

Management Response from WFP Republic of Congo Country Office to the recommendations of the decentralized Final Evaluation of the McGovern-Dole Funded School Feeding Project in the Republic of Congo DE/CGCO/2021/001 from September 2018 to November 2022



1. This document, finalized in February 2024, presents the management response to the recommendations of the Final Evaluation of the WFP McGovern-Dole Funded School Feeding Project in the Republic of Congo
2. The evaluation, which WFP Republic of Congo commissioned, covers McGovern-Dole outputs and outcomes and assesses whether the baseline and mid-term recommendations have been actioned and integrated into project implementation and, if so, whether these baseline and mid-term recommendations were successful in strengthening project implementation. The evaluation serves the dual purpose of accountability and learning and informs the progress made so far towards achieving results, compared with the baseline and mid-term and also looks at why certain results were achieved or not. It will draw lessons, derive good practices and pointers for learning. The purpose is to inform operational and strategic decision-making, including any course correction measures required by WFP.
3. The evaluation made six (6) key recommendations with twenty-three (23) actions. The matrix sets out whether WFP agrees, partially agrees, or disagrees with the recommendations and sub-recommendations. It presents the planned (or taken) actions, responsibilities and timelines.

Recommendations and related Sub-recommendations (Deadline) <i>[as per evaluation report – one (sub-) recommendation per row, deadline in brackets.]</i>	Recommendation and Sub-Recommendation Lead (Supporting Offices/Divisions) <i>[Name of responsible WFP office/division (/possibly external stakeholder in the case of Joint Evaluation). Names of supporting WFP offices/divisions and/or external stakeholders if any in brackets.]</i>	Management Response <i>[Is (sub-) recommendation Agreed, Partially agreed or Not agreed? If Partially agreed or Not agreed, provide a brief reason for this.]</i>	Actions to be taken <i>[Briefly state what action(s) will be taken to address each sub-recommendation – one action per row.]</i>	Action Lead (Supporting Offices/Divisions) <i>[Name of responsible WFP office/division/unit. Names of supporting WFP offices/divisions and/or external stakeholders if any in brackets.]</i>	Action Deadline <i>[Month and year – not to exceed related (sub-) recommendation deadline.]</i>
R1: Clarify and document the FY21 PMP to ensure its full implementation. The evaluation team noted numerous inconsistencies in the FY17 PMP that could not be clarified by the WFP country office. It is recommended that the categorization of beneficiaries be improved, that the annual and total targets of the FY21 project, and the coherence between them, be meticulously reviewed to detect and amend possible inconsistencies, and to document how targets have been defined for each output and outcome indicator.	CO M&E and programme teams, Directorate of School Feeding (DAS), MGD sub-recipients (CRS, UNESCO and UNICEF).	Agreed	<p>Raise awareness and understanding of the PMP indicators among relevant stakeholders.</p> <p>The CO will conduct internal and external M&E trainings on the definition, collection methodology and frequency of reporting for all project indicators as defined in the USDA indicator handbook.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) <u>Internal training:</u> for Field Monitor Assistants and Programme staff in the Country Office and Sub-Offices. b) <u>External training:</u> for MGD sub-recipients (CRS, UNICEF, UNESCO) and the Directorate of School Feeding (DAS). c) Institute the use of the standard reporting template by sub-recipients for semi-annual reports (due April and October each year). d) Develop a methodology to monitor the indicators in the project which measure the “demonstration” of knowledge or skills. e) Produce annual training plans for the project for enhanced monitoring of “demonstrate indicators”. 	<p>CO M&E team (RBJ monitoring team)</p> <p>CO M&E team (CO programme team)</p> <p>CO programme team (CO M&E team)</p> <p>CO M&E team (CO programme team)</p> <p>CO programme team (CO M&E team)</p>	<p>December 2023</p> <p>December 2023</p> <p>Continuous (September 2026)</p> <p>June 2024</p> <p>Continuous (September 2026)</p>

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			f) Implement monthly CO / RB monitoring team calls for technical support to the implementation of monitoring recommendations.	CO M&E team (RBJ Monitoring team, CO programme team)	Continuous (September 2026)
R2: Reinforce the objectives of gender equality and women's empowerment , by addressing the issue of gender-based violence and supporting the integration of an already existing curriculum on this theme in elementary school, and by developing a more in-depth approach to the role of women in the running of school canteens so that this translates into a benefit for them in terms of equality and the promotion of their autonomy. The FY21 project should also systematize the disaggregation of monitoring data by gender.	CO programme team supported by M&E, MEPPSA, Ministry for the Promotion of Women, WFP sub-recipients (CRS, UNICEF and UNESCO)	Agreed	a) All project indicators counting people to be disaggregated by gender as per the PMP and agreement. b) Disseminate findings from Cooks Survey with relevant partners and stakeholders. c) Establish synergies between WFP school feeding smallholder farmer activities to provide opportunities to the cooks within agriculture as a way to remunerate them for their contribution to the programme. d) Integrate gender positive messaging into the SBCC messages and trainings (links to Recommendation 3).	CO M&E team CO programme team CO programme team CO programme team	Continuous (September 2026) Continuous (September 2026) Continuous (September 2026) Continuous (September 2026)
R3: Strengthen the approach to awareness-raising activities for behavior change, particularly on	CO programme team, in coordination with WFP sub-recipients (CRS, UNICEF and	Agreed	a) Nutrition expert position to be funded and filled for the duration of the FY21 project.	CO programme team	October 2023

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<p>the issue of dietary diversity.</p> <p>Ensure the permanent presence of a nutrition expert for the duration of the FY21 project. Develop and implement a genuine communications program for change, with a clear approach defined and documented, content aligned with the official provisions of the relevant ministries, and the production of thematic guides and teaching aids for schools and communities. Use school canteens as a vehicle for change, for example to put into practice all the messages disseminated, and to this end ensure a wider reach of awareness-raising activities by considering the increased involvement of well-established local NGOs, community health workers or other available local resources. WFP and project partners should also consider including malaria and respiratory disease prevention in awareness-raising messages.</p>	UNESCO), Ministry of Health and Population and SUN Business Network		<p>b) WFP technical SBCC expert to provide training for WFP staff and partners to build the capacity of and strengthen programme implementation.</p> <p>c) SBCC formative research to be conducted to develop a SBCC plan for the implementation of awareness-raising and behaviour change activities under the project (with a focus on integrating issues of gender as per Recommendation 2, issues of prejudice against indigenous people as per Recommendation 6 and malaria and respiratory diseases).</p>	<p>CO programme team</p> <p>CO programme team</p>	<p>June 2024</p> <p>June 2024</p>

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R4: Increase budgeted resources and planning for the construction/rehabilitation of water points, to better cover needs	CO programme team, with support from CO M&E team and in coordination with UNICEF, CRS, Ministry of Economy and Finance, Ministry of Energy and Hydraulics	<i>Agreed</i>	<p>a) Conduct an inventory assessment of all the MGD's schools WASH infrastructures (water points and latrines).</p> <p>b) Undertake joint advocacy with UNICEF for national investment in WASH.</p>	<p>CO M&E team (CO programme team)</p> <p>CO programme team (CO partnerships and communications team)</p>	<p>June 2024</p> <p>Continuous (September 2026)</p>
R5: Strengthen the involvement and coordination of all relevant government institutions, in particular the Ministry of Health, Social Affairs and the Promotion of Women. To this end, support the establishment of the CNMAS (multi-sectoral coordination committee) and CTI (inter-ministerial committee) and improve communication with all project stakeholders. Support the DAS in coordinating the CNMAS and the CTI. The CNMAS should act as a steering committee for the McGovern-Dole project, and all technical choices should be	CO programme team in coordination with Directorate of School Feeding, the Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs and Social Action, Ministry of Planning, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Agriculture and the Office of the Prime Minister and WFP sub-recipients (CRS, UNICEF and UNESCO) .	<i>Agreed</i>	<p>a) Analyze the Ministry of Planning, Education, Agriculture and Humanitarian Affairs and Social Action policies and strategies to highlight opportunities for strengthened coordination and synergies with school feeding.</p> <p>b) Conduct a cost of “non-action” analysis using data from the Education Sector Strategy (2021 – 2030) to advocate for investment in school feeding by government.</p> <p>c) Appoint a “School Feeding” champion at the national level to advocate for and ensure the functioning of the two coordination bodies.</p> <p>d) Act as a technical partner to support the functioning of the two coordination bodies once established by government.</p>	<p>CO M&E team (CO programme team)</p> <p>CO M&E (CO programme team)</p> <p>CO programme team</p> <p>CO programme team (CO partnerships and communication team)</p>	<p>June 2024</p> <p>December 2024</p> <p>December 2024</p> <p>December 2024</p>

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discussed at CTI level. Carry out project presentation sessions with all the organizations concerned at national level and in all the departments covered. Set up regular coordination meetings with participants and provide information on project progress.					
R6: Strengthen the integration of indigenous populations into the project. Carry out a study of the impact of the closure of ORA schools in Likouala and, if necessary, implement specific actions aimed at the schooling of indigenous pupils in this department. Integrate the issue of prejudice against indigenous people into awareness-raising activities. Promote indigenous participation in all management committees and among cooks.	CO programme team in coordination in coordination with the Directorate of School Feeding, Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs and Social Action, the Ministry of Justice, Human Rights and the Promotion of Indigenous People, and community leaders, school principals, UNICEF	Agreed	CO to establish a partnership with the Ministry of Justice, Human Rights and the Promotion of Indigenous People through the signature of a MOU to: a) Conduct a qualitative study on the impact of the closure of ORA schools in Likouala. b) Promote indigenous participation in all management committees and among cooks.	CO programme team	December 2024
R7: Strengthen the complementarity of the imported food and local procurement	CO programme team, with support from CO partnerships team in coordination with the	Partially Agreed – targeting will be dependent on	The restrictions of the programme prevent WFP from using direct procurement modalities such as the transfer of cash to schools.	CO programme team (CO partnerships team, CO M&E team)	Continuous (September 2026)

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approaches. Consider implementing the two approaches in a complementary manner in the same schools, rather than separately in different schools, to improve the diversity of rations served in schools and reinforce the project's relevance to national school feeding policy.	Directorate of School Feeding, Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries, FAO	<i>programmatic design and objectives.</i>	The CO will undertake a special study that will focus on the intersection between food systems, climate and HGSF and explore issues around costs, nutrition and ecological factors of school meals and associated trade-offs and provide clear recommendations on menu planning and design.		
R8: Accelerate capacity development and transfer of school feeding functions still managed by WFP. To do this, draw up a capacity development and skills transfer plan with clear objectives and deadlines, and a mechanism for monitoring progress. Consider setting up seconded technical assistance housed at DAS	CO programme team in coordination in coordination with the Directorate of School Feeding and WFP sub-recipients (CRS, UNICEF and UNESCO).	<i>Agreed</i>	<p>The CO will:</p> <p>a) Disseminate the Systems Approach for Better Education Results (SABER) report.</p> <p>b) Provide technical support to the Office of the Prime Minister to finalize the draft national commitment for the Global School Meals Coalition.</p> <p>c) Develop a transition plan that responds to this commitment.</p> <p>d) Conduct an analysis of the Directorate of School Feeding with recommendations for structural and programmatic harmonization.</p>	<p>CO programme (CO partnerships and communications team)</p> <p>CO programme team</p> <p>CO programme team (RBJ and HQ CCS and SBP teams)</p> <p>CO programme team (CO HR team)</p>	<p>June 2024</p> <p>December 2024</p> <p>December 2024</p> <p>December 2024</p>

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R9: Reinforce the project's usefulness in improving the quality of education. Establish closer ties and coordination with PRAASED, which did not take place during the FY17 project, and with other actors involved in the education sector, to analyze and jointly plan the continuation of curriculum revision and teacher training.	CO programme team in coordination in coordination with WFP sub-recipients (CRS, UNICEF and UNESCO).	<i>Partially agreed – the new curriculum came into effect in 2022/23. The PRAASED project is under closure, but a new project will replace it.</i>	<p>The CO will work with education sector partners to:</p> <p>a) Implement relevant findings from the Education Sector Review</p> <p>b) Support UNICEF and UNESCO to finalize the nutrition guide that will be used to deliver nutrition training to teachers.</p> <p>c) Coordinate the delivery of teacher training, implementation of peer tutoring and the provision of learning materials by UNESCO and UNICEF under the programme.</p>	<p>CO programme team</p> <p>CO programme team</p> <p>CO programme team</p>	<p>Continuous (September 2026)</p> <p>December 2024</p> <p>Continuous (September 2026)</p>