



World Food Programme

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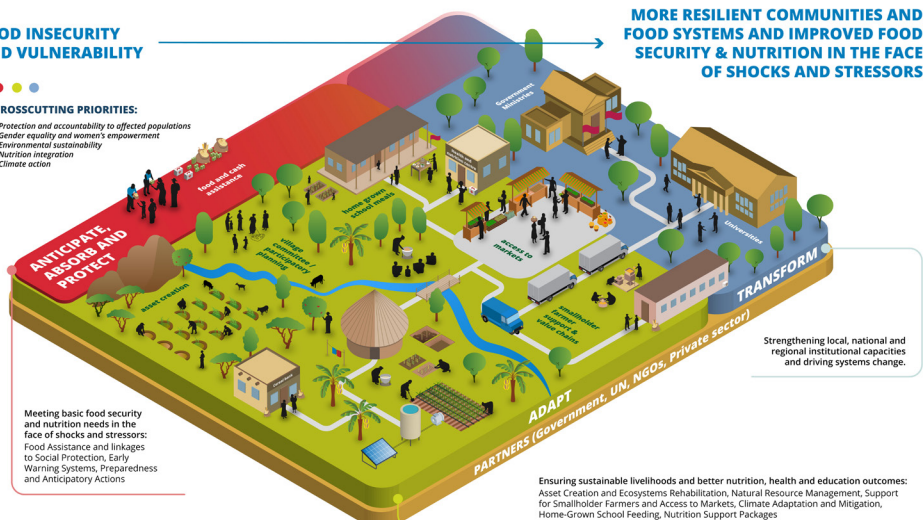
Summary of Guidance Note for IRP Progression Strategy Implementation

FOOD INSECURITY AND VULNERABILITY



CROSSCUTTING PRIORITIES:

- Protection and accountability to affected populations
- Gender equality and women's empowerment
- Environmental sustainability
- Nutrition integration
- Climate action



April 2025

Introduction

Despite ongoing challenges and food insecurity in the Sahel, the region holds great potential for ecosystem restoration, groundwater utilization, and renewable energy. Since 2018, WFP, in collaboration with several donors, national governments, and partners, has been implementing integrated resilience interventions across five Sahel countries.

Over the last five years, the IRP has focused on:

- **Ecosystem restoration** through asset creation to improve agricultural and pastoral productivity.
- **Regenerative agricultural practices** to ensure sustainable natural resource use.
- **Value chain development** to enhance market access for smallholder farmers.
- **Social protection measures** such as lean season assistance, school meals, and skills development.
- **Nutrition-sensitive** interventions to prevent and manage malnutrition.
- **Institutional capacity strengthening** to support resilience initiatives at national, regional, and community levels.

Given the rising humanitarian needs, the Sahel IRP aims to break the cycle of dependency by restoring livelihoods through land rehabilitation and essential asset creation.

The progression strategy evaluates community progress, enabling **a structured exit** plan where self-reliant communities transition to national support systems, allowing WFP to expand its reach to other areas in need. Successful implementation is critical because continuous external aid is unsustainable in the long run.

Purpose & Target Audience: This note guides Country Offices (CO), Field Offices (FO) and Regional Bureau (RB) staff in implementing the IRP progression strategy, ensuring contextualized application based on local IRP packages.

What is the Progression Strategy?

Summary of Guidance Note for IRP Progression Strategy Implementation

What is the Progression Strategy? The IRP is a dynamic package transitioning from direct assistance to self-reliance by:

- Reducing food aid dependence while strengthening capacities and local economies.
- Shifting from direct food aid to local production and safety net integration.
- Enhancing livelihoods through land restoration, market access, and specific social protection support for most vulnerable people.

The strategy spans 3–10 years in two phases (0–5 years and 6–10 years), ensuring communities either become self-sufficient and more resilient and/or integrate specific components into national social protection programs (e.g. SF, shock responsive ASP, etc.). Progression is non-linear, adapting to community needs and external factors.

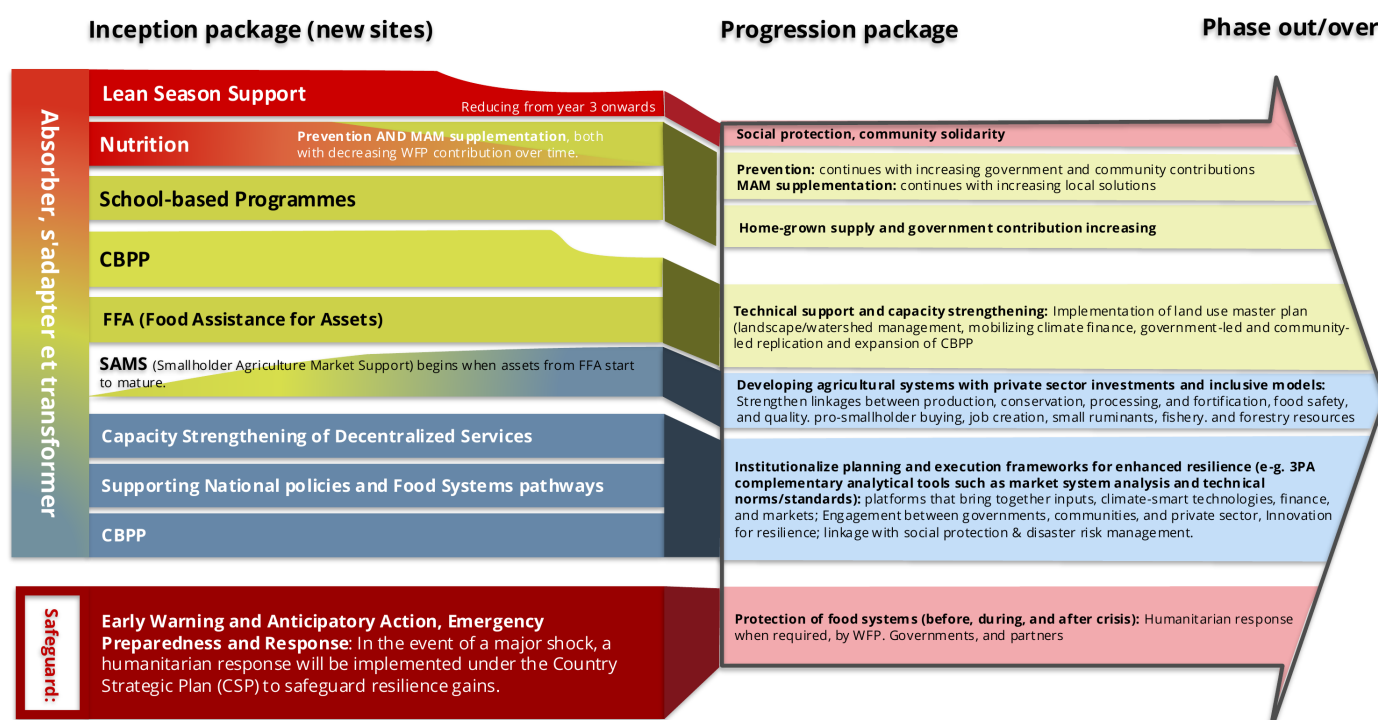
Key Enablers for the Progression Strategy.

Successful implementation relies on:

- Community ownership
- Multidimensional coverage & time
- Financial resources & community contributions
- Stakeholder roles & responsibilities, Partnerships and Alignment with national systems
- Milestones for monitoring & measuring results and enabling progressive learning
- Institutionalization & system strengthening

Implementation of the Progression Strategy

The implementation of the CSP requires baseline documentation through the Community-Based Participatory Planning (CBPP) tool, which highlights various priority elements identified by the community – enabling WFP to monitor progress. The CBPP, along with other monitoring indicators, shows the key areas and baseline measurement parameters, as displayed in the following table



| Axes | Parameters |
|---|--|
| <p>1. Community Ownership & Commitments. Activity plans must define assets, capacity building, stakeholder roles, and community contributions. Agreements on land tenure and asset management must be established. Performance of all stakeholders should be reviewed periodically, with annual assessments ensuring accountability.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agreed-upon activity plans, and quantified contributions at the site level. Stakeholder performance in fulfilling commitments. Management plans (number, type, duration, etc) for post-intervention sustainability. |
| <p>2. Asset Creation & Land Restoration. Asset creation is the IRP's core entry point for reversing land degradation and improving livelihoods. Food Assistance for Asset (FFA) interventions address short-term food security needs while fostering long-term resilience. Government involvement is key to ensure sustainability and scaling up. Once an asset is completed and functional, cash/food transfers should phase out, and complementary efforts (e.g., composting, homestead tree planting) should be household, groups and community-driven.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of assets created with and without incentives. Levels of HH, groups and community contributions. Level of utilization and impact of assets. Institutional integration of IRP tools and approaches into national guidelines (i.e. technical standards). Economic benefits generated versus initial investment costs. |

| Axes | Parameters |
|--|--|
| <p>3. Value Chain Development (Jobs & Youth Focus)</p> <p>Value chain development (VCD) complements asset creation, optimizing rehabilitated land and restored production systems. Depending on asset quality and scale, VCD activities can start in the first year or later. Once ecosystems are restored and production capacity improves, training is provided on regenerative agricultural practices, and specific equipment or support provided in postharvest management, market access, and financial inclusion. WFP supports smallholder farmers in marketing surplus commodities (e.g. staples, fodder, fresh foods, byproducts, livestock, etc.), fostering economic independence. Initial input support (e.g., equipment) is phased out over time, transitioning toward community-led management (e.g. via warrantage, tontines & savings schemes-driven IGAs, food (s) drying, conservation, and packaging, perishable foods and/or fodder storage and management, etc.).</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of HHs utilizing rehabilitated land for income generation. • # of groups (including youth) engaged in savings and IGAs (e.g., Niger's ESPOIR concept). • # of Ha of restored land under production and yield levels. • # and types of commodities produced (cereals, vegetables, fodder, etc.). • Level of women's participation in savings groups and IGAs. • # and type of trees planted for various purposes (e.g., home-steads, community areas). |



| Axes | Parameters |
|--|---|
| <p>4. Nutrition. Nutrition-sensitive programming is integrated across IRP activities, with nutrition-specific interventions in areas with high malnutrition rates. Immediate nutrition responses include treatment of acute malnutrition, micronutrient supplementation, and exclusive breastfeeding promotion. Longer-term solutions focus on food security, improved conservation, storage, and use of local products for nutritious foods preparation, food fortification, market access, integrated gardening (e.g. trees and crops with high nutritional value), and diversification, and reduced hardships on access to water and sanitation through surface and underground water management and partnerships.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of eligible population reached by nutrition preventive programme (coverage) • # of people receiving supplementation for moderate acute malnutrition (children 6–59 months and pregnant and breastfeeding women) • # of people reached through social and behaviour change • % of individuals practicing recommended healthy diet behaviour communication (SBCC) approaches • % of children aged 6–23 months receiving a minimum acceptable diet • Minimum diet diversity for women and girls of reproductive age • % increase in production of high-quality and nutrition-dense foods • % of households that cannot afford the lowest-cost nutritious diet • Trends in acute malnutrition rates (SAMS and MAM) over the years |
| <p>5. Lean Season Assistance. Lean season assistance is phased out after year one, except for specific vulnerable groups (e.g., disabled individuals). From year two, community-led mechanisms (e.g., turbo-tontines, dedicated rehabilitated assets and areas for solidarity schemes) replace external support. Community grain banks may also help mitigate seasonal food shortages.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of Reduction in HHs needing lean season assistance. • Quantity of food provided by community grain banks. • # of people transferred from highly vulnerable groups to social protection registries. |

| Axes | Parameters |
|---|--|
| <p>6. School Meals. IRP aims for a transition to national and local institutions led home-grown school feeding (HGSF). Locally produced food supports schools, strengthening market linkages and community contributions to meal programs. In contexts lacking SF national programs, communities supplement school meals through self-help initiatives (e.g., adding condiments, dry fish, eggs, vegetables).</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quantities of commodities sold to HGSF programs. • # of Local FO supported for HGSF • Type and volume of Community food contributions to school meal initiatives. |
| <p>7. Gender: Women, Youth & Marginalized Groups. The IRP strengthens gender equity through governance, land access, and economic empowerment. Women are supported in securing land tenure, engaging in value chains, and joining savings groups. School retention for girls is prioritized, alongside targeted nutrition support for pregnant and breastfeeding women, and promotional packages for adolescent girls (e.g. scholarships for access to education).</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of women represented in governance structures. • Level of men and women's access to land and economic resources. • School retention rates for girls. • Reduction rates of early marriages • % of women who have mastered agricultural techniques and/or management skills • % of men involved in child or family nutrition • Existence of mechanisms for protection against gender-based violence (GBV) • Women's access to agricultural technologies and climate innovation • % of women involved in conflict management mechanisms |
| <p>8. Social Cohesion. Given existing tensions in the Sahel (e.g. competition over land use, the burden of internally displaced persons and refugees on host communities, social stratification, etc.), IRP must monitor and mitigate local disputes and conflict risks. Strengthening community dispute resolution at intra and inter-community level, and inclusive governance structures, fosters peaceful resource sharing.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perceptions of resources' use across groups. • Representation of vulnerable groups in decision-making committees. |

| Axes | Parameters |
|--|---|
| <p>9. Risk Management & Climate Services. Timely weather and climate information enhances resilience by guiding agricultural planning and seasonal movements (e.g., early planting, crop selection, pasture conditions, etc.). Governments, with partners like FAO and WFP, can provide such services, supporting farmers and herders in decision-making. Specific Anticipatory Action mechanisms may be put in place at commune level to assist and protect vulnerable communities at times of severe shocks whilst safeguarding resilience gains in targeted resilience sites/territorial units.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existence of Climate information and EWS covering the geographical area (s) Existence of AA mechanisms for type of shocks |
| <p>10. Integration into National Programs: IRP facilitates transitioning specific components into national social protection systems (e.g., Early Warning Systems, social safety nets for specific categories of highly vulnerable people). It also supports government ownership of land restoration, the adoption of integrated and high-quality technical standards, and the scaling up of resilient food system strategies, including through specific social safety nets (e.g. school feeding) and adaptive ones (e.g. Anticipatory Action), and aligning with national commitments (e.g., NAPs, LDN, PAAGGW, NDCs).</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communities covered by National Programme on areas of the IRP Specific technical standards or packages adopted by line ministries Existence of partnerships to scale up resilience programmes |
| <p>11. Contribution to Decentralization: By embedding Seasonal Livelihood Planning (SLP) and Community-Based Participatory Planning (CBPP) within sub-national development plans, IRP strengthens local governance.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated Communal Development plans integrating CBPP information. |
| <p>12. Performance Indicators & Monitoring: IRP measures progress through context-specific indicators, tracking food security, livelihoods, and resilience.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key milestones set at project inception, within CBPP, with adjustments based on community engagement and evolving needs and real monitoring capacity at site level. # of sites tracked using GIS (e.g. AIMS) |

RESILIENCE AND CLIMATE ACTION UNIT

World Food Programme

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<https://www.wfp.org/publications/integrated-resilience-sahel>

Photo page 1: WFP/Asma Achahboun

Photo page 4: WFP/Asma Achahboun