be exploited by NSAG. Between May and July 2020, there have been 331 violent events (that resulted in at least one fatality) and 1,548 deaths. In Burkina Faso, the combination of the jihadist insurgency in the north and north-east and attacks on civilians by government forces and vigilantes will likely continue to increase in the lead up to the **November elections**, heavily impacting on internal displacement with over 1 million IDPs; the total number of IDPs in the Central Sahel stands at 1.8 million, an all-time high for the sub-region.

Violent events continue to inflict harm to civilian populations and limit humanitarian access. In Niger, following the kidnapping in June of 10 cooperating partners staff in Tillabery region, on 9 August seven staff of an INGOs and their local guide were killed by suspected ISGS assailants in Kouré Park 60Km from Niamey. Latest developments show the threat posed by Salafi-jihadist groups has expanded to a wider portion of the Nigerien territory, linking the Sahel with Northwest Nigeria and ISWAP. Though no one has claimed responsibility it is suspected that ISGS was behind the attack that underscores the threat to humanitarian INGOs and the UN. This was reinforced by the focus on West Africa in the 13 August edition of Islamic State's Al Naba magazine, in which attacks on humanitarians were justified due to their alleged 'collusion with corrupt governments'. The UN was specifically mentioned, and while these threats are not unprecedented, they could signal a renewed intent to target the UN in West Africa specifically, since the region has taken an increasingly prominent role in IS propaganda since mid-2019.

The reported killing of the long-standing ISGS second in command Abdelhakim al-Sahraoui by French troops in Mali on 17 August could have an impact on the open rivalry between ISGS and JNIM in the Central Sahel as Sahraoui was a strong advocate of the conflict between IS and JNIM, and also lead to reprisals targeting French and international troops.

In Mali on 18 August, a **coup d'état** by disgruntled elements of armed forces forced the besieged President to resign. ECOWAS has introduced sanctions against Mali as negotiations on transition scenarios are ongoing with the junta that has seized power. The situation remains tense as regional and international pressures for a quick power handover and early elections are met with resistance by the military junta and the likelihood for further mobilization remains high.

Impact: (1) Household food insecurity is at its all-time high for all three countries. The March Cadre Harmonise indicate the number of food insecure people (equivalent IPC phase 3 and above) will more than double, reaching 5.5 million people during the lean season, with recent WFP estimations projecting that 12.8 million persons will require food assistance when COVID-19 fallout is considered. In Burkina Faso the estimated number of food insecure this lean season rose by 52 percent, from 2.15 million as projected in the March 2020 Cadre Harmonisé to 3.28 million per the July 2020 revision. Two provinces in the north east, Oudalan and Soum, are in phase 4 emergency phase with 11,394 of their inhabitants in phase 5 or famine (for communication purposes WFP is using '**catastrophic food security situation**'). (2) **Access constraints** increasingly hinder to operations due to insecurity, notably in areas where most new/additional people in need of food assistance live. In Niger, humanitarian movement outside urban centers is at a standstill following a government position to impose armed escorts – a position at odds with the UN/HCT view that escorts be a less resort based on well identified risks. (3) Meanwhile, all three COs face **imminent pipeline breaks** and unless additional resources are mobilized WFP will be forced to reduce planned caseloads. Net Funding Requirements October – March are USD 143 million for the three countries, with Burkina Faso facing an NfR of 71% of its total 6-month requirements.

WFP's L3 corporate emergency response has been extended until 31 December 2020.

Actions: Central Sahel is maintained at Corporate Strategic Attention.

Fundraising: Support joint efforts for high level advocacy (such as recent joint WFP/FAO paper). Opportunities on horizon requiring continued senior level engagement: 20 October Ministerial Roundtable in Copenhagen focusing on basic services, protection and humanitarian access – with a pledging segment expected to make up a prominent part of the event; WFP to collaborate with OCHA on a "regional chapeau" to feed event. Prior to the event, WFP Senior engagement in joint mission with donor country(ies) to Burkina Faso and Niger.

Operational Readiness: (1) Support to Mali CO for contingency planning following coup d'état to ensure continuity of assistance, including to ensure ECOWAS sanctions on Mali sanctions do not affect the arrival of commodities sourced regionally/globally. (2) RBD will continue and reinforce support on access, protection and civ-mil coordination in Central Sahel with support from the HQ Humanitarian Military Interaction Unit. (3) In Burkina Faso efforts will focus on ensuring that IPC phase 5 populations are identified, localized and receive assistance. This include ongoing remote VAM analysis and support for access and civ-mil coordination. (4) A budget revision is being developed in Mali and discussions are currently ongoing in Burkina Faso and Niger on budget revisions covering 2021. (5) For Burkina Faso, actively support efforts to launch the UNHAS operation by deploying a helicopter to ensure access to populations in need.

Staffing: Critical vacant positions include international, local and backfilling positions that RBD will support in filling; in Mali this include Head of Area Office, Protection Officer and Social Protection consultant. A staff on TDY to fill in the newly vacant Emergency Coordinator position will be deployed as soon as flights are reinstated.; and in Burkina three emergency response positions are vacant

Risks: Deterioration of the **security situation in various parts of the country and direct targeting of humanitarian activities** by NSAGs with 38 incidents affecting humanitarian in July and humanitarian operations halted temporarily in several locations including Nana-Mambéré prefecture where NSAGs have clashed with peacekeeping forces. In the coming months, multiple opposing NSAGs are likely to fight for control of areas and inter-ethnic clashes as well as with security forces, are expected, resulting in temporary and at times largescale displacement that will to impede access to livelihoods. Over 680,000 persons have been internally displaced and current conflict dynamics will likely result in continued displacements and will contribute to a worsening of the food security situation as the fighting is likely to impede access to livelihoods. **Presidential elections** in 2020 (scheduled for December) may also result in increasing instability – this is already being observed through voter registration delays and threats that the leader of 3R in the West will jeopardize the process. In addition, supporters of former president Bozize are allegedly planning unrest in the capital if their candidate is not allowed to run by the constitutional court, impacting MINUSCA's ability to provide humanitarian support.

Significant impact of COVID-19 is already being felt, with price levels of food products generally higher than its level before the crisis both in Bangui and in the provinces. While the price increase in Bangui markets amount to +50%, in some towns in the provinces, the prices of certain food and non-food product have more than doubled. The general increase in food prices and the slowdown in economic activities negatively impact the purchasing power of the poorest households, particularly those depending on market. Poor households living in urban areas that depend on precarious activities are the most affected. In rural areas, agricultural activities could be negatively impacted due to a disruption in the supply of seeds, agricultural tools and a reduction in seasonal migration for agricultural labour.

Impact: In addition to displacement and growing food insecurity, humanitarian actors are increasingly likely to fall victim of ambushes, abductions and looting, with WFP partners being particularly at risk. Overall, flare-ups of insecurity across the country are likely to result in **movement restrictions** impacting WFP's ability to deliver in a timely manner. COVID-19 has had a significant impact on Douala Corridor operations especially in transportation of cargo. While waiting time at the border has significantly reduced following review of testing requirements, WFP's operations remains affected by **supply chain disruption** including for in-country transport with the onset of the rainy season. The effect on WFP activities is further compounded by the **limited physical staff presence** in the country to oversee and scale up operations to meet the increasing needs of affected populations. Currently, WFP estimated that 2.4 million people will be food insecure in 2020 based on the March IPC results and estimates of the COVID-19 fallout.

Actions: CAR is maintained at Corporate Strategic Attention.

Advocacy and Fundraising: Significant funding shortfalls are affecting the implementation of nearly all activities under the ICSP; securing funding early is critical to manage pipelines in the challenging operational context where corridor congestion, rains, and security can disrupt supply at any time. Support is required to increase visibility of the CAR forgotten crisis. An operational update was developed between the CO/RBD/HQ and is being shared with relevant external partners.

Operational Readiness: (1) RBD will engage with CO to develop contingency planning for the December elections to sustain delivery of assistance. The CO is currently working on clearing and reconciliation of the resources available to frontload food stocks in-country ahead of elections. RBD will support this exercise and facilitate sourcing through the Douala corridor. (2) RBD will also provide technical backstopping for CBT, protection, access and civ-mil coordination. The latter will include support from the HQ Humanitarian Military Interaction Unit on the issue of MINUSCA escorts.

Staffing: The CO's request for CBT surge support/TDY has been approved. Support is required to ensure that other key staff (CD, Head of Logistics and Head of Programme) arrive as planned in the coming weeks.

HAITI

Risks: (1) **SECURITY:** The **security situation in the country is increasingly alarming** with a worrisome spike in murders, crime and indiscriminate kidnappings. Gangs-groups have seen their power and territorial control strengthened, not least, through the new confederations of gangs. High levels of violence (eg massacres of last months at Pont-Rouge in May and Bel-Air) are pushing Haitians to live in a state of fear. Demonstrations are likely to intensify in the medium-term as main structural causes that trigger last year protests are yet to be address and while opposition is expected to demand that President Moise step down, the push to hold elections is likely to renew political tension. (2) **HURRICANE SEASON:** **Haiti is among the countries most vulnerable to the above-average hurricane season** predicted by NOAA (85% probability). In August, Haiti was affected by TS Laura, which destroyed 50-80% of certain crops in the Sud-Est department and cut off access. Forecasts still call for up to 6 major hurricanes, expected to develop more rapidly than in previous seasons. (3) **COVID:** A decline in COVID-19 prevention measures fuelled by seasonal changes coupled with an increase in protests, could see a large outbreak jeopardize the health system, while misinformation and fear of the virus could potentially pose a challenge for community acceptance of humanitarian assistance and containment measures. So far, the currency has depreciated 16% year on year, while cereal prices increased 25% since January. Along with an expected further decline in agricultural production, the lack of economic recovery will limit Haiti's import capacity, further drive up food prices, and jeopardize vulnerable households' access to food while pushing more Haitians into deeper poverty levels.

Impact: Access, security and funding (relative to the scale of new needs – including an expected imminent funding shortfall for UNHAS operations amidst the hurricane season) remain significant challenges for humanitarian actors, leaving them unable to meet the needs of populations in IPC 3 and 4. The new IPC results (31 August) point to continued deterioration of the food security situation in country: for the coming 6 months (August – February 2021) 4 million people or **42% of the population face high acute food insecurity** and are in urgent need of action – including nearly 1 million in IPC 4; by the lean season (March-June 2021) this proportion could increase to 4.4 million of the population in need of urgent assistance including 12% in IPC4. While WFP has been able to maintain its food and cash response, access continues to challenge WFP, partners and transporters to sustain operations and deliver the level of assistance needed to mitigate this increase in needs: of the 700,000 people in Phase 4 initially targeted under WFP's pre-COVID-19 response, as of August WFP, has reached some 308,760 with emergency food and cash support. Further funding prospects cannot guarantee WFP's capacity to reach pre-COVID targets; common services in particular face imminent critical funding shortfalls before the end of hurricane season. The funding context is bleak for all sectors, particularly in light of significant increases in humanitarian needs related to COVID-19. In 2019, Haiti's humanitarian response plan was funded at 32 percent - the second lowest country appeal in the world.

Actions:

Advocacy and Fundraising: Haiti has a **NfR of 85% for the coming 6 months**. Support to prevent pipeline breaks for WFP operations and common services to ensure the CO ability to scale up to cover IPC4 needs and be able to respond if major hurricane event.

Operational Readiness: Support to diversify CBT delivery mechanisms in context of cash flow restraints and scale-up rapid contracting of cooperating partners and financial service providers. Review and update WFP 2021 plans following the latest IPC results, as required.

Security- Ensure adequate implementation of new SMT recommendations. HQ support to identify and deployed international FSO to (i)increase security/risk analysis capacity within the office; and (ii) support management to optimize security risk mitigation measures. Support for CBT-specific risk assessments for large scale-up in collaboration with IFIs.

Staffing: Pre-identify staff required for surge support in case of major hurricane (challenge: FR speaking).

YEMEN

Risks: Yemen continues to face multiple large-scale crises which have led to **alarming level of food insecurity and malnutrition** across the country. Conflict between the Internationally Recognized Government (IRG) and Ansar Allah has been on the rise, particularly airstrikes and other fighting involving the Saudi-Led Coalition (SLC) on new frontlines in western Yemen. The ongoing conflict between the (IRG) and the Southern Transitional Council (STC) is likely to persist. Improvement of the security situation and stability are linked to the successful implementation of the Riyadh Agreement thus, expected to be fragile given the recurrent interruption of this implementation and the STC insistence that certain demands are met. The country's economy is also at risk, the value of currency lost up to 10% between June and July at the informal market, the only accessible mean to the local population, leading to 19% depreciation since the beginning of the year. Consequently, food prices are rising with the cost of the minimum food basket witnessed unprecedented increase reaching Rials 6,000 in the areas controlled by IRG. Floods are also another risk factor. Recently, heavy floods occurred in Hajjah and Hudaydah province led a large scale of displacement (over 160,000 people) and destruction of more than 260 houses. Restrictions implemented on vessels transporting fuels led to significant fuel shortages that might affect WFP activities.

The floating oil tanker, located in Ras Isa, 60km north of Hudaydah Port also warrants concern. This tanker carries 1.1 million barrels of crude oil and has been left without maintenance since 2015. Its deteriorating condition of rust and decay are posing a multi-layer environmental, economic, and supply chain risk in the event of an oil-leak.

Impact: The number of food insecure people is projected to increase 3.2 million (IPC Phase 3 and above) between July and December 2020 in Southern Yemen alone. The cost of the minimum food basket has increased by 8 percent in the southern parts (June 2020) in comparison with prior to COVID-19 spread (February 2020), while other areas recording even severer indication up to 35 percent increase. Movement restrictions and high input costs could affect the summer planting season, and negative coping strategies amongst pastoralists, such as selling herds. According to Famine Early Warning System Network (USAID) May 2020 Update, a risk of famine persists and could materialize if the country's capacity to import food is severely limited or if food supplies to areas are restricted for a prolonged period. The situation is further aggravated by the limited humanitarian funding with only 24 percent of humanitarian funding requirements have been met in 2020 and WFP and other agencies are being forced to reduce or close core programmes.

Actions:

Advocacy: Increase corporate attention to humanitarian access issues and continued coordination on COVID-19 preparedness and response.

Fundraising: The CO has net-funding requirement of USD 820 million over the coming 6 months (Oct-Mar) – an **NfR of 77%** of the total requirements. The largest funding gap is under general food assistance (USD 580 million) with **breaks for all three modalities starting from this month onwards**. Pipeline breaks in CBT activities is projected by late September and in food assistance by late October. Resource mobilization continues to be a high priority to mitigate pipeline breaks. Yemen continues to be highlighted at management meetings as a key country of concern for funding.

Operational readiness: Continued coordination between the RBC and the CO regarding the Safer floating oil tanker for risk evaluation, and preparedness measures on this potential hazard.

SYRIA

Risk: The protracted conflict and on-going insecurity in the northwest and parts of the northeast of the country compounded with **economic deterioration, currency depreciation and high inflation rates** have significantly increased the humanitarian needs with an estimate of 11.1 million people needing

some form of humanitarian assistance. The consistent military activity and mobilization around Idlib also remain active, thus a large displacement may occur in case of further escalation. In other parts of the country, especially in the South and Central, tension between local populations and the Government of Syria (GoS) remains high with a risk of local level violence. The economic situation will likely continue deteriorating over the coming months. This is due the impact of the protracted conflict, economic standstill, the sanctions compounded with impact of COVID-19 countermeasures. The economic situation in the neighbouring Iran and Lebanon further reducing Syria's foreign currency reserve. Moreover, the renewal of the UNSC resolution 2533 authorizing only one crossing point for humanitarian cross-border operations poses a challenge to WFP and other humanitarian actors restricting humanitarian access in the northwest and leaving limited contingency options.

Impact: WFP estimates that number of food insecure people in Syria has increased significantly due to the economic crisis. According to the recent estimates, the number of food insecure people has reached 9.3 million people in 2020. **This is 46 percent of the total population and the highest number recorded ever.** In addition, the number of severely food insecure people has doubled in 2020 since 2019; increasing from 500,000 to more than one million. Exacerbating the context is the latest explosion at Beirut Port that might disrupt the in-kind imported food supply to Syria and further challenge staff movement, access to health services, and MEDVAC arrangements. In response to the increasing needs, WFP has scaled up its GFA activity, and currently targets 5.9 million people each month with general food assistance (GFA).

Actions:

Advocacy and Fundraising: Broader advocacy activities are strongly needed to mitigate pipeline breaks. Funding outlook for the CO remains limited relatively to the operational needs. The net funding requirement over the coming six-month period amounts to USD 371 million, representing 63 percent of the total requirements with projected pipeline break in CBT activities by mid-September. The GFA operation requires at least an additional USD 140 million to continue assisting 4.8 million people till June 2021. Without additional indications on new funding, WFP will be forced to substantially reduce the number of people reached through GFA. RBC and HQ, to continue supporting with fundraising and resource mobilization efforts to prevent pipeline breaks.

Staffing: Support with surge capacity was provided filling emergency coordination and SC positions, while one supply chain officer has been identified to support the CO for an initial period of six months

MOZAMBIQUE

Risks: Prior to COVID-19, an estimated 2 million people were at risk of severe food insecurity across Mozambique (IPC projections for October 2019-March 2020 period), owing to the combined impacts of a severe drought in the southern provinces, the long-lasting effects of last year's Cyclones Idai and Kenneth in the central and northern provinces, localized flooding which occurred in early 2020, and insurgent attacks in the northern province of Cabo Delgado. As of September 2020, it is estimated that more than 310,000 people had been internally displaced in Cabo Delgado, with IDPs also fleeing to Nampula and Niassa provinces to seek refuge. **The number of IDPs has tripled as compared to early 2020.** The number of IDPs stranded in the districts of Mocimboa da Praia, Macomia, and Quissanga is still not known. According to UNHCR, 1,000 refugees have also fled across the border into Tanzania. Recent activity by insurgents in northern province of Cabo Delgado also highlights the group's increased capabilities and evolving strategy, suggesting a further security deterioration leading to renewed displacements and access constraints in the province in the coming months. The militants have demonstrated their ability to overwhelm Government forces on numerous occasions, most notably with their extended occupation of Mocimboa da Praia for most of August. Most of the areas north of Pemba remain inaccessible due to this militant activity, particularly as they are apparently attempting to secure control of roads leading to and from Palma through the establishment of illegal checkpoints. As such, there is **still no solution to improve humanitarian access in the province** and the region is also

emerging as a COVID-19 hotspot. Furthermore, concern is growing regarding impacts on the entire region, as demonstrated by SADC statements that they stand ready to assist Mozambique in any way possible, and both Zimbabwe and Tanzania are reportedly ready to formally deploy troops. Although humanitarian do not yet represent a target, past events showed that resources may be appropriated for redistribution or even destruction, should the opportunity arise. The country is also considered extremely vulnerable to negative economic impacts of COVID-19, considering its dependence on food imports and primary commodity exports. Food imports are now exposed to prices swings and exports are likely to decline, resulting in less government revenues and higher food prices, posing further pressure on vulnerable populations which have already exhausted their coping strategies. Low income urban populations and small-holder rural farmers and fishermen are particularly vulnerable to heightened food insecurity.

Impact: The escalation of violent attacks in the province of Cabo Delgado over the past months led to additional population displacement, limitations in humanitarian access, and destruction of WFP assets, obliging WFP and humanitarian partners to reduce their footprint in the affected districts. The situation could deteriorate even further with the instability caused by COVID-19 at economic and political levels. Violence and insecurity have had an impact on food security due to displacement and limited access to productive assets, making Cabo Delgado also one of the most food insecure regions of the country. Humanitarian access is severely impaired.

A Rapid Response Plan for Cabo Delgado was launched in early June with the aim of providing urgent life-saving and life-sustaining assistance to populations in insecure areas. The effects of the pandemic are already observed across various sectors, leading to the recent launch of a flash appeal for COVID-19. To mitigate the impacts of COVID-19, WFP is planning to provide unconditional cash-based assistance to vulnerable households living in urban and semi-urban areas where the risk of social unrest is higher; provide food assistance for patients in COVID-19 isolation and treatment centres at hospitals, scaling up take home rations and expanding nutrition support activities. Technical and coordination support is also planned with the National Logistics Working Group and gaps analysis, and WFP is also collaborating with the Government to expand its social protection system.

Actions:

Advocacy: (1) L2 Extension request focused on Cabo Delgado to be extended for 3 months and re-evaluated for possible elevation to L3 based on defined triggers. (2) Urgently support advocacy and resource mobilization efforts, including leveraging the upcoming ED visit.

Fundraising: Prioritise the processing of COs requests for ad-hoc SRAC allocation and IRA funds.

Operational readiness: (1) Co-operate in further security analyses and assessments for Cabo Delgado. (2) Support the ongoing discussions on humanitarian access in Cabo Delgado including through surge staff. (3) Augment UNHAS and supply chain capacities to enhance agility and flexibility of field teams in difficult to access locations. (4) Expand analysis, evidence generation and monitoring of the food security situation in urban settings and price monitoring, as well as the economic and political situation.

Staffing: Support additional surge staffing requests as they are submitted.

AFGHANISTAN

Risks: Armed conflict and terror attacks are expected to escalate further, especially in areas where extremist groups operate. High profile attacks by non-state armed groups may continue despite the start of the intra-Afghan talks. There is also a possibility of growing factionalism and dissent within the Taliban, in relation to the peace process. In addition, the continued drawdown of U.S troops in the country is likely to embolden the Taliban forces further. According to the IPC from May 2020, an estimated 12.4 million people (33 percent of the population) are expected to be in Phase 4 (Emergency) or Phase 3 (Crisis) food security situation between June and November 2020. However,

the latest harvest has not been able to offset the negative socio-economic impact of COVID-19 and the number of food-insecure people is expected to reach 15 million.

Impact: The **escalation of the conflict** and the ongoing economic impacts of COVID-19 could lead to further displacements, and jeopardize food security, including access to agricultural inputs for the coming planting season. Over 134,000 people have reportedly been displaced by conflict in 30 of 34 provinces since the beginning of the year. Continued insecurity and incidents of harassment remain obstacles to WFP's and other humanitarian organizations' operations. In addition, **periodic border restrictions with Pakistan are severely disrupting WFP's supply chain operations** leading to high congestion, delays in custom clearance, and increased transport rates. WFP has scaled up operations to provide unconditional assistance to an additional 3 million people. Additional funds are urgently required for the COVID-19 response and early funding to allow for **timely prepositioning of food commodities ahead of winter**.

Actions:

Advocacy: (1) Increase corporate attention to humanitarian access issues and continued coordination on COVID-19 preparedness and response and availing opportunities for joint advocacy with other humanitarian partners through the HRP. (2) Potential need for high level consultation with Ministries of Foreign Affairs in Pakistan and Afghanistan to identify / get support for priority access for humanitarian cargo.

Operational Readiness: (1) RBB and HQ to support the CO identify and assess alternative supply corridors, due to issues affecting the Pakistan corridor. This particularly applies to oil and specialised nutritious food (WSB+) which is procured internationally and transits via Pakistan. (2) CO to assess the option for procurement of local / regional oil which may not comply with WFP specifications in terms of fortification.

Fundraising: RBB and HQ to support the CO with resource mobilization. WFP Afghanistan requires USD 148 million – **74% of its requirements** – to continue operations from October 2020- March 2020. Timing is critical to preposition supplies ahead of the winter.

Staffing: RBB and HQ to support the CO with the recruitment of surge and long-term staff to support the scale up requirements. Profiles include: (1) Emergency Preparedness and Response Officers; (2) Programme Policy Officer – Digital Advisory and Assistance Services.

SUDAN

Risks: Sudan continues to face challenges with increased and protracted displacement, economic decline, inflation, and high food price hikes, which were further exacerbated by the COVID-19 spread. The Sudanese Pound continued its decline reaching 250 pounds for one USD on the informal market that led to the Sudanese government to declare the economic state of emergency on September 11. Severe floods, as level of the River Nile reached 17.43 meters, continue threatening the food security situation with rising concerns on further deterioration of the health situation and risk of diseases outbreaks. In September, the Government of Sudan declared a national state of emergency for three months over deadly floods, that caused over 100 deaths. Sporadic intercommunal clashes remain a challenge with an increased number of security incidents throughout the Darfur region as well as Red Sea and Kassala States. Meanwhile, peace talks in Juba continue and have seen the formal initiation of the unity government at the end of August, although it remains to be seen if this will suffice to prevent civil unrest from escalating as elements of the population express discontent with the progress of the

transition. Moreover, ongoing political negotiations with the US on de-listing Sudan from the list of states sponsoring terrorism could have medium term implications to Sudan especially on international access to its banking/financial sector. Lastly, staffing shortage continues to be a major operational risk.

Impact: Sudan has been significantly impacted with economic crisis and shortage of foreign currency to finance the imports of key commodities. Food prices continue to witness sharp increase compared to the previous year. The number of people facing high acute food insecurity has reached 9.6 million according to the most recent IPC report in July. Furthermore, the spread of COVID-19 cases has added serious stress to the local health facilities, which is affecting the operational environment including staff deployment, movement and MEDEVAC. The impact of COVID-19 restrictions on the reduced livelihoods opportunities and reduced remittance further decreased the purchasing power of people. This is further aggravated by the impact on over 506,000 people that have been affected by flooding since mid-July. WFP has provided assistance to an initial 3,500 flood-affected people, with further WFP and inter-agency needs assessments underway.

Actions:

Operational readiness: (1) Fast track budget revision, currently underway in the CO with the draft to be sent to RBC soon for technical review. (2) HQ and RBC continue to provide dedicated support to CO in reviewing key issues hampering full implementation, including analytical review of key operational trends, funding, requirements, supply chain, distribution, identifying staffing as a critical issue, which is being addressed with immediate review of positions and longer term plan to generate advocacy and visibility across WFP for staffing needs of Sudan CO.

Staffing: 60 percent of the staffing gap has been filled. However, **expediting staffing support** remains a priority.

Close corporate follow-up

NIGERIA

Risks: In north-eastern Nigeria, **security situation continues to deteriorate** across Borno State and parts of Yobe and Adamawa States. Salafi-jihadist groups are stepping up their activity against government forces and convoys, clashes with government forces and targeting civilians, likely aimed at stockpiling commodities. In Borno, access to several Local Government Areas (LGAs) is heavily restricted and subject to frequent cut-offs. There is also increased targeting of Humanitarian actors, with five humanitarians executed by NSAGs in July, and Hubs by Salafi-jihadist elements and WFP air assets have also been attacked. Violence in north-western Zamfara, Sokoto, Kaduna and Katsina states is resulting in several dozen civilians killed on a monthly basis and an unverified number of displaced. NSAGs in this area are increasingly suspected of manoeuvring to take advantage of the security crisis, with mounting fears over a potential geographic link which could be established between groups in the Lake Chad Basin area and those operating in the Central Sahel. In addition, there has been a clear and largely communicated IS statement displaying rhetoric legitimizing attacks against aid workers and UN (even Muslims working in all aid organizations) which may bring additional security-related access issues in the LCB. The spread of COVID-19 in Nigeria is increasing rapidly with further strain on livelihoods, markets and the already impacted economy due to the fall in oil prices.

Impact: Movement restrictions directly affecting WFP's humanitarian activities especially movement by road of WFP partners and commodities. Growing insecurity is likely to trigger a new influx of IDPs in the Northeast and Northwest of the country and refugees are also expected in Maradi region of Niger. Between 50,000-150,000 new IDPs are likely in the North East, with a risk of increasing to 250,000 in the event of a post-rainy season offensive by ISWAP cutting off new LGAs from government access.

Amidst the COVID-19 outbreak and resulting pandemic mitigation measures that disrupted the transport, food market supply and livelihood systems and compounded vulnerabilities already experienced due to the entrenched conflict and community conflicts, a revised Cadre Harmonisé estimate conducted in June 2020 in the four states of Adamawa, Borno, Kano and Yobe showed a **35% increase in food insecurity**, bringing the total up to 5.8 million people in these states. Out of these, 4.3 million are in the three north-eastern states. In Kano, where the impact of COVID-19 is anticipated to be significant given its centrality and commercial importance, the number of food insecure increased by 158%, from 578,000 to 1.5 million. In total, 8.65 million were estimated to be food insecure in this current lean season in Nigeria during the March CH. Recent WFP analysis estimations with COVID-19 show that 23 million people will be impacted and at risk of food insecurity in 2020 in Nigeria. Additionally, the drop-in oil price has produced increased volatility in the exchange rate of the local Naira currency against USD. The impact of devaluation will be a rising cost of living as people's purchasing power is reduced.

Actions: Nigeria is maintained at close corporate follow-up.

Fundraising: The CO has a six-month Net Funding Requirements of USD 119 million representing two-thirds of the total requirements for the coming 6 months (Oct-Mar). This is one of the most important shortfalls in RBD region. Considering the dependence of the CO on a few main donors, discussions are ongoing with the CO to identify opportunities to expand the donor base. HQ and RBD are providing directed support in the development of a Partnership Action Plan with the intention to systematise and streamline the CO's fundraising efforts. Nigeria continues to be highlighted at management meetings as a key country of concern for funding.

Operational Readiness: WFP is facing unprecedented challenges in programmatic shifts and change in modalities as well as starting food assistance activities in large urban centres in the country. RBD will continue to provide technical support as required.

Staffing: Key staffing needs remain, and critical positions include Deputy Head of Programme

CAMEROON

Risks: Deteriorating security environment is hampering access to the affected populations in the NW/SW Regions, due to splintering of non-state armed groups and financial motivation for targeting humanitarian community. Increasingly frequent security incidents have affected WFP cooperating partners and commercial transporters contracted by WFP, including several reported abductions and deaths. Increased intensity of ISWAP attacks on security forces and civilians in Far North Region are likewise impacting WFP programming and potentially causing displacement. In NW/SW regions, there is growing resentment towards UN Agencies, which are now associated with the Government and there is little distinction being made between various programmes and agencies or organizations. Trans-border criminality is also gaining ground in NW/SW Regions with criminal elements from Nigeria and some former NSAG members taking advantage of the conflict by forming criminal gangs to abduct or harass road users to collect ransom or money and valuables. Population displacement continues with 1 million IDPs currently displaced as of end of July estimates with almost 420,000 refugees from CAR and Nigeria.

Impact: The splintering of NSAGs and increased targeting of humanitarian actors in NW/SW region will likely result in **significant impact on WFP operations and access**, confiscated/looted WFP property and aid, delays in delivery and increased risk to the security of WFP CPs. Insecurity in Far North Region may continue causing disruptions in CBT programming as areas of violence correspond with areas of WFP intervention. The March Cadre Harmonisé indicates the number of food insecure people (equivalent IPC phase 3 and above) would reach 2.1M during the 2020 lean season, (double of last year) but taking into account the COVID-19 impact on the population, the number will increase to 3.3M. The economic impact of COVID-19 is estimated to have significant bearing on vulnerable groups including refugees, migrants, IDPs and host communities due to the loss of income, restricted movement, reduced access to markets, inflation and a spike in prices of imported commodities.

Actions: Cameroon is maintained at close corporate follow-up.

Advocacy and Fundraising: Cameroon continues to be the worst funded HRP operation in sub-Saharan Africa over the past 2 years. The CO has a six-month funding requirement of USD 34 million; the CAR refugee crisis in particular is critically underfunded and CO has used corporate funds to fill gaps. Joint advocacy efforts to continue to be required, such as recent joint UNHCR/WFP appeal warning that severe underfunding is impacting the ability to sustain assistance to CAR refugees in the far north.

Operational Readiness: Restrictions on transport of cargo to CAR and Chad have significantly impacted WFP supply chain to those countries. Additional supply chain staff have been identified to support operations on the Cameroon side – and continued advocacy and support is required.

Staffing: A number of **key positions are currently vacant and will only be filled in October**. TDYers are needed for Head of Field Office and Deputy CATO and RBD will continue to support CO in filling critical staffing gaps.

Democratic Republic of Congo

Risks: DRC has the second highest number of food insecure people worldwide due to continued, multiple, large-scale and protracted crises. **Almost 22 million people are acutely food insecure**, suffering “crisis” (IPC Phase 3) or “emergency” (IPC Phase 4) hunger, according to the latest nationwide assessment (July 2020). Another 45 million are in a “stressed” state, at high risk of rapid deterioration. The situation is alarming, if joined robust efforts are not quickly made. The DRC 2020 IPC Analysis had a much wider geographic coverage than 2019 and, out of the 21.8 million food insecure people, 3.2 million were in urban areas. Eight additional cities (in addition to Kalemie that was also covered last year) were analysed while rural caseloads increased by 3 million people compared to 2019. Worst off are the conflict-ravaged eastern provinces of Ituri, North and South Kivu, Tanganyika and Maniema, as well as the Kasai region, where up to 40 percent of people are in IPC Phases 3 or 4.

Persistent insecurity and conflict led to protracted large-scale displacement, which continued to rise in 2020 and could further escalate especially in Ituri, and North and South Kivu. This is further compounded by limited humanitarian access, floods, multiple health crises (e.g. malaria, measles, cholera and Ebola) across various regions, which are now further aggravated by the recent resurgence of Ebola in Equateur province² and the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic – which is projected to have a devastating impact on an already very fragile health system and levels of poverty in the country. COVID-19 is disproportionately affecting urban households, as they are dependent on markets for food and their livelihoods have been more impacted by restriction measures. The second-order economic impacts of COVID-19 are already observed through job losses, increased inflation, deterioration of purchasing power, disruptions in access to markets by vulnerable households, and a developing “liquidity crisis”, with dangerously low levels of foreign currency reserves. Restrictive COVID-19 measures such as lockdowns, border and trade closures have resulted in mass unemployment and loss of incomes and livelihoods, heavily impacting vulnerable households in urban and peri-urban areas. These multiple compounding shocks could further destabilize the country, triggering broader regional implications with bordering countries.

Impact: The deterioration of the security situation, displacement and the COVID-19 and Ebola crises have had significant impact to WFP’s operations. The ongoing challenges for securing humanitarian access have been further aggravated by the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic (e.g. disruptions, delays in operations and increased community resistance in some areas). The situation may also impair WFP’s ability to provide critical services for the humanitarian community and health response (both for COVID-19 and the 11th EVD outbreak) and has triggered **additional needs for assistance in environments where WFP does not have strong operational capabilities** (e.g. urban areas). As part of the COVID-19 response, WFP, UNICEF and FAO are launching a social safety net programme in

Nsele commune in Kinshasa through the provision of mobile money. Nutrition and resilience programmes are also planned at a later stage. This is the first-ever operation of such kind for WFP in the capital city, and close to 100,000 people are initially targeted in the pilot phase. WFP continues to support the government and partners through humanitarian air services, logistics planning and supply chain support. In 2020, WFP has scaled up its activities, aiming to reach 7.6 million people by the end of the year. In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, WFP is providing food assistance in compliance with COVID-19 preventive measures, including physical distancing, mandatory handwashing and temperature checks. WFP is also providing logistics and supply chain services to the Government and humanitarian partners. Additionally, WFP has scaled up its resilience activities.

Actions:

Advocacy: For humanitarian access and maintenance of common services (e.g. aviation etc).

Fundraising: Support with resource mobilization and adjustment of pipelines in light of COVID-19 and the 11th EVD outbreak. DRC currently has a net funding requirement of USD 186 million.

Operational readiness: (1) Expand analysis and monitoring of the economic, political and security situation; (2) Enhanced support in developing urban safety nets and social protection programmes with relevant partners to address rising urban food insecurity.

Staffing: Support additional surge staffing requests as they are submitted.

SOUTH SUDAN

Risks: The combination of protracted conflict, rapid currency depreciation, natural hazards and the COVID-19 pandemic continues to threaten a further deterioration of already high food insecurity levels. Sub-national conflict remains a major challenge in South Sudan, with **continuing clashes** in Jonglei, Warrap, Lakes, Eastern Equatoria, and Upper Nile areas. Armed clashes (especially between NAS and government forces in the Equatorias), robbery and banditry/ambush targeting commercial and humanitarian traffic continue to pose safety and security challenges to WFP's programs. In recent months there have been several incidents of violence directly involving WFP and its partners and contractors, including some that resulted in gunshot injuries; the wider UN and humanitarian community have been similarly affected. Persistent delays in the implementation of the revitalized peace agreement and the establishment of robust governance structures down to the state and local level, when combined with the food security situation, have created conditions for more violent criminality and fiercer sub-national conflict. Further, the exhaustion of foreign exchange reserves has deprived authorities of the necessary buffer to control currency depreciation. This, in addition to **disrupted trade routes** and limited food deliveries due to seasonal raining is likely to result in price increases for local consumers. The ongoing rainy season which is performing above-average could still bring a risk of localized flooding in the south-eastern areas of the country, though the peak of flooding in these areas already passed and food needs in conflict-affected IPC-4 areas (parts of Jonglei, Upper Nile and Lakes) are likely to reduce.

Impact: With violence from subnational conflict and COVID movement restrictions crippling livelihoods, communities and households would be likely to fall into famine in the absence of humanitarian assistance (FEWS Net). WFP anticipates 6.5 million people from the May-July IPC projections to remain acutely food insecure (IPC-3 or above) in the next months. WFP is sustaining its emergency and resilience activities while also expanding assistance to vulnerable, market-dependent populations. In addition to regular assistance to 5 million people, WFP has revised its CSP requirements to target an additional caseload of 1.6 million people, mostly in urban settings. COVID-19 is likely to continue to affect operations including staff movement and medevac options. CBTs are particularly affected by COVID-induced supply shocks and price increases. Insecurity is likely to cause further displacement and operational disruptions in the affected areas.

Actions:

Advocacy: L3 extension currently ongoing.

Fundraising: Advocacy and fundraising for additional needs – the country has a net funding requirement of USD 614 million, 73% of the total 6-month needs-based requirements.

Operational readiness: Close corporate follow-up and continuous coordination with the RB to monitor the situation and support any anticipated scale-up of operations.

Staffing: Continuous follow up on solutions to support staff on the ground e.g. securing R&R cycles affected by movement restrictions, MEDEVAC arrangements etc).

ETHIOPIA

Risks: Ethiopia is highly vulnerable to a variety of risks and shocks, including political and ethnic tensions, social unrest, intercommunal violence, and natural hazards – which are now further aggravated by the impacts of COVID-19. The latest seasonal forecasts suggest with more than 60% likelihood a below-average 2020 Deyr rainy season (Sept-Nov) in central and eastern Ethiopia (Somali and eastern Oromia regions), likely leading to below-average harvests in some areas. This would compound the impact of what are **likely to be below-average harvests** of the past season as a result of desert locusts, flooding and lower-than-normal planted areas. Ethiopia is facing the worst locust outbreak in 25 years, causing a loss of over 356,000 MT of cereal, and affecting up to 1.3 million hectares of pasture. The March interagency impact assessment indicated nearly 1 million food insecure people due to locust infestation, some of which are currently being assisted by WFP in the Somali region. Additionally, the initial decision to impose a lockdown due to COVID-19 caused a slowdown of the economic activities. While some restrictions have now been eased, the impact of the economic contraction due to the pandemic could be felt in the availability of some vital imports as well as on prices. Over the last months, a rise in new cases of coronavirus among the refugee population has been reported in the Gambella and Tigray camps where people live in highly congested settings. Meanwhile, the country is experiencing a surge of returnees, some 15,300 people since April according to IOM, raising concerns about the risk of coronavirus' transmission. Protests and civil unrest in Oromia are likely to continue and could expand with growing opposition from Ethiopia's regions to Aby Ahmed's unionist stance, and is likely to cause temporary disruptions in affected areas. The aftermath of unilateral elections in Tigray which were held on 9 September could further exacerbate these tensions and trigger unrest.

Impact: The impact of desert locusts, economic decline and inflation, displacement and the compounding effect of COVID-19 related restrictions are the key drivers for food insecurity. Based on September's IPC assessment, an estimated 8.5 million people (21% of the 41 million people analysed) are acutely food insecure in between July and September 2020. This includes about 7.1 million people who were classified in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) and about 1.4 million people in Emergency (IPC Phase 4) levels. After a slight improvement in October and November due to seasonal harvest, **projection expects a total of 11.1 million people be IPC phases 3-4** between the months of January and June 2021. An update to the 2020 Ethiopia HRP has been released outlining additional humanitarian priorities including those needs related to COVID-19 multi-sector impact. The revised requirement of US\$1.44 billion seeks to address the needs of 15.1 million people. WFP currently plans both horizontal and vertical expansions to provide temporary income support to some 555,000 households in 27 cities. WFP is preparing to provide cash top ups to vulnerable populations in Addis Ababa with plans to reach 4,000 households (or 18,000 people) with cash assistance by July.

Actions:

Advocacy and Fundraising: Advocacy and resource mobilization for additional needs in the revised HRP. The CO has a NfR of 213 million for Oct-Mar, representing two-thirds of the total requirements.

Operational Readiness: Support for scaling up urban Productive Safety Net Programmes (PNSP) and expand assistance in urban needs.

SOMALIA

Risks: A combination of flooding, locust invasion and COVID-19 risks affects an already fragile humanitarian situation, pushing Somalia into even deeper food insecurity. In addition, seasonal forecasts are suggesting with very high likelihood a below-average 2020 short rains season (Sept-Nov) in southern and central Somalia, **likely leading to below-average harvests** in some areas. This would be consecutive to a Gu season harvest (accounting for 60% of the total annual cereal production) which is forecast to be 30 to 40 percent below average as a result of crop damages due to desert locusts and flooding which affected main agricultural areas in April-May. Results from WFP market and supply chain monitoring show that the flooding situation led to a rise in prices of food key commodities in many locations, e.g. vegetables and fruits. It is estimated that diaspora remittance flows to Somalia could decline by 30-50 percent as Somali relatives abroad continue to lose jobs due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Consequently, food insecure Somalis who rely on remittances for a living are likely to suffer income poverty, further exacerbating their food and nutrition security situation. Political tension and uncertainty between the FCG and its FSG, especially Jubaland, around the electoral process and an extension of President Farmaajo's mandate are likely to continue and could result in localised confrontations between FCG and FSG security forces. Al-Shabaab is likely to exploit this uncertainty for further attacks and to attempt extending its territorial presence.

Impact: The impact of two potential consecutive below-average harvests would further increase the vulnerabilities and needs beyond the recent projections for Somalia of up to 3.5 million and over 500,000 additional people will require humanitarian assistance in the next six months. The country's revised HRP shows an increase of 32% in the funding required to support humanitarian assistance in Somalia. As a result of the effects of the triple shock in Somalia (floods, desert locusts and COVID-19 pandemic) WFP has revised its budget to increase relief assistance to reach 2 million people. WFP continues to support the Government's effort in response to COVID-19, floods and desert locusts by providing air transport to medical officials on COVID-19 mass testing mission and cargo (including COVID-19 supplies, flood response and desert locust supplies).

Actions:

Advocacy: on the shrinking humanitarian space.

Fundraising: for additional needs – the CO has a NfR of USD 253 million – representing nearly two-thirds of the total 6-month requirements.

Staffing: Continuous follow up on solutions to support staff on the ground (e.g. securing R&R cycles affected by movement restrictions, MEDEVAC arrangements etc).

LEBANON

Risks: The **explosions** at the Beirut Port on 4 August account for the third consecutive shock Lebanon has experienced since the start of popular protests in October 2019. The situation is likely to continue deteriorating with persistent **economic contraction**, protracted refugee crisis – as Lebanon hosts the highest number of refugees per capita in the world – civil unrest, political instability compounded with the impact of COVID-19 containment measures. Economic growth contracted by 13.9 percent in July 2020 and is projected to further contract in 2021 Lebanon became the first country in the region to be hit with hyperinflation. The impact of COVID-19 containment measures has further aggravated the food security situation of the population with reduced remittances, jobs losses, and decrease in salaries. Civil unrest and political instability continue, as a new government led by Prime Minister-designate Mustapha Adib is due to be formed by 15 September following the resignation of Lebanon's cabinet days after the explosion. The multiple shocks with the impact of the recent port explosions and political instability will likely further deteriorate the food security situation and increase economic vulnerabilities of both Lebanese and refugees.

Just over a month after the port explosion, a fire broke out on 10 September at a warehouse storing oil and tyres in Beirut Port's Duty Free area. WFP's wheat flour stored at the port was not affected, but the fire spread to a warehouse storing food parcels and cooking oil intended for humanitarian operations. The extent of the damage and impact on humanitarian operations still remains to be established.

Impact: The compound effects of, the fiscal and economic crisis and the impact of COVID-19 containment measures have led to a sharp increase in the average cost of the survival minimum expenditure basket (SMEB). The food SMEB recorded its highest price in August 2020 at LBP 103,300, up 168 percent since October 2019, and the price of the non-food SMEB also increased by 170 percent during the same period.

The food security situation in Lebanon before the explosions was already concerning and rapidly deteriorating. In recent months, the dramatic economic and fiscal crises, hyperinflation, and rising prices have had devastating effects on the economic vulnerabilities of Lebanese and refugee populations. The World Bank estimates that 45 percent of the Lebanese population would fall into poverty as a result of the economic and COVID-19 crises, while 850,000 individuals, equivalent to 22 percent of the Lebanese population, would become extremely poor. A recent WFP survey found that food has become a major source of concern, with 50 percent of Lebanese respondents saying over the past month they felt worried they would not have enough food to eat. The same survey found that COVID-19 containment measures have pushed one out of three Lebanese into unemployment, while nearly one fifth of the population saw their salaries being reduced. Taking into account the poverty estimates, hyperinflation, and reduced purchasing power of households, WFP estimates that approximately 150,000 people directly affected by the port explosion will be in need of humanitarian assistance over the next six months.

The explosion destroyed the port of Beirut, the country's main entry point for goods imported via sea, covering 80 percent of Lebanon's maritime shipping traffic. However, WFP contracted shops in the surroundings of the port of Beirut were not severely affected and most cash agent networks and ATMs are still available. Wholesalers and food suppliers contacted indicated there are food stocks in the country that can cover Lebanon's needs for up to 2 months, with additional supplies currently being procured. Nine WFP staff were injured in the explosions and the WFP Country Office was severely damaged.

Actions:

Advocacy: WFP is strengthening the partnership with the Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA), Social Development Centres (SDC), local authorities, and local NGOs. WFP has also augmented civil-military coordination capacities on ground, as the Lebanese Armed Forces are heavily involved in the relief effort.

Fundraising: As of 11 September, WFP's blast response has secured a total USD 20.2 million of confirmed funding. WFP's current 6-month NfR is USD 170 million, or 61% of the needs-based requirements for Oct-Mar. (1) Continue coordinating private sector partner inquiries via the Dubai office. (2) WFP submitted inputs for food security, logistics, and emergency telecommunications sectors to the OCHA coordinated Flash Appeal that was launched on 14 August. The Flash Appeal will cover immediate needs for the next 3 months – advocacy required. Including following donor enquiries at local level have been received from the US, UK, Australia, ECHO and EU Trust Fund, GCC (via WFP in Riad) & France. Through WFP HQ, further contact has been made with Canada, Denmark, Ireland, Luxembourg, and others.

Operational readiness: Expedite budget Revision 07 in order to enable the immediate response: emergency in-kind assistance, CBT scale-up, injection of wheat flour, and related SC costs, and to harmonize messaging to external partners on the resource requirements associated with response to the blasts.

Staffing: Staffing support has been prioritized with total of 36 staff deployed to Beirut as surge capacity including the Emergency Coordinator, Supply Chain, VAM, and other key profiles. RB to continue to monitor staffing requirements over the coming weeks as the response stabilizes.

MYANMAR

Risks: While military forces (Tatmadaw) have unilaterally extended the ceasefire until the end of September 2020, it still does not cover "areas where state-declared terrorist groups are operating". As a result, the **conflict** in Rakhine and Chin states is expected to escalate due to growing capacities of non-state armed groups and increased military response. The National **elections** are scheduled to be held in early November and could further exacerbate ethnic tensions. The number of reported COVID-19 cases in the country have more than doubled over the past few weeks, a large majority of which were reported from Rakhine State. Those that have contracted COVID-19 include ten UN and INGO workers. Approximately 500 contacts of COVID-19 patients have been placed in quarantine facilities in Rakhine State. Local authorities have imposed lockdown measures in all townships in the State. Access continues to be problematic for populations in need and for humanitarian workers.

Impact: Persistent armed conflict could lead to additional displacements and further reduce humanitarian access, affecting ongoing and planned interventions. Similarly, COVID-19 restrictions and related impacts will likely worsen the food security situation and could lead to civil unrest. As a result of the COVID-19 restrictions, **WFP has had to reduce its staff footprint** in Rakhine State. Nutrition and community awareness activities have been suspended until further notice as a number of nutrition-related partner staff have contracted COVID-19. The Government restrictions in Rakhine State will entail adjustments to the regular transport routes and may result in a delayed food deliveries. In addition, procurement of commodities from local sources for WFP activities remains a challenge as most factories are not fully operational. If WFP opts to procure the commodities regionally or internationally it could lead to delays and possibly additional costs.

Actions:

Fundraising: Support the CO to engage with donors to materialize the forecasted contributions. The Myanmar operation requires USD 44 million to continue operations from Oct-Mar, representing 73% of the total requirements for the period.

Operational Readiness(1) CO is in discussion with the relevant authorities on the possibility of providing food assistance to Government-managed quarantine sites in Sittwe, Rakhine State. (2) CO to continue working with the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) on the production of research notes on the food vendor and community surveys conducted through mobile phones. (3) CO to finalize mobile data collection for the joint COVID-19 food security and livelihood assessment with FAO in seven high risk states and regions. (4) RBB to support the establishment of a comprehensive food safety measures for service providers of hot meals in returnee/quarantine centers.

Staffing: HQ to support the CO with the recruitment of the following profiles: (1) CBT/ Social Protection Advisor

ZIMBABWE

Risks: Zimbabwe has endured a combination of extreme natural shocks and persistent economic challenges, leading to the highest levels of food insecurity in a decade in the first quarter of 2020. The situation is likely to continue deteriorating as the country approaches the next lean season period (Dec 2020 – Mar 2021) and as a result of another well below average harvest due to prolonged drought conditions.

Further macroeconomic aggravation, the effects of COVID-19 and worsening political instability will

impact negatively on the food security situation. The economic impact of the pandemic is already observed through increased currency depreciation, high inflation, loss of incomes and livelihoods. The currency lost 88% of its value year-on-year, further eroding the purchasing power of the population and risking to increase the already extreme food inflation, which in July stood at 837 percent year on year. The deterioration of the socioeconomic situation has fuelled public discontent, which has been aggravated by the strict enforcement of COVID-19 containment measures (including allegations of politically motivated unlawful detentions, leading to an escalation of the tension between the Government and the opposition). This scenario fuels the risk of civil unrest and crime-related security incidents, adding to the political uncertainty – while the country's health system lacks the capacity to cope with a potential surge in COVID-19 cases. Projections indicate that new COVID-19 cases are still on the rise.

Impact: The volatile socio-economic and political situation of Zimbabwe, coupled with COVID-related restrictions of movement and economic activities, aggravates the already serious risk of widespread food insecurity in the country. The food and nutrition security situation for urban and rural contexts is reported to be deteriorating, with households finding it increasingly difficult to meet the minimum food security thresholds. By the end of 2020, WFP projects that 8.6 million people are at risk of food insecurity (up from 5.9 million in previous assessments, and representing almost 60 percent of the country's population). Of these, 3.3 million are in urban areas. In this situation, WFP has a shortfall of USD 277 million to be able to meet its needs-based plan, and low buffer stocks. The expected increase in WFP assistance, planned to reach up to 3.5 million people in the 37 worst-affected districts and in urban areas, is **severely hampered by resourcing constraints**. The unpredictable political developments and high tension have already caused delays and forced WFP to modify its operational plans in order to continue delivering assistance. This may happen again in the future. In response to the deteriorating food security situation in the country, WFP is working closely with RBJ and HQ to roll out a mobile (mVAM) food security monitoring system which will enable remote tracking of household food security on a monthly basis. The information collected will support decision making and programming.

Actions:

Fundraising: (1) Prioritise advocacy and resource mobilization efforts to bridge a significant funding gap of USD 277 million for the next 6 months (**NfR equivalent to 84% of total requirements**); (2) Monitor advance financing opportunities and reimbursement arrangements, and seek prioritized support for requests for advance financing.

Operational Readiness: (1) Maintain and expand analysis and monitoring of the economic, political and security situation in country, focusing on indications of increased crime, politicization of food assistance, social unrest and political instability. (2) Continue to support advance procurement to cover additional needs. (3) Support on simplification for more agile contracting of new FSPs for urban CBT scale-up.

Close Technical support

VENEZULAN MIGRANT CRISIS

Risk: With COVID-19 continuing to spread rapidly in Latin America, the 4.3 million Venezuelan migrants and refugees hosted in the region are among those hardest hit by border closures, curtailed economic activity, overwhelmed health systems and strained social safety nets. Planning for the 2021 Regional Response and Migrant Response plan highlights the need for an integrated response with common funding targeting the needs of migrants across host countries. The nearly 2 million food insecure migrants in Colombia, Ecuador and Peru have been disproportionately affected by the progressive

cessation of public activity and decline of informal sector due to COVID-19 restrictions, leaving them entirely dependent on international assistance; meanwhile, critical funding shortfalls and unprecedented operational constraints weaken response capacities. the situation has triggered new patterns of migration, with an estimated 95,000 of the most vulnerable Venezuelans having returned, and others turning back, exposed to increased health risks and criminal activity when attempting to cross borders.

Competing demands on status-driven focus: limitations on the state budgets of host countries relative to COVID-19 needs have left some national populations in need – with governments unable to extend national programmes. The status-driven focus of WFP’s primary response in countries could bring a rise in xenophobic sentiment towards migrants as well as WFP’s acceptance.

Impact: (1) COLOMBIA: Rising food prices (20 percent since last December) and record levels of unemployment (23 percent) have its strongest impact on migrants and vulnerable nationals; some, 90 percent of migrants in country depend the informal sector. Local Governments are overwhelmed by the level of needs and requested assistance through WFP’s initial scale up plan to include over 1,000,000 people, including extremely vulnerable nationals. Delivering on rising needs is challenged by: logistics access [the Amazonas region, where most of the recent acceleration of infections has been recorded, is only accessible by air or river]; civil unrest [protests planned September-November and the risk of civil unrest remains high, with likely disruptions to WFP staff movement]; the worsening security situation [return of armed conflict practices, with a significant increase in mass killings recorded]; and significant funding shortfalls which will impact upcoming distributions.

(2) ECUADOR: The collapse of its oil export revenue (one fifth of 2019 level) has left Ecuador with limited recourse to stimulate a dollarized economy and the country has appealed international organizations to provide assistance to people identified by the social registry as likely to be extremely affected by COVID-19. This has put WFP in a challenging position, competing with its already limited funding for the migrant response. Furthermore, the Government’s strict financial constraints could jeopardize the international community’s capacity to operate and finance Cash Based Transfer solutions; initial plans to implement a cash-based transfer programme with IR-R funds has been significantly delayed.

(3) PERU: In Peru, having announced the Government’s financial inability to expand safety net coverage to the 208,000 migrants in country, the international community, with no previous set-up for direct food security interventions, is required to urgently design, finance and implement last resort solutions, initially for 63,000 people identified jointly with UNHCR and IOM through the Migrant Working Group.

Actions:

Advocacy and Fundraising: and support for the identification of funding opportunities (Colombia NfR 75% of 6 month requirements), grant flexibility and advance funding mechanisms

Operational Readiness: (1) Remote monitoring of food security status of migrants and changes in migration patterns. (2) HQ & RB to enable COs to deliver where previously no direct or few direct transfer mechanisms: Peru (Western Union & FSPs contracting); Ecuador (joint targeting, registration and implementation of the Common Cash Statement with UNHCR); Colombia (financial capacity assessment for additional FSPs beyond Western Union). (3) Programme support to update operational planning including how to balance and prioritize migrant and host community in a highly sensitive environment.

(4) As needed, rapid development and review of budget revisions: Peru expansion for full COVID-19 needs; Colombia introduction of service provision & expansion for COVID-19 needs.

COTE D’IVOIRE

Risk: Côte d’Ivoire’s presidential election on 22 October risks triggering violent unrest and fighting between government supporters and critics, potentially leading to disruptions for WFP operations. A lower likelihood, high impact scenario is that of an attempt by disgruntled opposition leaders to forcibly unseat the president, which would likely trigger widespread displacement and sharply increase humanitarian needs, while necessitating staff relocations and evacuations.

The **election** is exacerbating the existing rivalry of political heavyweights who were on opposing sides of the country's two civil wars in 2002 and 2011. President Alassane Ouattara announced his bid for a third term on 6 August, reversing an earlier pledge to stand aside for "the new generation". Denounced as unconstitutional by the opposition, Ouattara's bid has triggered violent protests across the country. It comes on top of existing discontent over the transparency and fairness of the election, which is undermining its legitimacy in the eyes of opposition supporters. With the rival parties representing regional or ethnic interests, any unrest would risk quickly spilling into intercommunal violence, driving localised displacement.

Of particular concern is the disqualification of key opposition figures Laurent Gbagbo and Guillaume Soro from the election, through arrest warrants. Widely perceived as politically motivated, these obstructions increase their incentive to challenge the election as a whole, particularly in the event of a disputed vote. While unlikely, this could well entail an attempt to unseat Ouattara by force, with the former rebel commander Soro, in particular, enjoying significant support in the army and among ex-combatants.

Impact: A disputed vote would highly **likely give rise displacements** to up to as a result of insecurity and fearing abuse from rival communities, armed ex-combatants, and/or government forces, concentrated in the country's west, but also including Abidjan and other past hotspots such as Mankono, Béoumi, and Bouna. In total, between 50,000 to 100,000 additional people would likely need humanitarian assistance, including both IDPs and host communities. The alternative, lower likelihood scenario of an armed conflict, triggered by an attempt to unseat President Ouattara by force, would risk pushing this figure up to 1,000,000 internally, and up to 250,000 to neighbouring countries, depending on the scope of the violence. In both scenarios, WFP's school feeding programme is likely to face disruptions as schools are temporarily closed in violent hotspots in the western and northern districts.

Actions: Cote d'Ivoire added to watch list in June. Based on recent developments and the risk of socio-political crisis and violence Cote d'Ivoire is elevated to close technical support.

Operational readiness: Direct support to CO including: (1) RBD surge to support preparedness planning; (2) joint update to Inter-Agency contingency plan; (3) IASC mission planned at the end of September by WFP and OCHA; (4) Elections risk analysis and scenario planning for 'most probable' scenario of 50K to 100K IDPs and 'worst case' scenario of 500K to 1M IDPs; (5) Ongoing support to the elaboration of the CONOPS; (6) Finalization of Minimum Preparedness Actions; Activating Advanced Preparedness Actions (including partners FLA and updated former staff lists for surge) and further investments if required; (7) Initiation of an ad-hoc Security Risk Management (SRM) process for the elections – to be raised at security cell and/or SMT level, and then presented to the SMT for DO decision.

Fundraising: CO Capacity strengthened through allocation of an IR-R (USD 445,043) for floods and COVID-19 that will support general preparedness of the CO, including through rapid assessments with in-depth emergency food needs assessments. Based on current risk assessment, Cote d'Ivoire CO has also received an allocation of USD 200K for their Crisis Response activities from the last SRAC RBD allocation (June 2020).