Crisis response revision of Sierra Leone country strategic plan (2020–2024) and corresponding budget increase

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Current</th>
<th>Change</th>
<th>Revised</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Duration</strong></td>
<td>1 January 2020–31 December 2024</td>
<td>No change</td>
<td>No change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Beneficiaries</strong></td>
<td>596 708¹</td>
<td>567 680</td>
<td>1 164 388</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total cost</strong></td>
<td>65 847 700</td>
<td>28 359 943</td>
<td>94 207 643</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transfers</td>
<td>44 407 139</td>
<td>24 345 088</td>
<td>68 752 227</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementation</td>
<td>9 368 174</td>
<td>1 783 397</td>
<td>11 151 571</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted direct support costs</td>
<td>8 094 029</td>
<td>499 800</td>
<td>8 593 829</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subtotal</strong></td>
<td>61 869 341</td>
<td>26 628 285</td>
<td>88 497 627</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indirect support costs</td>
<td>3 978 359</td>
<td>1 731 658</td>
<td>5 710 016</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Gender and age marker code*: 3

¹ Total revised beneficiary numbers as per budget revision 2 is 596,708, not 584,760. Table 1 in budget revision 2 had a calculation error which has been corrected.


**Rationale**

1. This third proposed budget revision to the Sierra Leone country strategic plan (CSP) (2020–2024) steps up WFP’s response in the country to the rapid changes brought by the COVID-19 crisis, challenges that require urgent adjustments to enable WFP to continue to respond effectively, and to scale up operations to meet the needs of increasing vulnerable populations affected by the pandemic as shown by recent food security monitoring data.

2. In its July 2020 update, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs put Sierra Leone’s total COVID-19-related assistance needs at USD 62.9 million.² As of 29 September, Sierra Leone had recorded 2,222 cases of coronavirus, with 72 deaths.

3. In Sierra Leone, “economic crisis and high inflation erode incomes and livelihoods,” WFP noted in the June 2020 global update. “COVID-19 is anticipated to further deteriorate livelihoods. Price monitoring data shows that prices are increasing, travel restrictions have disrupted domestic supply chains whilst fear of contracting COVID-19 is anticipated to have negatively impacted on agricultural production.”³

4. The most recent Emergency Food Security Monitoring System (E-FSMS)⁴ released in July 2020, confirms this grim assessment, reporting an estimated 5.1 million people currently food insecure, with the overall national level of food insecurity increasing from 47.7 percent in January 2020, to 63 percent in June 2020. The proportion of Sierra Leoneans categorized as severely food insecure more than doubled over the same period, from 4.6 percent (January 2020) to 10 percent (June 2020).
2020), equating to 789,536 people. This budget revision seeks to meet the urgent needs of severely food-insecure Sierra Leoneans.

5. The direct health threat of COVID-19 coupled with a widespread indirect socioeconomic impact are growing already alarmingly high rates of food insecurity in Sierra Leone. The livelihoods of smallholder farmers and petty traders has been negatively affected by the inter-district lockdowns and market closures in some areas. The pandemic is compromising the long-term resilience of many vulnerable households, with 89 percent of households resorting to unsustainable coping strategies to survive, and 70.8 percent adopting crisis (e.g. sale of livelihood assets) or emergency (e.g. sale of lands) coping strategies.5

6. Pre-existing households’ food insecurity and vulnerability levels have been exacerbated by COVID-19 through lockdown and movement restrictions, seasonal high food prices, and the collapse of household income to buy food. The E-FSMS shows a deterioration in overall food insecurity nationally, especially in rural districts of Port Loko, Bombali, Kambia, Falaba and the capital Freetown. Prioritizing support to severely food insecure households, WFP estimates around 500,000 people will require assistance.

7. Without emergency assistance and support to re-establish pathways to resilience, food security is expected to decline still further in the coming months.

8. Budget revision 3 is partially linked to WFP Global Response to COVID-19, and takes action across all three pillars of intervention6 as defined in WFP’s medium-term programme framework. While aligned to the corporate frameworks, WFP is working in Sierra Leone with government institutions, other United Nations agencies, international financial institutions, donors, non-governmental organizations, and guided by the Global Humanitarian Response Plan COVID-19, the United Nations framework for the immediate socioeconomic response to COVID-19, and the national COVID-19 response plan.

9. The current United Nations sustainable development cooperation framework 2020–2023 in Sierra Leone was developed prior to the pandemic. To respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, the United Nations country team has proposed a United Nations socioeconomic development framework to inform a coordinated multisector United Nations COVID-19 response. WFP will provide a significant contribution to guide the geographical targeting of COVID-19 recovery support through implementing a comprehensive food security and vulnerability assessment planned for October 2020 which will provide much needed data at the chiefdom level.

10. Budget revision 3 aims to meet the increasing food and nutritional needs in Sierra Leone precipitated by the COVID-19 outbreak through scaling up unconditional food assistance to severely food-insecure populations, expanding nutrition support to malnourished pregnant and lactating women and girls (PLWGs) and children aged 6–59 months, increasing school feeding coverage and scaling up food assistance for assets support.

Changes

Strategic orientation

11. Budget revision 3 requires no change in strategic orientation, with no new strategic outcomes. However, three strategic outcomes will be updated to scale up assistance to respond to increased needs.

12. Sierra Leone’s previous two budget revisions are summarized as follows:

5 Ibid.

6 WFP’s medium-term programme framework, June 2020. The three pillars are: i) national social protection systems; ii) basic social service - school-based programmes and nutrition; and iii) food systems.
➢ Budget revision 1 (an increase of USD 4.6 million approved by the country director in March 2020) made no changes to the CSP’s strategic orientation, merged activity 3 into activity 2, and scaled up beneficiaries to be targeted under activity 5.

➢ Budget revision 2 (an increase of USD 7.91 million approved by the West Africa Regional Director in July 2020) represented WFP’s initial COVID-19 operational response in Sierra Leone and added a new crisis response strategic outcome – strategic outcome 6, activity 7 – to enable WFP to undertake “service provision activities supporting national disaster preparedness and response in supply chain and emergency telecommunication”.

**Strategic outcomes**

13. Budget revision 3 represents the second phase of WFP’s emergency response and scale up of resilience building programming and is expected to continue into 2021, subject to adjustments in line with WFP’s global L3 declaration. It requires scale up of three CSP strategic outcomes that address SDG 2:

- strategic outcome 1: unconditional food assistance to meet the crisis;
- strategic outcome 2: school feeding to support resilience; and
- strategic outcome 4: conditional food and livelihood support to build resilience.

14. Under strategic outcome 1, WFP will continue to target the most affected populations whose food security has been jeopardized without alternative options for assistance. The targeting approach of WFP and partners will be guided by the most recent food security analysis, ensuring WFP’s assistance reaches over 450,000 extremely vulnerable beneficiaries in rural and urban settings from November 2020 to September 2021 most affected by the economic downturn, rising food prices and restriction of movement. In response to the increased prevalence of moderate acute malnutrition (MAM) among PLWGs and children aged 6–59 months as indicated by data from the health information system, empirical evidence shows a high correlation between food insecurity and poor nutrition status. Based on the June 2020 E-FSMS assessment – which showed a food insecurity rate of 63 percent – in addition to the 2017 Sierra Leone National Nutrition Survey - which reported a global acute malnutrition prevalence of 5.1 percent and MAM prevalence of 4.1 percent - WFP has projected that the prevalence of acute malnutrition and MAM are 5.4 percent and 4.4 percent, respectively. This projection is based on available data, triangulated with the anticipated malnutrition burden aggravated by the impacts of COVID-19 including: reduced access to adequate food; loss of fragile livelihoods; and increased morbidity caused by reduction in health-seeking behaviour. The Ministry of Health and Sanitation data from March 2020 reported a reduction in accessing healthcare services from 90 percent to 85 percent (health management information system), implying increased prevalence of untreated childhood illnesses, including malaria, diarrhoea and pneumonia, which is anticipated to further contribute towards increased malnutrition among children. WFP will treat MAM under activity 1, targeting 17,120 malnourished PLWGs and 25,917 children aged 6–59 months to stabilize their nutrition status and prevent further deterioration. Direct food support will be provided in the form of specialized nutritious food, comprised of 200g of Super Cereal and 25g of vitamin A-enriched vegetable oil (premix) for PLWGs, and 200g of Super Cereal Plus for children aged 6–59 months, for a maximum duration of 90 days. WFP with support from the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS under the Unified Budget, Results and Accountability Framework will provide nutritional support to people living with HIV/AIDS through cash-based transfers (CBTs) to support adherence to their treatment regimens in light of their heightened vulnerability due to the COVID-19 outbreak.

15. Under strategic outcome 2, to respond to increased food insecurity found by the June 2020 E-FSMS and to overcome prospective barriers of schoolchildren from vulnerable households returning to school after reopening, WFP will scale up school meal beneficiaries by 67,330 across nine targeted districts.
16. Under strategic outcome 4, to support recovery of agricultural production activities negatively impacted by the pandemic to increase food availability, WFP will scale up food assistance for assets by 27,000 beneficiaries to support development of irrigation systems in inland valley swamps from January to May 2021 in addition to in-kind food assistance for assets to support cultivation of nutritious vegetables during the 2021 lean season from May to August.

17. Key partners for strategic outcome 1 activities include the Sierra Leone Red Cross Society, the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs and the National Civil Registration Authority. Given the significant scale up of emergency food assistance as CBTs, the country office would benefit from increased capacities in terms of CBT programming. Close coordination with the National Commission for Social Action will support transition of chronically vulnerable beneficiaries into the national social safety net programme. WFP continues to adapt its monitoring and reporting systems to limit the risk of exposure to COVID-19 for personnel, partners and beneficiaries, employing remote monitoring solutions where appropriate and rollout of qualitative methods to demonstrate impact. Remote food security monitoring will entail mobile phone-based interviews with urban and peri-urban populations to collect mobile and vulnerability data. This approach was used during the June 2020 E-FSMS given relatively higher caseloads of COVID-19 in urban localities to ensure that assessments did not contribute towards the spread of COVID-19, in addition to widespread phone ownership and network coverage. For rural populations, food security monitoring is to be undertaken through face-to-face interviews wearing face masks and maintaining social distancing to ensure that vulnerable populations (many of whom do not own phones/live out of coverage area) are not underrepresented to ensure data quality and fully represent needs. Monitoring and evaluation data will be routinely shared with programme staff and management to identify challenges and best practices to support continuous learning and guide decision making, including adjustments in project implementation arrangements.

Beneficiary analysis

18. Beneficiary numbers will increase according to the scale up in districts found to be most food insecure by recent food security analysis. WFP assistance will prioritize targeting of the most vulnerable, severely food-insecure populations, and will work in close coordination with complementary initiatives of other actors, including the Government's cash social safety net delivered through the National Commission for Social Action, as well as other actors' food security assistance (Catholic Relief Services and British Red Cross).
### TABLE 1: DIRECT BENEFICIARIES BY STRATEGIC OUTCOME, ACTIVITY AND MODALITY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic outcome</th>
<th>Activity and modality</th>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Women (18+ years)</th>
<th>Men (18+ years)</th>
<th>Girls (0–18 years)</th>
<th>Boys (0–18 years)</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1 (in-kind, GFD)</td>
<td>Current</td>
<td>13 435</td>
<td>25 409</td>
<td>16 604</td>
<td>15 954</td>
<td>71 402</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Increase</td>
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<td>44 628</td>
<td>39 161</td>
<td>37 626</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Revised</td>
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<td>70 037</td>
<td>55 765</td>
<td>53 591</td>
<td>222 157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1 (CBT, GFD)</td>
<td>Current</td>
<td>12 718</td>
<td>12 219</td>
<td>14 342</td>
<td>13 780</td>
<td>53 059</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Increase</td>
<td>60 541</td>
<td>58 167</td>
<td>68 269</td>
<td>65 592</td>
<td>252 569</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>70 386</td>
<td>82 611</td>
<td>79 372</td>
<td>305 628</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1 (MAM treatment)</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>13 218</td>
<td>12 699</td>
<td>38 928</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Increase</td>
<td>17 120</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>13 218</td>
<td>12 699</td>
<td>43 037</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Revised</td>
<td>30 131</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>26 436</td>
<td>25 387</td>
<td>81 954</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2 (in-kind)</td>
<td>Current</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>169 827</td>
<td>163 167</td>
<td>332 994</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Increase</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>34 338</td>
<td>32 992</td>
<td>67 330</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>204 165</td>
<td>196 159</td>
<td>400 324</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>4 (in-kind)</td>
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<td>18 950</td>
<td>15 645</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>53 675</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>18 950</td>
<td>15 645</td>
<td>53 675</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>5 (in-kind)</td>
<td>Current</td>
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<td>6 137</td>
<td>7 204</td>
<td>6 921</td>
<td>26 650</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Increase</td>
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<td>6 218</td>
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<td>7 012</td>
<td>27 000</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>14 502</td>
<td>13 933</td>
<td>53 650</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>5 (CBT)</td>
<td>Current</td>
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<td>4 606</td>
<td>5 406</td>
<td>5 194</td>
<td>20 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Increase</td>
<td>6 472</td>
<td>6 218</td>
<td>7 298</td>
<td>7 012</td>
<td>27 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Revised</td>
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<td>10 824</td>
<td>12 704</td>
<td>12 206</td>
<td>47 000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total (without overlap)</td>
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<td>48 371</td>
<td>245 551</td>
<td>233 360</td>
<td>596 708</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>115 231</td>
<td>169 582</td>
<td>162 933</td>
<td>567 680</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
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<td>189 360</td>
<td>163 602</td>
<td>415 133</td>
<td>396 293</td>
<td>1 164 388</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

GFD = general food distribution

### Risk Management

19. To safeguard the health and wellbeing of beneficiaries and WFP and partner personnel, WFP will ensure strict adherence to COVID-19 infection prevention control measures to manage risks. This will include, but is not limited to, sensitization of beneficiaries and community leaders on infection prevention control measures and display of COVID-19 prevention pictorial posters, ensuring effective social distancing during community engagements and prior to distributions, provision

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7 Total revised beneficiary numbers as per budget revision 2 is 596,708, not 584,760. Table 1 in budget revision 2 had a calculation error which has been corrected.
of handwashing facilities for programme activities and during distributions and use of personal protective equipment by WFP and partner personnel during all community engagements. To ensure adherence by partners, a standard operating procedure on programming and food distributions during COVID-19 will be included as an annex to partnership agreements, and WFP will provide practical training to partner personnel on infection prevention control measures.

**Transfers**

20. There is no change in food rations. Transfer arrangements remain unchanged from budget revision 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 2: TOTAL FOOD/CASH-BASED TRANSFER REQUIREMENTS AND VALUE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Current budget</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total (mt)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cereals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pulses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oil and fats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed and blended foods</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total (food)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash-based transfers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total (food and cash-based transfer value)</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Cost breakdown**

21. This revision seeks the additional operational costs needed to implement the CSP (as revised by budget revisions 1 and 2), to meet the increased assistance and operational needs posed by the COVID-19 context, in line with the World Health Organization and national guidance, and not limited to the following critical investment area:

- responding to the additional assistance needs – the food transfer budget is upwardly revised in tandem with increased needs to provide food assistance to vulnerable populations.
### TABLE 3: COST BREAKDOWN OF THE REVISION ONLY (USD)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus area</th>
<th>Strategic outcome 1</th>
<th>Strategic outcome 2</th>
<th>Strategic outcome 3</th>
<th>Strategic outcome 4</th>
<th>Strategic outcome 5</th>
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<td>24 345 088</td>
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<td>Implementation</td>
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<td>361 340</td>
<td>186 454</td>
<td>166 798</td>
<td></td>
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<td>1 783 397</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adjusted direct support costs</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>499 800</td>
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<td><strong>Subtotal</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>26 628 285</td>
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<td>Indirect support costs (6.5 percent)</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>28 359 943</td>
</tr>
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</table>

### TABLE 4: OVERALL CSP COST BREAKDOWN, AFTER REVISION (USD)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus area</th>
<th>Strategic outcome 1</th>
<th>Strategic outcome 2</th>
<th>Strategic outcome 3</th>
<th>Strategic outcome 4</th>
<th>Strategic outcome 5</th>
<th>Strategic outcome 6</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>24 410 896</td>
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<td>47 500</td>
<td>11 151 571</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adjusted direct support costs</td>
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<td>1 094 492</td>
<td>1 104 617</td>
<td>731 325</td>
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<td>8 593 829</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Subtotal</strong></td>
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<td>8 382 971</td>
<td>9 659 484</td>
<td>6 113 489</td>
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<td>88 497 627</td>
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<td>Indirect support costs (6.5 percent)</td>
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<td>2 065 946</td>
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<td>397 377</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5 710 016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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<td>33 849 728</td>
<td>8 927 865</td>
<td>10 287 351</td>
<td>6 510 865</td>
<td>651 226</td>
<td>94 207 643</td>
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<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<tr>
<td>CSP</td>
<td>country strategic plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>MAM</td>
<td>moderate acute malnutrition</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>PLWGs</td>
<td>pregnant and lactating women and girls</td>
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