

Crisis response revision of the Republic of the Congo country strategic plan (2019–2024) and corresponding budget increase

	Current	Change	Revised
Duration	1 January 2019– 31 December 2024	Two additional years	1 January 2019– 31 December 2026
Beneficiaries	985 218	214 113	1 199 331
<i>(USD)</i>			
Total cost	218 646 561	93 207 628	311 854 189
Transfers	165 691 619	63 213 027	228 904 646
Implementation	27 166 081	12 733 475	39 899 557
Adjusted direct support costs	12 731 955	11 610 938	24 342 893
Subtotal	205 589 656	87 557 439	293 147 095
Indirect support costs (6.5 percent)	13 056 905	5 650 189	18 707 094

Gender and age marker code: 3

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

Rationale

1. The Government of the Republic of the Congo has approved a new national development plan (2022–2026). As a result, the United Nations country team adopted a two-year extension of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) which now covers the period 2020–2026. This fourth revision to the Republic of the Congo country strategic plan (CSP) (2019–2024) is therefore seeking an extension by two years to ensure continued alignment with the national development plan (2022–2026) and UNDAF (2020–2026). Overall, this revision introduces an increase in unique beneficiaries by 214,113 and a budget increase of USD 93,207,628. Proposed adjustments respond to changes in the operational context and are guided by evidence from evaluations, reviews, assessments, monitoring, internal and external consultations, and corporate priorities.
2. *Refugee influx with rising food insecurity.* Continued instability in Mai-Ndombé, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), between July and December 2022, led to an influx of refugees into Congo's Ngabé, Mpouya, and Ignié districts. In 2023, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) transferred food assistance responsibilities to WFP.¹ The majority of refugees remain reliant on food assistance due to limited socioeconomic opportunities, particularly in rural areas. A rapid food and nutrition assessment by WFP in Ngabé confirmed that 64.61 percent of asylum-seeking households are food insecure, with 3.6 percent being severely food insecure.²

¹ This is in line with the memorandum of understanding between the two agencies, as the registered refugees exceeded 5,000.

² Detailed report on the initial assessment of asylum seekers from DRC in Ngabé (2023) (unpublished).

3. *Recurrent floods, shocks, and stressors.* The country has been grappling with recurring floods in its northern and central regions since December 2023. Joint assessments by WFP and the Government in January 2024 found that over 336,560 people were impacted by flooding and in need of urgent emergency food assistance. On 29 December 2023, the Government declared a state of emergency and requested the assistance of humanitarian actors and United Nations agencies. A multi-sector flood response plan was developed in January 2024 by the Government in partnership with humanitarian actors and United Nations agencies, including WFP. A total of 277,563 people most at risk in nine departments are planned to receive food assistance provided by the Government through food rations covering 1,800 kcal per day.
4. The multi-sector flood response plan highlights the need to continue to strengthen the capacities of national response actors and systems through the establishment of coordination mechanisms and emergency preparedness and prevention activities, such as crisis risk monitoring tools, digital solutions, and systems, beneficiary management, supply chain/procurement abilities including emergency food reserves for immediate response. In 2023, WFP has successfully provided financial and technical support to the Ministry of Social Affairs, Solidarity and Humanitarian Action and aims to expand these efforts with this revision.
5. *School feeding capacity constraints.* WFP has strengthened the Government's capacity to manage school feeding programmes as part of the sustainability initiative. In 2023, WFP provided meals to 173,200 children in 532 public schools nationwide and supported the Government as per the national school feeding policy (2016), enhancing efforts to develop home-grown school feeding (HGSF) and advancing national ownership through South-South and triangular cooperation. A Systems Approach for Better Education Results review has been undertaken in 2023 to inform these efforts. Findings show the continued need for strengthening and support of national, institutional, technical, and human capacities in logistics, procurement, monitoring, and evaluating the national school feeding programme. Additionally, to enable the expansion and long-term sustainability of HGSF, the capacity of smallholder farmers requires strengthening. The McGovern-Dole decentralized evaluation³ indicated the importance of continued strengthening of the involvement and coordination of all relevant Government institutions and identifying opportunities for improved coordination and synergies with school feeding programmes by analysing the policies and strategies.
6. *Access constraints to the Likouala Department.* As of 31 December 2023, the Likouala Department hosts 36,990 refugees and asylum seekers, making up 57 percent of the total 65,095 refugees in the Republic of the Congo. Therefore, it is essential that the humanitarian community ensures fast and reliable access to the affected areas. The journey from Brazzaville to Likouala, however, currently requires two to three days of travel by road. The roads are often inaccessible during periods of heavy rain. The lack of access has led to donors and humanitarian partners formally requesting United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS) support from WFP.

Changes

Strategic orientation

7. There is no change in strategic orientation.

³ WFP. 2023. *Final evaluation of the WFP McGovern-Dole funded school feeding project (FFE-679-2017/020-00) in the Republic of the Congo – 2018–2023*; and WFP. 2023. *Baseline Evaluation of the WFP McGovern-Dole Funded School Feeding Program in the Republic of Congo from 2021 to 2026*.



8. Under CSP Outcome 1, Output 17 has been introduced to enable WFP to support the Government in terms of emergency preparedness, early response, and recovery in line with national priorities. Activity 1 has been revised to capture the capacity strengthening component introduced through this revision.
9. Under CSP outcome 5, activity 7 and corresponding output 18 have been introduced to allow for the provision of UNHAS to humanitarian actors in the region.

Country strategic plan outcomes

10. This revision represents a continuation of the activities of the CSP for 2019–2024 for two additional years and is further enhanced by the following changes.
11. *To respond to the refugee influx and associated rising food insecurity*, WFP plans to extend assistance to an additional 5,450 beneficiaries from the DRC, under CSP outcome 1, activity 1. A total of 30,450 refugees will be supported through unconditional general distribution of in-kind and cash-based transfers until the end of June 2025. Through ongoing discussions with the Government and UNHCR, WFP plans to transition 30 percent of the refugees in the Likouala Department to conditional assistance, with the remaining number of refugees supported via unconditional general food distributions. Additional analysis will be carried out with key partners to inform WFP's long-term strategic approach aimed at building refugees' self-reliance.⁴
12. *Resilience building for refugees, asylum seekers, and at-risk host communities* will be expanded under CSP outcome 1, activity 1 to cover an increased number of locations and beneficiaries. Areas most affected by flooding and vulnerable to future floods as well as those hosting large numbers of refugees will be prioritized. Over 18 months, WFP plans to assist an additional 45,380 beneficiaries, with sustainable agricultural practices to build resilience. Beneficiaries will be required to participate in integrated climate risk management activities that align with the seasonal calendar and are subsequently layered and sequenced to achieve food security and nutrition outcomes. Additionally, refugee children will be included in the school feeding programmes and will continue to receive school meals while attending schools in areas where WFP implements these initiatives.
13. *To increase the Government's capacity to anticipate, prepare and respond to shocks*, WFP will prioritize the capacity strengthening and support to the Government by enhancing the national emergency preparedness and response capacities system through crisis risk monitoring tools, digital solutions, systems for predictive modelling, anticipatory action plans, and joint drafting of response plans, beneficiary management, and supply chain/procurement abilities. This is reflected by adding a new output 17, under CSP outcome 1, activity 1. To strengthen emergency food reserves for immediate response, in alignment with the multi-sector flood response plan⁵, WFP will support the Government with the prepositioning of contingency stock. High-energy biscuits will be utilized as a reserve to address the needs of 50,000 shock-affected people to be prepared for future crises and contribute to closing the gap in assistance. WFP will require 15 mt of high-energy biscuits per year (based on a ration size of 100 g per person/per day for 3 days), equivalent to approximately three days' rations.

⁴ A joint assessment mission is planned with UNHCR for 2024 to better understand the needs of refugees and ensure self-reliance programming is adequate to their needs.

⁵ Ministry of Social Affairs, Solidarity and Humanitarian Action. 2024. *Plan multisectoriel de réponse aux inondations en République du Congo*.



14. *To address access constraints to the Likouala Department*, WFP, through this revision, has incorporated humanitarian air services through the new activity 7 and corresponding output 18. WFP will ensure timely and efficient access for government officials and humanitarian actors to crisis-affected populations in hard-to-reach areas. In collaboration with UNHCR, the country office will also facilitate air services to support the repatriation of refugees who have expressed their intention to return.
15. *To address government capacity gaps across the school feeding programme*, WFP will accelerate its efforts in strengthening the capacity of the Ministry of Pre-Primary, Primary and Secondary Education, and Literacy focusing on food stock management, training of school feeding committees, food diversity, hygiene, logistics, and procurement. Additionally, WFP will support the monitoring of the school feeding programme, commencing with 25 pilot schools in Pool, Bouenza, and Plateaux to effectively initiate the transition to the Government. WFP will enhance coordination across ministries by advocating for and supporting the establishment of a functional multisectoral school feeding council and an inter-ministerial technical committee, as outlined in the national school feeding policy. Along with strengthening national frameworks and institutions, WFP will support activities that create an enabling environment for the national school feeding directorate and decentralized school feeding service to lead and provide strategic guidance for the implementation of the national school feeding policy. These changes have been reflected by adding a capacity strengthening modality under CSP outcome 2, activity 2. To build a strong foundation for HGSF, WFP plans to provide support to an additional 6,510 smallholder farmers, strengthening their capacity to apply climate-resilient farming practices aimed at encouraging market-oriented production linked to schools as markets under CSP outcome 3, activity 4.

Targeting

16. Targeting methodologies will differ based on activity objectives and the availability of pre-existing data. In flood response scenarios, there is a higher need for a quick response, so WFP will leverage data from the Government's unique identifier social registry, where available, which pre-selects the most vulnerable households across the country. For resilience activities, the targeting process will be community-based, involving affected populations in identifying the most at risk and determining the types of assets needed for rehabilitation in their locality. Targeting for refugees will continue to rely on registration data provided by UNHCR, including variables that can be used to assess household vulnerability to food insecurity. WFP will furthermore conduct a comprehensive verification exercise to assess the quality of refugee data and serve as a basis for targeting. Refugees in the Likouala Department selected for conditional assistance are identified through UNHCR's livelihood mapping exercise, which indicated that 30 percent have sufficient economic capacity to meet their basic needs, supported by food security assessments. Lastly, targeting for school meals will prioritize locations with the highest levels of food insecurity, as identified by the comprehensive food security and vulnerability analysis.⁶ For the HGSF model, targeting will also consider factors such as market functionality and agricultural potential.

Partnerships

17. Moving away from unconditional to conditional assistance for refugees, arrangements are already in place with UNHCR and the Government for the assessments and selection of the most appropriate activities to improve refugees' self-reliance.

⁶ *Comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerability Analysis 2023/24* (unpublished).

Country office capacity

18. WFP is preparing a geographic strategic shift of field presence to better consolidate operational needs and reduce costs, which has been reflected in this revision. This will reduce transport costs, and support monitoring efforts. Additionally, WFP has conducted a staffing review to align profiles and structures with current and future operational needs, ensuring efficient workload distribution and strategic focus.

Service provision

19. WFP aims to establish two additional warehouses in the central-north, and southern part of the country, to reduce delivery times and mitigate the impact of road closures during the rainy season.

Monitoring and evaluation

20. Baseline data collection will be ensured, and the monitoring plan will be revised to adhere to the minimum monitoring requirements, as well as incorporate risk-based monitoring. Monitoring and evaluation frameworks have been updated to include new country capacity-strengthening indicators. Additional monitoring and evaluation staff will support the implementation of the minimum monitoring standards, especially given the increasing number of refugees. Over the next two years, analysis and evidence creation will be a priority for WFP to inform the design of the new CSP.⁷ In alignment with the 2022–2025 strategic plan, WFP will promote gender-responsive monitoring and the disaggregation of data by age, sex, and disability as well as other identity elements, in an effort to understand how different individuals are affected by food insecurity. WFP will utilize this detailed data collection to make informed, evidence-based decisions that strengthen the inclusivity and effectiveness of its programmes, while also enhancing accountability, reporting, and long-term planning.

Transition/handover strategy

21. In preparation for the next CSP, WFP will build evidence in coordination with UNHCR and the Government to identify ways to transition refugees into resilience-building activities that promote self-reliance.

Risk management

22. In line with the Executive Director's circular OED2024/004⁸ on the Global Assurance Framework, WFP will ensure that minimum assurance measures are in place. As part of risk management, WFP will systematically assess cooperating partners' performance and conduct spot-checks at least once a year. In 2023, WFP strengthened its community feedback mechanism by establishing local community mechanisms for project involvement and enhancing internal controls with standard operating procedures, a reinforced partner selection process, increased monitoring missions, and segregation of duties.

Social and environmental safeguards

23. During the CSP extension period, WFP will implement the environmental and social sustainability framework, utilizing the environmental and social risk screening tool for all activities. This ensures adherence to environmental and social standards and facilitates

⁷ Additional assessments required include: i) joint assessment missions with UNHCR; ii) the Fill the Nutrient Gap study; iii) the Standardized Monitoring and Assessment of Relief and Transitions survey to update malnutrition and anaemia rates; iv) a crop and food security assessment with FAO; v) an Integrated Food Security Phase Classification should be held to improve the monitoring of the food security situation.

⁸ Executive Director's circular OED2024/004, [WFP Global Assurance Framework](#).



partner agreements. WFP and partners will develop and implement environmental and social management plans where necessary. Special attention will be given to protection and accountability to affected populations, ensuring engagement and meaningful participation of communities, including Indigenous Peoples, in accordance with the principle of free prior and informed consent.

Beneficiary analysis

24. The number of beneficiaries targeted will increase by 214,113. In table 1, the unique beneficiaries targeted during the period covered by this revision are presented, with overlaps occurring at various levels primarily driven by the significant increase in activity 1 (food and cash modalities).

TABLE 1: DIRECT BENEFICIARIES BY STRATEGIC OUTCOME, ACTIVITY AND MODALITY								
CSP outcome	Activity	Modality	Period	Women (18+ years)	Men (18+ years)	Girls (0-18 years)	Boys (0-18 years)	Total
1	1	Food	Current	128 884	72 175	144 350	170 127	515 536
			Increase/ (decrease)	49 263	12 763	36 797	35 472	134 295
			Revised	178 147	84 938	181 147	205 599	649 831
		CBTs	Current	79 674	69 051	58 427	58 427	265 579
			Increase/ (decrease)	15 442	13 126	11 104	11 379	51 051
			Revised	95 116	82 177	69 531	69 806	316 630
2	2	Food	Current	-	-	70 215	70 215	140 430
			Increase/ (decrease)	-	-	8 280	5 519	13 799
			Revised	-	-	78 495	75 734	154 229
		CBTs	Current	-	-	43 035	43 035	86 070
			Increase/ (decrease)	-	-	5 075	3 383	8 458
			Revised	-	-	48 110	46 418	94 528
3	4	Capacity strengthening	Current	1 318	782	-	-	2 100
			Increase/ (decrease)	2 422	4 088	-	-	6 510
			Revised	3 740	4 870	-	-	8 610
Total (without overlap)			Current	206 537	138 251	303 055	337 375	985 218
			Increase/ (decrease)	67 127	29 977	61 256	55 753	214 113
			Revised	273 664	168 228	364 311	393 128	1 199 331

Transfers

**TABLE 2: FOOD RATION (*g/person/day*) AND CASH-BASED TRANSFER VALUE (*USD/person/day*)
BY COUNTRY STRATEGIC PLAN OUTCOME AND ACTIVITY**

	Country strategic plan outcome 1					Country strategic plan outcome 2		
	Activity 1					Activity 2		
	General food distribution	Moderate acute malnutrition supplementation - PBWG	Moderate acute malnutrition prevention - PBWG	Food assistance for assets	Moderate acute malnutrition supplementation children	Moderate acute malnutrition prevention children	School meals - ration 1	School meals - ration 2
Modality	Food/CBTs	Food	Food	Food/CBTs	Food	Food	Food/CBTs	Food
Cereals	400	-	-	400	-	-	150	-
Pulses	120	-	-	120	-	-	40	40
Oil	30	25	25	30	-	-	15	15
Salt	5	-	-	5	-	-	5	5
Canned fish	-	-	-	-	-	-	30	30
Cassava flour	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	150
Super Cereal	-	250	200	-	-	-	-	-
LNS-MQ (Plumpy'Doz)	-	-	-	-	-	50	-	-
RUSF (Plumpy'Sup)	-	-	-	-	100	-	-	-
Total kcal/day	2 100	1 175	940	2 100	510	255	901	900
% kcal from protein	10.8	13.8	13.2	10.8	10	10	-	9
Cash-based transfers (<i>USD/person/day</i>)	0.94	-	-	0.94	-	-	0.30	-
Number of feeding days per year	360	90	120	48	90	120	180	180

Abbreviations: LNS-MQ = lipid-based nutrient supplement - medium quantity; PBWG = pregnant and breastfeeding women and girls; RUSF = ready-to-use supplementary food.



	Current budget		Increase		Revised budget	
	Total (mt)	Total (USD)	Total (mt)	Total (USD)	Total (mt)	Total (USD)
Cereals	28 945	12 292 862	11 131	3 709 887	40 077	16 002 749
Pulses	8 364	6 532 257	3 267	1 972 184	11 631	8 504 441
Oil and fats	2 848	3 402 708	1 150	1 474 268	3 998	4 876 976
Mixed and blended foods	4 830	6 250 767	2 700	3 191 257	7 530	9 442 024
Other	2 966	6 147 689	1 066	2 642 586	4 032	8 790 274
Total (food)	47 952	34 626 283	19 316	12 990 181	67 268	47 616 464
Cash-based transfers		65 425 200		28 438 564		93 863 764
Total (food and cash-based transfer value)	47 952	100 051 483	19 316	41 428 745	67 268	141 480 227

Cost breakdown

25. This revision will increase the CSP budget by USD 93,207,628 to a total cost of USD 311,854,189. This increase is mainly driven by the two-year extension in time as well as the increase in beneficiaries under CSP outcome 1, activity 1 and the inclusion of an UNHAS output 18 and activity 7.

	SDG target 2.1/WFP strategic outcome 1	SDG target 2.1/WFP strategic outcome 2	SDG target 2.3/WFP strategic outcome 3	SDG target 17.9/WFP strategic outcome 4	SDG target 17.16/WFP strategic outcome 5	Total
	CSP outcome 1	CSP outcome 2	CSP outcome 3	CSP outcome 4	CSP outcome 5	
Focus area	Crisis response	Root causes	Resilience building	Crisis response	Crisis response	
Transfers	41 377 097	17 539 796	2 196 362	0	2 099 771	63 213 027
Implementation	6 885 373	4 716 226	829 624	0	302 251	12 733 475
Adjusted direct support costs						11 610 938
Subtotal						87 557 439
Indirect support costs (6.5 percent)						5 650 189
Total						93 207 628

TABLE 5: OVERALL CSP COST BREAKDOWN, AFTER REVISION (USD)						
	SDG target 2.1/WFP strategic outcome 1	SDG target 2.1/WFP strategic outcome 2	SDG target 2.3/WFP strategic outcome 3	SDG target 17.9/WFP strategic outcome 4	SDG target 17.16/WFP strategic outcome 5	Total
	CSP outcome 1	CSP outcome 2	CSP outcome 3	CSP outcome 4	CSP outcome 5	
Focus area	Crisis response	Root causes	Resilience building	Crisis response	Crisis response	
Transfers	140 098 101	62 611 630	19 972 568	1 887 576	4 334 771	228 904 646
Implementation	20 268 089	15 692 102	3 342 919	61 225	535 221	39 899 557
Adjusted direct support costs	14 170 813	7 628 402	1 888 890	126 702	528 086	24 342 893
Subtotal	174 537 003	85 932 135	25 204 377	2 075 503	5 398 078	293 147 095
Indirect support costs (6.5 percent)	11 344 905	5 585 589	1 638 285	0	138 316	18 707 094
Total	185 881 908	91 517 724	26 842 662	2 075 503	5 536 393	311 854 189