

Management Response from WFP Democratic Republic of Congo Country Office to the recommendations of the decentralized evaluation of Final Evaluation of the Programme to Strengthen the Socio-Economic Resilience of Smallholder Farmers and Vulnerable Populations in Democratic Republic of Congo (DE/CDCO/2022/020) from 2018 to 2024

1. This document, finalized in July 2025, presents the management response to the recommendations of the Decentralized Evaluation of the Programme to Strengthen the Socio-Economic Resilience of Smallholder Farmers and Vulnerable Populations in Democratic Republic of Congo from 2018 to 2024.
2. The evaluation, which was commissioned by WFP, FAO and UNICEF covers smallholder farmers and vulnerable communities in selected territories in North and South Kivu by building the capacity of provincial and local government actors to design and implement policies that improve social services access. The JRP aims to bolster the Government of the DRC's National Strategic Development Plan, which seeks to: (a) stabilize conflict-ridden areas, (b) promote economic growth, (c) create new jobs, and (d) support overall human development. The final evaluation assessed the results achieved by the JRP in DRC on the target population's well-being and resilience during the implementation period from 2018-2024.
3. The evaluation made twelve key recommendations out of which five are strategic and seven operational with 29 actions under the leadership of the three Agencies. The matrix sets out whether WFP, UNICEF and FAO agree, 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>
Strategic Recommendations					
Priority: High Recommendation 1: Consider the level of accessibility and stability needed for full implementation of activities (Deadline: next phase of the programme)	WFP, FAO and UNICEF: review their own activities [Implementing agencies and NGO partners for confirmation on access]	This recommendation has already been considered in phase II of the JRP project design and plan. Following the occupation of M23 in the Eastern Provinces and in light of the changes in the security and accessibility context, JRP II refocused activities from North Kivu to Tanganyika. Resilience light package developed for South Kivu noting the change with wide-spread insecurity and access challenges. WFP: <i>Agreed</i> UNICEF: <i>Agreed</i> FAO: <i>Agreed</i>	1.1 WFP in coordination with UNICEF, FAO and other partners will conduct quarterly reviews of the security situation (physical accessibility, negotiation and community engagement analysis) and of the rate of implementation. Partners will jointly agree on triggers for further adjustments in South Kivu.	WFP: Programme (Security)	Implemented (30 June 2025) Quarterly
			1.2 UNICEF in congruence with coordination and other 2 agencies will decide consensually with donor on how to proceed with regard to South Kivu beyond 3 months.	UNICEF: Security Unit	30 June 2026
			1.3 FAO: In light of the prevailing security situation in South Kivu, FAO will undertake comprehensive consultations with all relevant stakeholders — including KfW, UNICEF, WFP, national and local authorities, and field actors — prior	FAO: Management/Programme /Security	30 June 2026

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			to launching its activities, in order to ensure contextual relevance, coordination and operational safety.		
Priority: High Recommendation 2: Consider focusing on a smaller number of interventions to ensure that all are implemented fully and that beneficiaries receive multiple complementary interventions as opposed to just one. (Deadline: next phase of the programme)		Recommendation informed the design of next phase of the project. A light resilience package has been developed for South Kivu. Sequencing of interventions planned as part of inception workshop. WFP: <i>Agreed</i> UNICEF: <i>Agreed</i> FAO: <i>Agreed</i>			
Sub-recommendation 2.1 Select activities that are the most promising in terms of building resilience. While the evaluation did not assess all interventions, the ET observed that the following activities	WFP, FAO and UNICEF: review their own activities. Joint committee to make the final decision [Implicated ministries]	WFP: <i>Agreed</i> UNICEF: <i>Agreed</i> FAO: <i>Agreed</i>	2.1 WFP/FAO/UNICEF: This recommendation has already been considered in phase II through the design of a resilience light package - WFP has built on the lessons learnt from JRP-I to select activities such as support to smart-agriculture; capacity development	WFP: Programme	Implemented - 30 June 2025 (WFP)

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showed the most promise: the agricultural and vocational trainings, support for IYCF and maternal nutrition, access to market and storage. (Deadline: next phase of the programme)		-	in agri-business and entrepreneurship; development of market information system		
			2.2 UNICEF : Joint committee to make the final decision. IYCF promotion and maternal nutrition interventions will continue and reinforced in JRP II.	UNICEF : Nutrition/Education	30 September 2026
			2.3 FAO will prioritize support to agricultural production and income-generating activities, notably through Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs). It will also seek to create strategic synergies with the intervention packages of the three partner agencies to maximize impact and ensure complementarity	FAO : Programme	31 May 2026
Priority: High Recommendation 3: Increase coverage of peacebuilding activities (beyond specific individuals or groups) or develop a protocol for wider	UNICEF [Implementing agencies and NGO partners]	UNICEF : Agreed	3.1 UNICEF will review its current activities and integrate better with youth, education and Social and Behaviour Change (SBC) activities.	UNICEF : Education (Youth), SBC	30 June 2026 (UNICEF)

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dissemination across the community. (Deadline: Next phase of Programme)					
Priority: Medium Recommendation 4: Align evaluation strategies across agencies based on shared learning objectives and include elements of convergence to increase learning across organization (EQ 3.3). (Deadline: Next phase of programme to time the baseline evaluation of the programme, and as soon as possible for changes in any monitoring system)	WFP, FAO and UNICEF for their respective activities with one agency identified to take the lead on the combined efforts (for instance by using a centralized reporting structure (as opposed to individual reports from the three agencies) and a centralized mechanism for responding to information requests from the donor or government counterparts)	Evaluation strategy agreed by partners. Impact evaluation under-planning. WFP: Agreed Each UN agency has its own M&E mechanism/Unit and reporting system. However, for phase II, an additional staff will be recruited to assist the project coordination team to further facilitate the compilation and consolidation of reports. In addition, there is also the extra-project M&E framework for all BMZ-funded projects.			
Sub-recommendation 4.1 Align M&E strategies and adopt unique identifiers across activities so that programme			4.1 WFP will appoint one additional team member at the project coordination team to further facilitate the compilation and consolidation of reports.	WFP Programme (JRP Coordination)	31 January 2026

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<p>convergence can be tracked at the household level.</p> <p>(Deadline: Next phase of programme to time the baseline evaluation of the programme, and as soon as possible for changes in any monitoring system)</p>		<p>UNICEF: <i>Partially agreed</i> - Each agency has a focal point for reporting and M&E and uses the joint template to prepare reports. For more convergence activities are conducted through the platform approach this could be reflected in reports for better harmonisation.</p> <p>FAO: <i>Agreed</i></p>	4.2 WFP: this recommendation has already been taken into account in JRP phase II through a common logframe and a joint impact evaluation.	WFP Programme (UNICEF, FAO , JRP II M&E Team)	Implemented (30 June 2025)
			4.3 WFP, FAO and UNICEF: WFP, FAO and UNICEF will adopt a centralized reporting structure as in the previous phase—replacing individual agency reports—with a unified reporting and information-sharing mechanism for donor and government counterparts. The reporting template will also be reviewed and revised to align with a platform-based approach.	WFP: Programme UNICEF: Nutrition/ Education FAO: Programme	31 March 2026
<p>Priority: High</p> <p>Recommendation 5: Ensure sustainability of the JRP and other joint programmes by increasing government ownership and participation within the programme's</p>	WFP, FAO and UNICEF for their respective activities	<p>Government engagement plan under-development for national, province and local authorities.</p> <p>WFP: <i>Partially agreed</i>- This recommendation has been considered in Phase II. The</p>	5.1 WFP will develop workplans at national and provincial level, including the Environmental and Social Safeguards (ESS) and organize joint missions with the various sectoral ministries (Agriculture, rural development, environment, etc.)	WFP: Programme [Ministries of Agriculture, Rural Development and Environment]	31 January 2026

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sustainability strategy. Include further details within the sustainability strategy on how to mitigate the effects of shocks. (Deadline: This should be included in the design and proposal of the new phase)		approach promoting the Government ownership and participation at all levels as well as the approach on supporting the mitigation of shock effects have been included in the project document for Phase II. In addition, these approaches have also been considered by other complementary projects sharing the same intervention areas such as the Anticipatory Action project with ECHO, in coordination with the JRP. UNICEF: <i>Agreed</i> FAO: <i>Agreed</i>	5.2 UNICEF will set up a steering committee (with government technicians including at provincial level) for Government ownership and leadership. This action is dependent on decision to be taken for recommendation 1 on South Kivu.	UNICEF: Education/Nutrition/SB	31 July 2025
			5.3 FAO will engage the competent authorities in the implementation of its activities, through letter of agreement and well-targeted capacity-building sessions.	FAO: Programme (Field offices)	30 May 2025
			5.5 UNICEF will continue to promote climate-resilient WASH services.	UNICEF: Programme	31 December 2028
Operational Recommendations					

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Priority: High Recommendation 6: Select crops based on value chain analysis that identify those that are the most financially beneficial and viable for the region to promote in agricultural training. (EQ 1.4). Broaden the focus of livelihood and income generating activities by including more non-agricultural opportunities and ensure that vocational trainings align with the sectors/vocations perceived to be most accessible and profitable (EQ 1.4).	FAO (for value chain analysis), WFP and UNICEF (for additional training) [Ministry of Agriculture for inputs on feasibility of selected crop to be cultivated; Ministry of Rural Development and Ministry of Vocational Training may help identify profitable non-agricultural sectors/vocations]	WFP: <i>Agreed</i> UNICEF: <i>Agreed</i> FAO: <i>Agreed</i>	6.1 WFP: This recommendation has been considered in the project design for phase II.	WFP: Programme	31 December 2025
			6.2 UNICEF will conduct additional training.	UNICEF: Education/Nutrition/SBC	30 September 2025
Priority: High Recommendation 7: Reinforce farmers' knowledge and practice in natural resource management and climate resilient agricultural	FAO	FAO: <i>Agreed</i> -	7.1 FAO: In JRP II, FAO will strengthen farmers' knowledge and practices in natural resource management and climate-resilient agricultural production where feasible.	FAO: Programme	31 December 2027

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production in South Kivu (and North Kivu if feasible). (Deadline: Next phase of Programme)					
Priority: High Recommendation 8: Adjust procedures to facilitate the timely flow down of funds for implementation and to accelerate the approval process for expenditures to NGO partners to avoid any delays with financing the implementation of activities. For instance, explore options to allow for pre-financing at the start of implementation; and ensure that the reimbursement process is clear to implementing partners so that they are aware	WFP, FAO and UNICEF for their respective activities [Implementation agencies and NGO partners]	WFP: <i>Agreed</i> UNICEF: <i>Partially agreed</i> UNICEF will within its capacity ensure smooth flow of funds. However, procedures for contracts, procurement and selection of partners are mandatory every two years. Disruptions cannot be completely avoided. FAO: <i>Agreed</i>	8.1 WFP: Based on the lessons learned from the previous phase this recommendation has already been taken into account in JRP II. The capacity of partners will be strengthened on UN financial management processes and standards. The trainings organized immediately after the signing of the agreements will focus on the aspects of expenditure forecasting (preparation of monthly or quarterly expenditure plans), preparation and presentation of financial reports/invoices according to a monthly or quarterly schedule in order to stem the payment delay and carry out activities normally. Each partner will have a multi-year agreement covering a set of activity packages.	WFP: Programme, Finance	Implemented (30 June 2025)

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of the timing when claims should be submitted (EQ 3.1). (Deadline: Adjustments should be made as soon as possible, but could be coincide with the next phase)			8.2 FAO: DRC is a Level 3 emergency country for FAO. It implies simplified procedures for procurement and partnerships; enhanced coordination mechanisms with other UN agencies and NGOs and priority access to funding mechanisms like the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF).	FAO: Programme	31 December 2025
Priority: High Recommendation 9: Establish a coordination mechanism (for example, regular meetings or a WhatsApp group) for NGO partners at the community level to get to know one another, coordinate activities, and reduce duplication of effort. (Deadline: As soon as possible, ideally with the launch of the next phase of the JRP)	WFP, FAO and UNICEF for their respective activities [Implementing agencies and NGO partners]	WFP: <i>Partially agreed</i> - There had already been informal but functional coordination between the CPs during phase I. UNICEF: <i>Partially agreed</i> - A steering committee at technical government provincial level could be an idea for improvement FAO: <i>Agreed</i>	9.1 WFP will (i) Formalize the coordination mechanism of cooperating partners at all levels i.e. national, provincial and local with continuous monitoring; (ii) Define the coordination framework and timetables; and (iii) Ensure that each meeting is recorded in minutes. 9.2 FAO will reinforce the coordination of joint activities such as targeting, monitoring, evaluation and communication.	WFP: JRP Coordination FAO: Programme	Implemented (30 June 2025) Latest by end of 31 Dec 2028

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Priority: High Recommendation 10: Increase communication and transparency around the JRP's targeting rationale at the community level including beneficiaries and other (non-beneficiary) community members (EQ 7.1). (Deadline: As soon as possible, but this can be aligned with other community-based efforts)	WFP, FAO and UNICEF for their respective activities [Implementing agencies and NGO partners]	WFP: <i>Partially agreed</i> - WFP already has two technical reference documents for targeting: a standard operating procedure (SOP) and a technical note. Both documents provide clear guidelines for communication activities. UNICEF: <i>Partially agreed</i> - SBC and mechanisms for community engagement and communication need to be discussed and harmonised in the planning and targeting. FAO: <i>Agreed</i>	10.1 WFP will intensify communication activities during phase II by ensuring non-beneficiaries are systematically included among the target audiences.	WFP: Programme (CAM, RAM)	31 December 2025
			10.2 UNICEF will strengthen communication through community engagement mechanism and dialogue.	UNICEF: SBC	By 31 July 2025 (UNICEF)
Priority: High Recommendation 11: Develop a structured approach for including vulnerable populations such as persons with disabilities,	WFP, FAO and UNICEF for their respective activities	WFP: <i>Agreed</i> UNICEF: <i>Partially agreed</i> – Targeting is already done on a basis of vulnerability and reaching most	11.1 WFP: This recommendation has already been taken into account in JRP II. WFP's technical targeting note already considers the vulnerability criteria listed in the recommendation. It also includes, for example, consideration of victims of	WFP: Programme, RAM	Implemented - 30 June 2025 (WFP)

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<p>elderly, extremely poor within programme targeting (e.g. by adding identifiers in beneficiary targeting lists) and ensure that accommodations are provided if needed to guarantee equitable access to the activity (EQ 7.3)</p> <p>(Deadline: This should be included in the design and proposal of the new phase)</p>		<p>vulnerable households. Efforts might be undertaken to include persons with disability together with the implementing partners or review the selection criteria for beneficiaries.</p> <p>FAO: <i>Agreed</i></p>	<p>sexual and gender-based violence. Furthermore, the target groups for WFP activities include vulnerable households with members with specific needs. However, there are also predefined vulnerability criteria that must be considered to achieve the desired level of productivity and livelihood strengthening.</p>		
			<p>11.2 UNICEF will reinforce application of the targeting criteria for the inclusion of beneficiaries with disabilities.</p>	UNICEF: Programme	By 31 July 2025
			<p>11.3 FAO: FAO targeting note takes into consideration multiple types of vulnerability status, including for indigenous people.</p>		
<p>Priority: Medium</p> <p>Recommendation 12: Continue efforts to increase women's access to credit through further supporting VSLAs to enhance</p>	FAO, WFP and UNICEF	<p>WFP: <i>Partially agreed</i> - The project foresees the continuation of activities</p>	<p>12.1 WFP: This recommendation has already been considered in phase II. The proposed activities started in the previous phase that will be intensified during the phase II are:</p>	WFP: Programme	31 December 2028

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women's resource empowerment. (EQ 7.4). (Deadline: As soon as possible, but this can be aligned with other community-based efforts)		such as MUSO ¹ and Village Savings and Lending Associations (VSLA). However, women's access to credit is also conditioned by the strengthening of their livelihoods (income-generating activities (IGAs), etc.). Indeed, increasing their purchasing power makes them credible and therefore eligible for various financial opportunities and contributes to increasing their long-term production capacities. UNICEF: <i>Partially agreed</i> - More integration with Gender/cross cutting and education (vocational	<div>(i) Capacity strengthening of MUSO, VSLA and their members with a focus on women and youth.</div> <div>(ii) Women's empowerment through literacy training, financial education, provision of kit to women for starting small business and development of IGAs.</div>		
			12.2 WFP and UNICEF will conduct additional livelihoods trainings.	WFP/UNICEF: Programme	31 July 2025
			12.3 FAO will establish VSLAs.	FAO: Programme	31 December 2028

¹ Solidarity credit unions

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		training for vulnerable adolescents girls) on enhancing women empowerment. FAO: Agreed			