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Operational matters – Country Strategic Plans

For approval

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Draft Bhutan country strategic plan (2019–2023)

Duration	1 January 2019–31 December 2023
Total cost to WFP	USD 8,942,053
Gender and age marker*	3

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

Executive summary

For more than 40 years of partnership with the Royal Government of Bhutan, WFP has supported the country in making progress towards many of its educational goals, including full school enrolment and attendance. Investments in education, health and other sectors have produced rapid economic growth and important gains towards achievement of the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Not all Bhutanese have benefited equally from the progress, however; this is recognized in the Government's 12th five-year plan, which incorporates the country's plans for attaining the Sustainable Development Goals, and the United Nations' goal, articulated in the United Nations Sustainable Development Partnership Framework for Bhutan (2019–2023), of fostering "a just, harmonious and sustainable Bhutan where no one is left behind", including poor people, children, elderly people, women and persons with disabilities.

With this goal in mind, WFP is responding to the Government's request for support as Bhutan travels the "last mile" in graduating sustainably from least developed country status. Although food security and nutrition have improved overall, health problems related to a lack of balanced diets, including micronutrient deficiencies, and lifestyle changes continue to pose challenges to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 2, and non-communicable diseases are a growing health concern that affects all age groups. In addition, as a result of climate change, the country's topography and geotectonic movements, natural disasters threaten to reverse Bhutan's progress to date. The 2015 earthquake in Nepal, which claimed more than 9,000 lives and inflicted severe economic damage, focused attention on the urgent need to enhance the Government's preparedness to respond to emergencies. The 2018 literature review on food and nutrition security

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in Bhutan, which complements Bhutan's 2018 voluntary national review, takes stock of these issues and includes a series of recommendations for addressing them.

Building on its partnership with the Government in the education sector, WFP is well placed to help Bhutan implement several of the most important of these recommendations through this country strategic plan. Recognizing the Government's achievements and plans for assuming full ownership of the school feeding programme by the end of 2018, WFP will shift its role to that of an "enabler" and will work towards the following two strategic outcomes:

- School-age children, women and vulnerable groups in Bhutan have improved nutrition in line with national targets by 2023.
- Government has strengthened capability to address food security and nutrition challenges and prepare for and respond to crises, including those resulting from climate change, by 2023.

Under strategic outcome 1, which contributes to outcome 2 of the United Nations sustainable development partnership framework, WFP will provide technical assistance for the transformation of the existing school feeding programme into a national school nutrition programme through which the Government can address nutrition issues by connecting the provision of school meals to nutrition education, health and agriculture activities. WFP will also provide the Ministry of Agriculture and Forests with technical and policy advice for the establishment of a regulatory and compliance framework for fortified foods, which will enable the wider Bhutanese population to benefit safely from fortified foods.

Under strategic outcome 2, which contributes to outcomes 1 and 4 of the United Nations sustainable development partnership framework, WFP will work with the Government on building capacities, particularly in the Department of Disaster Management, by strengthening disaster risk management practices, including through strengthened preparedness and response capacities, enhanced forecasting and analysis of disaster impacts, the development of standard operating procedures and capacities for supply chain management in emergencies, and the coordination of supply chains, emergency logistics and telecommunications and food security among government ministries and military, civil society, United Nations and private sector organizations. WFP will contribute to the achievement of this strategic outcome through integrated multisectoral programming and joint programmes with partners in critical areas, including the SDGs and providing more reliable and timely data for guiding and monitoring work towards the SDGs, as articulated in the United Nations sustainable development partnership framework.

WFP's approach is coherent with the Government's commitment to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030 and with its 12th five-year plan, which guides the Government's efforts in the short term as Bhutan graduates from least developed country status. Implementation of the country strategic plan will contribute to the achievement of three of the four outcomes in the United Nations sustainable development partnership framework. In its new role as an enabler, WFP will be in a position to convene various stakeholders and to broker knowledge sharing, including through South-South cooperation, in support of Bhutan as it travels the "last mile" towards graduation from least developed country status, protects progress to date, reaches the people who are at risk of being left behind and achieves SDG 2 and the broader goals of the 2030 Agenda.

Draft decision*

The Board approves the Bhutan country strategic plan (2019–2023) (WFP/EB.1/2019/6-A/1) at a total cost to WFP of USD 8,942,053.

* This is a draft decision. For the final decision adopted by the Board, please refer to the decisions and recommendations document issued at the end of the session.

1. Country analysis

1.1 Country context

1. The small Himalayan Kingdom of Bhutan has achieved rapid growth in its economy by managing its natural resources and unlocking its hydropower potential. Guided by the national concept of “gross national happiness” developed by the fourth King of Bhutan, His Majesty Jigme Singye Wangchuck, Bhutan’s strong economic growth, investments in health and education and peaceful transition to a democratic constitutional monarchy have resulted in a reduction in the prevalence of poverty from 23.2 percent to 8.2 percent in little over a decade.¹ Life expectancy increased from 32 years in 1960 to 69 years in 2016 and Bhutan ranks 132nd of 188 countries on the Human Development Index, placing it in the “medium human development” category. The country’s progress in tackling extreme poverty is among its most notable achievements, and the Government has expressed its firm commitment to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which are in line with the principles of gross national happiness and has integrated the SDG targets into Bhutan’s 12th five-year plan, which covers the period 2018–2023.
2. Future progress in eradicating poverty and preventing people from falling back into poverty will depend on the relationship between Bhutan’s people and the land. The impacts of climate change lead to more frequent and intense disasters that threaten to reverse Bhutan’s progress to date, with considerable effects on the country’s food and nutrition security because a majority of the population depends on the agriculture sector. Projected variability in rainfall resulting from climate change may jeopardize future hydropower revenues, while roads are increasingly vulnerable to floods and landslides.
3. In the Himalayas, the risk of natural disaster arises not only from climate but also from topography and geotectonic movements. Bhutan is located in one of the most seismically active zones in the world, and recent moderate earthquakes have focused attention on this ever-present threat.² Recent scientific data suggest that the likelihood of earthquakes in some seismically active mountain areas will increase as climate change causes thinning of the heavy ice and snow that have suppressed seismic activity.
4. Bhutan’s population is increasingly urbanized, young, online and educated. With half of the population under 23 years of age and two-thirds of working age, now is the time to capitalize on Bhutan’s demographic potential. However, attractive opportunities for young people are limited, a focus on growth led by the public sector has contributed to a weak private sector, hydropower produces few jobs, the civil service has already surpassed absorption capacity, and a culture of high productivity has yet to take hold. With young people drawn to migration by the prospect of opportunity and modernity and pushed by poverty and the remoteness of rural agricultural life, unemployment among young people in cities rose from 13.5 percent in 2012 to 28 percent in 2015 – with the figure for young urban women twice that of young urban men.
5. In both rural and urban areas, convergence between poverty eradication efforts and wise environmental management are reflected in Bhutan’s draft five-year plan, which is known as the “last mile” plan.³ As the Government begins the transition from least developed country status towards graduation by 2023, it recognizes the need to address the country’s continuing economic fragility⁴ and the two focus areas of poverty eradication and

¹ There is no difference in the incidence of poverty between women- and men-headed households. The positive assessment of the economic status of women-headed households may be due to the benefits of matrilineal inheritance of landholdings.

² Earthquakes include those of 6.1 magnitude in eastern Bhutan in 2009, 6.9 magnitude in Sikkim in 2011 and 7.9 magnitude in neighbouring Nepal in 2015. The 2015 earthquake in Nepal originated from a tectonic fault line that extends into Bhutan and killed nearly 10,000 people, injured many more and caused several billions of dollars in economic loss.

³ At the time of drafting the CSP, the plan was awaiting approval by the new Government.

⁴ Bhutan currently meets only two of the three indicators for graduation from least developed country status.

environmental management are reflected in Bhutan's approach to the SDGs. Progress towards the SDGs will be facilitated by increased attention to inequalities, including the urban-rural divide and inequalities related to diversity or gender, with a view to ensuring that national averages do not obscure the situation of vulnerable groups who risk being left behind.

6. Work on the development of a national gender equality policy (latest draft October 2017) and a nationwide study on the prevalence of violence against women (2017) demonstrates the Government's commitment to addressing gender inequalities. While progress has been made in mainstreaming consideration of gender issues into the planning, formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of all policies and programmes (examples include the introduction of six months of maternity leave for women working in the public sector), inequalities continue to hamper progress. Causes include traditional social norms, cultural beliefs and stereotypes.⁵ Bhutan ranked 117th of 188 countries on the 2015 Gender Inequality Index. Although women head 30 percent of all households, only 15 percent of parliamentarians are women. Bhutan gender statistics for 2010 indicate an increasing trend in the incidence of domestic violence, with women usually the victims of assault and battery and girls of rape and molestation. That 68 percent of women aged 15–49 find domestic violence acceptable reflects the extent to which harmful gender norms and practices pervade and further illustrates women's high risk of domestic violence, which is recognized as an impediment to their empowerment.⁶
7. While Bhutan has concluded its first decade of democracy, during which the Government has established the institutions of a constitutional monarchy, capacity gaps remain in its technical, legislative, oversight, accountability and transparency functions and in the quality of its services. The country is traversing the "last mile" towards graduation from least developed country status, which may accelerate the ongoing withdrawal of development partners. In order to move beyond the vision set out in *Bhutan 2020: A Vision for Peace, Prosperity and Happiness*,⁷ civil society and international organizations must play increasingly important roles as bridges between vulnerable groups and government institutions, ensuring that no one is left behind.⁸

1.2 Progress towards SDG 2

Targets

8. Under the 11th five-year plan, Bhutan made important gains towards SDG 2 targets. While reliable data are not available for all areas, and data disaggregated by age, sex and disability are lacking, Bhutan's voluntary national review on progress towards the achievement of the SDGs,⁹ a literature review on food and nutrition security in Bhutan (RFNS)¹⁰ and other sources illustrate that progress has been made.

⁵ National Plan of Action for Gender 2008–2013. Available at <http://evaw-global-database.unwomen.org/-/media/files/un%20women/vaw/full%20text/asia/national%20action%20plan%20on%20gender%202008-2013/nap%20on%20gender%202008-2013.pdf?vs=1000>.

⁶ National Commission for Women and Children 2017. Study on Violence against Women in Bhutan, p. 16. <http://www.ncwc.gov.bt/publications/Study%20on%20Situation%20of%20Violence%20against%20Women%20in%20Bhutan.pdf>.

⁷ Planning Commission, Royal Government of Bhutan. 1999. *Bhutan 2020: A Vision for Peace, Prosperity and Happiness*. <http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/APCITY/UNPAN005249.pdf>.

⁸ "Draft country programme document for Bhutan (2019–2023)" (DP/DCP/BTN/2).

⁹ Bhutan presented its voluntary national review to the United Nations High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development in July 2018.

¹⁰ College of Natural Resources, Royal University of Bhutan. 2018. *Literature Review on Food and Nutrition Security in Bhutan*. (Not available online.)

9. *Ensure access to safe, nutritious and sufficient food all year.* Approximately 27 percent of all Bhutanese households consume less than the daily minimum calorie requirement of 2,124 kcal. As a result, nearly 30 percent of the population faces malnourishment and related health issues.¹¹ Bhutan was not given a score on the 2017 Global Hunger Index because no data exist on the proportion of undernourished people in its population. Although most available data are for children under 5, the RFNS identified a number of other at-risk groups, including children in rural areas, mothers without formal education and households in the lower wealth quintiles. Low birth weights were, however, also found among mothers with formal education and in households in higher wealth quintiles.¹²
10. Studies show that people living in mountainous areas face higher rates of food insecurity than those living on the plains. According to the RFNS, food insecurity afflicts rural households more than urban ones and varies among geographic locations depending on remoteness, economic activities, landholdings and productivity.
11. *End all forms of malnutrition.* Malnutrition has been substantially reduced in Bhutan in recent years, even though indicators of significant malnutrition among children and pregnant and lactating women and girls persist. Stunting is a persistent public health issue in all wealth quintiles. According to Bhutan's 2015 national nutrition survey,¹³ 21.2 percent of children under 5 were stunted, compared with 33.5 percent in 2010, and one third of stunted children were severely stunted. Nearly twice as many children in rural areas were stunted as in urban ones, and there was a strong correlation with household wealth: more than six times as many children in the lowest wealth quintile were stunted as in the wealthiest quintile, with roughly the same rate among boys as among girls.
12. According to the 2015 national nutrition survey, the wasting rate among children under 5 was 4.3 percent, with boys showing marginally higher rates than girls and a higher rate, of 7 percent, among poor households. The prevalence of severe wasting is more than 1 percent in all wealth quintiles, which makes it a significant public health issue according to World Health Organization (WHO) criteria. The prevalence of overweight among children under 5 was reported at 7.6 percent in 2010, more than double the rate reported two decades earlier, and slightly more girls were overweight than boys.¹⁴
13. While the prevalence of anaemia in children under 5 decreased from 80.6 percent in 2003 to 43.8 percent in 2015, anaemia remains a severe public health issue according to WHO criteria. The prevalence in women and girls of reproductive age stood at 34.9 percent in 2015 – nearly 5 percentage points above the global average. The 2015 national nutrition survey found that nearly one in three adolescent girls in Bhutan was anaemic – an important indicator of future health as 6 percent of girls are married by the age of 15 and 26 percent by age 18.
14. *Double the agricultural productivity and incomes of small-scale food producers.* Economically Bhutan has done well, achieving annual growth of 7 percent over the past decade along with a gradual shift from an agrarian to an industry- and service-based economy. While less than 3 percent of Bhutan's total geographic area is cultivated, 58 percent of the population relies on agriculture as its main source of income. Agriculture's contribution to Bhutan's gross domestic product (GDP) declined from 26 percent in 2001 to 16.5 percent in 2016. The

¹¹ <http://blogs.worldbank.org/endpovertyinsouthasia/what-are-we-doing-improve-food-security-bhutan>.

¹² Bhutan National Statistics Bureau. 2016. *Child Poverty in Bhutan: Insights from Multidimensional Child Poverty Index and Qualitative Interviews with Poor Children*.

¹³ Ministry of Health. 2015. *National Nutrition Survey, 2015*. Available at https://www.researchgate.net/publication/326461056_National_Nutrition_Survey_2015.

¹⁴ <https://tradingeconomics.com/bhutan/prevalence-of-overweight-percent-of-children-under-5-wb-data.html>. Obesity in adults is also increasing, creating a double burden of malnutrition: according to WHO's 2016 diabetes country profile for Bhutan, the obesity rate in Bhutan's overall population was 24.8 percent, with rates of 23.3 percent among men and 26.6 percent among women.

decline has had negative effects on women, who make up the majority of farmers. While urban households earn an average annual income of USD 5,815, rural households earn USD 2,300, and women earn only 75 percent as much as men. According to the RFNS, people in mountainous areas are at particular risk because of poor infrastructure, physical isolation and the high cost of food production and transportation.

15. *Ensure sustainable food production systems.* Eight percent of Bhutan's geographic area is arable land but given its mountainous terrain and 70 percent forest cover only 3 percent is cultivated. Crop farming and livestock rearing are integral components of the agricultural system; the former predominates at lower elevations and the latter at higher elevations. These diverse food systems face the frequent threat of natural hazards, environmental degradation and negative impacts of climate change. Bhutan's 24 weather stations have registered rises in temperature of about 1°C in summer and 2°C in winter since 2000, and forecasters expect temperatures in the Himalayan region to increase by three times as much as the global average. Such temperature increases can have significant implications for local ecosystems and, along with changing precipitation patterns, can affect local livelihoods. They can also accelerate the rate of snow and glacier melt, which can trigger mud flows that discharge huge sediment loads, affecting infrastructure such as hydropower turbines, roads and irrigation systems. The effects of climate change are expected to be felt most acutely in agriculture, affecting women and girls disproportionately because of inequalities. The resulting decline in food production could have negative impacts on food security and nutrition.

Macroeconomic environment

16. Over the last four decades, Bhutan has enjoyed continuous economic growth and development, attributable largely to political stability and good leadership. GDP has grown by an average of more than 7 percent per year since 1982, rising by 6.8 percent in 2017. At approximately USD 2.71 billion on 31 December 2017, however, Bhutan's external debt exceeds the size of its economy.¹⁵ Approximately two thirds of public sector borrowing stems from large-scale development of the hydropower industry, which is largely denominated in Indian rupees.¹⁶
17. Although nearly 60 percent of the Bhutanese population lives in rural areas and relies on agriculture for its livelihood, agriculture's contribution to GDP declined from 26 percent in 2001 to 16.5 percent in 2016. These trends affect food security and nutrition in two main ways. First, growing income inequality between rural and urban communities and poverty in rural areas threaten the food security of rural people. Second, climate change threatens Bhutan's overall poverty reduction efforts: projected variability in rainfall may jeopardize future hydropower revenues, which are critical for poverty eradication, while the roads that connect farmers to markets and ensure the movement of fuel, rice and medicine are increasingly vulnerable to floods and landslides.

Key cross-sector linkages

18. The RFNS identified five main drivers of food insecurity and malnutrition in Bhutan. In addition to the challenges related to diet and food habits and to the availability of data discussed in the following subsection, the other three major concerns are as follows:
 - *Inequalities (SDGs 1 and 5).* Income inequality and poverty are threatening the food security of people in rural areas. Women, children, elderly people and persons with

¹⁵ Index Mundi. Bhutan external debt. https://www.indexmundi.com/bhutan/debt_external.html.

¹⁶ World Bank. 2015. *Bhutan Development Update, April 2015*. <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/408661467999076695/pdf/96526-WP-PUBLIC-Box391449B-ADD-SERIES-Bhutan-Development-Update-April-2015.pdf>.

disabilities¹⁷ are particularly affected because many men and boys abandon agricultural work and move to cities.¹⁸ As well as labour shortages, rural farming communities face challenges such as a lack of advanced technology, low capacity to invest, limited infrastructure, including for irrigation, and difficult access to markets. Gender inequalities caused by traditional social norms, cultural beliefs, the lower participation of women and girls in the labour force and gender-based stereotypes further drive food insecurity and malnutrition.

- *Limited job opportunities, demographic shifts and urbanization (SDGs 8 and 11).* Other factors limiting access to food include underemployment and unemployment, the latter of which stood at 2.5 percent in 2015, affecting women disproportionately; among young people the rate was 10.7 percent,¹⁹ rising to 28 percent in cities. Urbanization has not only created social problems in cities such as rising rates of crime, but also caused an acute shortage of farm labourers, reducing agricultural production and driving up the costs of food.
- *Climate change and natural disasters (SDG 13).* Natural disasters induced by climate change are increasing in number and magnitude, dramatically affecting agriculture and driving hunger in rural communities. Rising temperatures are expected to have severe effects on ecosystems. Erratic rains will have negative effects on livelihoods by triggering landslides and floods that block the roads connecting farmers to markets and halt the importation of food, fuel and other necessary products.

19. Recognizing the concerted efforts and substantial progress that have been made in addressing these related challenges, the RFNS identifies a number of gaps and includes recommendations for filling these gaps and achieving SDG 2 in Bhutan.

1.3 Hunger gaps and challenges

20. The Government recognizes the importance of achieving all 17 SDGs and the interlinked nature of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Focusing on SDG 2, the RFNS includes several recommendations that are in line with the priorities outlined in the strategic framework for the 12th five-year plan, the Gross National Happiness framework and the findings of the voluntary national review of progress towards the SDGs:

- Improve dietary and health habits among school-age children and in communities, especially at the local level, with a view to addressing the rising prevalence of non-communicable diseases; and increase awareness of food quality and safety in order to reduce the risk of foodborne illnesses.
- Link farmers' cooperatives to large markets such as school feeding programmes and local markets in order to help strengthen rural economies, enhance rural living standards and reduce poverty and inequality by fostering inclusive economic opportunities that take into account issues related to urbanization and the "feminization of agriculture".²⁰

¹⁷ According to a study conducted by the Ministry of Education and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), 21 percent of Bhutanese children aged 2–9 years live with one or more disabilities.

¹⁸ The Gini coefficient decreased from 0.42 in 2003 to 0.38 in 2017. Based on a national poverty line of USD 32.43 per capita per month, the poverty rate decreased to 8.2 percent at the national level in 2017, but differed from district to district, with rural areas showing a significantly higher rate of 11.9 percent.

¹⁹ Among the people employed in rural areas, 74.9 percent are independent workers and 53.6 percent of women participate in the labour force compared with 71.7 percent of men.

²⁰ The "feminization of agriculture" refers to the increasing participation of women and girls in the agricultural labour force.

- Raise awareness of the negative impacts of climate change on food security, promote climate-resilient livelihoods and adaptation measures, raise awareness of the serious threat that natural disasters pose to food security and establish adequate emergency response plans and coordination systems.
 - Promote stakeholder collaboration by facilitating access to multisector evidence-based data for context-specific planning and targeting in order to ensure that food and nutrition security issues are addressed coherently.
21. Although nutrition in Bhutan has improved overall, health problems related to a lack of balanced diets, including micronutrient deficiencies, and lifestyle changes, including physical inactivity and alcohol and tobacco use, remain a challenge. The traditional diet includes high consumption of carbohydrates, salt and animal fats with very few fruits and vegetables. Traditional meal preparation and cooking practices also tend to reduce the nutritional value of food. Partly as a result of this, non-communicable diseases, which affect all age groups, are a growing health concern, accounting for almost 70 percent of the reported burden of disease and responsible for more than half of all deaths in the country.²¹ Awareness raising and advocacy programmes on diet, food habits and health rarely reach beyond schoolchildren and women. Inefficiencies in food distribution systems and lack of investment in processing and post-harvest technologies result in unsafe food, which increases the risk of disease due to foodborne illnesses.
 22. A 2016 national audit of Bhutan's school feeding programme²² found major systemic and implementation gaps. It called for an urgent assessment of the programme with a view to ensuring improved nutrition outcomes, including through nutrition education and the development of guidelines and diversified healthy menus. It also recognized gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls as important cross-cutting themes for Bhutan's socio-economic development, as reflected in the 12th five-year plan's call for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.
 23. While Bhutan's record in environmental conservation is strong, adaptation and mitigation systems for dealing with the negative impacts of climate change are not yet fully established and the Government lacks the data information systems, response plans and coordination systems it needs for ensuring adequate preparation for emergencies. In its mid-term review of the 11th five-year plan,²³ the Government concluded that data gaps are a major challenge. Reliable, timely and disaggregated data are critical to the ability of Bhutan to identify gaps, develop policies, initiate programmes and measure progress towards gross national happiness, the objectives of the 12th five-year plan and the SDGs, but there is a lack of data for two thirds of the 244 SDG indicators. Data gaps are particularly significant at the local level. Major gaps also remain in data that are disaggregated by age, sex and disability, reflecting the challenge in ensuring the regular collection of credible information.
 24. The lack of reliable data also creates challenges for planning, especially for the advancement of equality and social justice. While living standards continue to improve for many people, greater efforts must be made to ensure inclusiveness and equality, especially for people in rural areas, women, adolescent girls, children and persons with disabilities, many of whom live in the villages where food and nutrition security are most affected by the challenges discussed in this subsection.

²¹ WHO. 2018. *Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs): Country Profiles 2018*. http://www.who.int/nmh/countries/btn_en.pdf.

²² See http://www.bhutanaudit.gov.bt/audit-cnt/raa-files/pa-reports/Performance_Audit_Report_on_School_Feeding_Programme_2017.pdf.

²³ Gross National Happiness Commission. 2016. *Eleventh Five Year Plan (2013–2018). Mid Term Review Report*. <https://www.gnhc.gov.bt/en/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Final-Revised-Draft-Mid-Term-Review-Report.pdf>.

1.4 Country priorities

Government

25. The Government articulates its development efforts in five-year plans that are structured around the nine domains of gross national happiness.²⁴ The 12th five-year plan aims to enhance the well-being and happiness of the people of Bhutan through achievements in 16 “national key result areas” (NKRAs), which are based on international and regional goals and commitments. Bhutan’s voluntary national review defines links between the NKRAs and the SDGs. Priorities include eradicating poverty and reducing inequalities (NRKA 3) creating productive and gainful employment (NRKA 11), promoting gender equality and empowering women and girls (NRKA 10) and ensuring water, food and nutrition security (NKRA 8).
26. Bhutan’s food and nutrition security policy (2014) recognizes “the fundamental right of all people living in Bhutan to have access to affordable and adequate, safe, nutritious and culturally acceptable food” and the need for a multisector coordinated approach to ensuring this right. Consistent with the RFNS’s conclusion that Bhutan should shift its focus from food to nutrition in its work for food and nutrition security, the Government prioritizes the establishment of a national school nutrition programme for addressing micronutrient deficiencies (in line with the draft national school nutrition and health strategy) and the rising prevalence of non-communicable diseases (in line with the national nutrition action plan and multisector national action plan for the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases (2015–2020)). In addition to using the national school nutrition programme as a platform for improving dietary and health practices, the Government also plans to scale up the use of fortified rice throughout the programme and has requested assistance for the strengthening of food safety and quality regulatory frameworks and compliance mechanisms, as articulated in the action plan for the development of the regulatory and compliance framework for rice and other food fortification in Bhutan.
27. The national disaster risk management strategy establishes linkages and ensures coherence among disaster risk management, climate change adaptation and sustainable development and outlines the principles, strategies and priorities for guiding the development of plans and programmes for risk prevention and reduction, preparedness, response, recovery and reconstruction. While the strategy defines the roles of the Department of Disaster Management and the Ministry of Agriculture and Forests, in collaboration with relevant agencies, in responding to a major catastrophe, the Government has requested the United Nations’ assistance with emergency preparedness and response, including in the area of food security and nutrition as described in the following subsection.

United Nations and other partners

28. The United Nations in Bhutan is finalizing its sustainable development partnership framework (UNSDPF) for 2019–2023 in line with the 12th five-year plan and with a view to supporting Bhutan in its graduation from least developed country status and its achievement of the goals of the 2030 Agenda.²⁵ Based on a common country analysis and in close consultation with the Government, United Nations agencies have agreed to focus on four main thematic areas: the SDGs and data; access to social services, tackling violence against women and children; and disaster preparedness and response. While the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) will act as the lead agency for outcome 2, which focuses on good quality health and nutrition services among other intended results, WFP will participate alongside the United Nations Capital Development Fund, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the United Nations Population Fund

²⁴ The nine domains of the Gross National Happiness integration framework are education, health, living standards, ecological diversity and resilience, time use, culture, psychological wellbeing, community vitality, and good governance.

²⁵ The United Nations sustainable development partnership framework is the local name for the United Nations development assistance framework for the period 2019–2023.

(UNFPA), the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, UN-Women and WHO in addressing malnutrition and the rising level of non-communicable diseases. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) will act as lead agency for outcome 3, collaborating with UN-Women on tackling violence against women and children.

29. With the Government's identification of data gaps as a major challenge and its acknowledgement that unreliable and poor data and unrealistic or irrelevant measurements are a major concern for the development and monitoring of national policies, the United Nations is focusing on "the SDGs and data", with UNFPA acting as the lead agency for outcome 1, in collaboration with the entire United Nations country team. Together, the Government and United Nations agencies will ensure that more and better data are available, including on vulnerable groups, and that better use is made of data in evidence-based policy making, monitoring and evaluations.
30. The limited availability of data, information systems, response plans and coordination systems for ensuring preparedness for emergencies offers the United Nations in Bhutan a unique opportunity for supporting the Government by providing more reliable data for timely, effective and coordinated responses in times of a disaster. Under outcome 4, led by UNDP and WFP alongside the International Trade Centre, the International Fund for International Development, the United Nations Environment Programme and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the United Nations will work closely with the Government on the alignment of international and national emergency coordination structures and the development of contingency plans.

2. Strategic implications for WFP

2.1 WFP's experience and lessons learned

31. Since WFP began providing assistance to Bhutan in 1974, it has focused on school feeding with the goal of increasing enrolment and attendance in primary and secondary school. Together, WFP and the Government helped the country to achieve an enrolment rate of 95 percent (96 percent among boys and 94 percent among girls) in primary schools in 2017, while attendance rates have also increased dramatically. The mid-term evaluation of WFP's development project 200300 "Improving Children's Access to Education", a 2017 regional synthesis of operation evaluations in Asia and the Pacific and consultations with the Government, other United Nations agencies and civil society organizations have identified the following lessons and results that can inform WFP's future programming:
 - Micronutrient deficiencies justify the continuation of school feeding, but WFP must ensure that the Government's food basket meets schoolchildren's full nutritional needs and supports the promotion of improved diets.²⁶
 - Options should be reviewed for local purchases and local "farm-to-school" linkages designed to give students access to more diverse and healthy local foods produced by smallholder farmers and for agricultural productivity and market development programmes, leveraging synergies with the initiatives of United Nations partners.
 - Capacity development should be based on a robust analysis of national capacities, follow a more rigorous and technically sophisticated approach to achieving gender equality and strengthen collaboration with the agriculture and health sectors.

²⁶ A WFP-supported dietary assessment carried out in schools in 2017/18 reached the same conclusion.

32. WFP, OCHA, WHO and UNICEF facilitated an inter-agency simulation exercise in July 2018, jointly organized with the Government, during which gaps were identified in emergency preparedness and response capacity, needs assessments, response planning and coordination arrangements.

2.2 Opportunities for WFP

33. Based on these insights and the recommendations in the RFNS, WFP will pursue two broad strategic opportunities in implementing this country strategic plan (CSP):
- *Leverage and consolidate investments made so far in order to support the Government in transforming school feeding activities into a national school nutrition programme.* While the RFNS, consultations and the mid-term evaluation of development project 200300 revealed that WFP and the Government have achieved educational enrolment and attendance objectives, the Government has requested WFP's assistance in scaling up and transforming school feeding in order to address nutrition concerns, especially the rise in non-communicable diseases, and micronutrient deficiencies, including anaemia. This gives WFP an opportunity to build on progress to date by providing technical and capacity strengthening assistance – such as solutions for the optimization of supply chains and improved data collection and monitoring systems through digitization – that addresses the gaps and needs identified in the 2016 national audit of the national school feeding programme in order to enhance nutrition outcomes. Although WFP's main focus will be on improving dietary and health habits among school-age children, including in religious institutions, these efforts will also address gender inequalities through gender-transformative nutrition education for both boys and girls, influencing the wider community.
 - *Engage in new areas.* Building on its experience with school feeding in Bhutan, WFP has the opportunity to contribute to national priorities through capacity development and policy assistance. Following WFP's introduction of fortified rice to the school feeding programme in 2017, the Government has requested WFP's assistance in strengthening food quality and safety and regulatory and compliance frameworks for fortified rice and eventually other types of fortified foods. The 2015 earthquakes in neighbouring Nepal underscored the ever-present danger of natural disasters and raised awareness of the need to establish better preparedness measures for enabling Bhutan to respond to disasters. Given WFP's global leadership in emergency logistics and telecommunications, the country office will work with the Government, United Nations agencies and other partners with a view to bolstering Bhutan's emergency preparedness and response mechanisms, including the use of warehouses and pre-positioning, and integrating gender equality throughout these areas. In supporting the Government's efforts to achieve its goals, WFP will focus on knowledge transfer, test innovative approaches and facilitate the adoption of low-cost disruptive technologies.

2.3 Strategic changes

34. To pursue these opportunities, WFP will make several strategic changes to its approach. Consistent with the corporate strategic plan, the country office will fully align its activities with Bhutan's efforts to achieve the SDGs, particularly SDG 2, in order to ensure that WFP's contributions contribute to a coherent overall strategy. WFP will cease its provision of in-kind food assistance and will instead engage with the Government through a multi-stakeholder, holistic, systems-oriented approach to the strengthening of institutional capacities with a view to assisting the Government in its scale up and transformation of school feeding. into a national school nutrition programme that addresses malnutrition, including micronutrient deficiencies, and the rise of non-communicable diseases and applies gender-transformative approaches.

35. Building on WFP's introduction of fortified rice into school feeding and the Government's plan to use fortified rice throughout the national school nutrition programme, WFP will assist the Government in strengthening regulatory frameworks and compliance mechanisms for fortified rice and other fortified foods. Given the urgent need to prepare for emergencies, WFP will work closely with the Government with a view to aligning international and national emergency coordination structures and developing contingency plans, ensuring that support reaches the most vulnerable people.

3. WFP strategic orientation

3.1 Direction, focus and intended impacts

36. The CSP will support Bhutan's progress towards the goals of the 2030 Agenda, especially SDG 2, through an integrated systems-based approach to strengthening national capacities in school feeding in order to address malnutrition (SDG 3). It will also address risks that threaten food security, such as climate change (SDG 13) and natural disasters. WFP will focus on two interrelated strategic outcomes that focus on SDGs 2 and 17: ending malnutrition and strengthening emergency preparedness and response.
37. Given the limited data available, especially data disaggregated by sex, age and disability, the Government and its partners lack a comprehensive understanding of the particular needs, opportunities and barriers faced by men, women, boys and girls. In order to contribute to the development of a reliable, timely and integrated national data and information management system that enables the Government to better understand these differentiated needs, opportunities and barriers, WFP will support core stakeholders in the development and institutionalization of critical skills in data collection and assessment and the use of innovative technologies. Such skills may include regular monitoring of geo-referenced data layers using data from various sources and sectors in order to monitor the food security and nutrition situation and vulnerabilities over time.
38. To enhance emergency preparedness and response, WFP will strengthen national capacities in the "72-hours" approach to rapid post-disaster assessment, enabling the Government independently to identify, map and prioritize vulnerable population groups within 72 hours of a disaster. WFP will scale up to nationwide coverage a multisector, digital data collection and reporting system that provides the school information system with real-time data on health, nutrition, education, school agriculture, infrastructure and school feeding in order to facilitate the transition from school feeding to an integrated national school nutrition programme and to address the waste of food and nutrition supplements that results from poor reporting.
39. WFP will ensure that gender issues are considered throughout the implementation and monitoring of the CSP in order to promote gender-transformative programmes and policies. WFP will also make efforts to establish a system that disaggregates all data by sex, age and disability and facilitates the integration of gender considerations into analyses, assessments, research and related work.²⁷ Gender considerations will also be integrated into all programme, policy and capacity strengthening initiatives, and women, men, girls and boys (and their organizations) will be engaged in activities in a manner that is empowering, fosters equality of outcomes and advances gender equality (SDG 5). For example, information about the effects of early marriage of girls and about the importance of nutritious food for adolescent girls will be integrated into health and nutrition curricula and social and behaviour change communications for school-age children, including in religious institutions.

²⁷ In the multisector, digital data collection and reporting system, data on, for example, school attendance, body mass index and the delivery of vitamin A supplementation to schoolchildren will be disaggregated by sex and age, enabling WFP to increase the availability of disaggregated data at the national level.

WFP will also ensure that opportunities for men and women are equitable in all activities, such as the provision of training for school cooks or farmers.

40. While supporting the Government in transforming and scaling up school feeding to address the multiple faces of malnutrition, WFP will support core stakeholders, such as the national standards bureau, the Bhutan Agriculture and Food Regulatory Authority (BAFRA) and the leadership of the Ministry of Agriculture, in the establishment and institutionalization of regulatory and technical standards and compliance mechanisms for food quality and safety, including for rice fortification. This will have a positive impact on the supply of fortified rice for schools, leading eventually to the availability of fortified foods on the market. As WFP will no longer provide in-kind food, it will focus its resources on the building or enhancement of infrastructure such as school kitchens and food stores in order to facilitate the provision of fortified rice for the national school nutrition programme in Bhutan's 20 districts. Stocks of fortified rice could also serve as emergency reserves in the event of natural disasters or seasonal shocks. In line with WFP's 2017 environmental policy, environmental and social issues will be taken into consideration throughout the design and implementation of all activities and activities will be compliant with WFP's environmental and social standards. WFP will complement its support for infrastructure enhancement with capacity strengthening for national stakeholders with a view to ensuring the proper use and maintenance of the infrastructure.
41. Under the UNSDPF and its outcome 4, WFP will work closely with other United Nations agencies and the Government in order to increase awareness of vulnerability, especially as vulnerability relates to emergency preparedness and response (SDG 17). The CSP will support the Government's efforts to eradicate poverty (SDG 1) and achieve the 16 NKRA in order to graduate from least developed country status in a sustainable manner by 2023.

3.2 Strategic outcomes, focus areas, expected outputs and key activities

Strategic outcome 1: School-age children, women and vulnerable groups in Bhutan have improved nutrition in line with national targets by 2023

42. After more than 40 years of supporting the Government's successful efforts to use the school feeding programme to ensure access to education, WFP will shift its focus to helping the Government achieve SDG target 2.2, thereby ending malnutrition. In addition to school-age children, women aged 18 years and over and other nutritionally vulnerable groups such as people in religious institutions also require assistance in improving their nutrition. WFP will provide capacity strengthening support to the ministries of education, agriculture and forests, and health in order to facilitate the establishment of a fully integrated national school nutrition programme that covers all students from pre-primary to grade 12 in government schools by 2023 and to improve the nutrition of the overall population through the adoption of gender-transformative and sustainable approaches to nutrition, including healthy dietary habits. Through the gradual scale up of the national school nutrition programme, students will receive fortified rice. WFP will provide technical assistance to the Ministry of Agriculture and Forests with the aim of eventually making fortified rice and other fortified foods available to the broader population and ensuring food safety and quality in order to address micronutrient deficiencies.
43. Smallholder farmers will be supported in order to reinforce the farm-to-school linkages that strengthen the local economy and contribute to vibrant communities. Work on farm-to-school linkages is designed to give students access to more diverse and healthy local foods produced by smallholder farmers.

Focus area

44. This outcome focuses on root causes.

Expected outputs

45. This outcome will be achieved through two outputs:
- Targeted primary and secondary schoolchildren, including adolescent girls, (tier 3) benefit from healthy diets consisting of diverse foods, gender-transformative nutrition education and health services provided to boys and girls in order to improve their nutrition, combat non-communicable diseases (SDG 3) and enhance school performance (SDG 4).
 - Vulnerable populations (tier 3) benefit from the Government's increased capacity to monitor the safety and quality of fortified foods and thus to ensure that their basic food and nutrition needs are met.
46. The first output is based on the recognition that schools are effective nutrition and health platforms for reaching children, women and other vulnerable groups because they enable the Government not only to ensure that schoolchildren receive at least one nutritious meal per day but also to reach the broader population through a combination of services that improve the nutrition and health of schoolchildren and have positive effects on the children's communities through the transfer of better dietary and health habits to their households, thus contributing to SDGs 2 and 3. If based on participatory gender analyses, activities that contribute to this output have the potential to be gender-transformative by fostering gender equality through the prevention of early marriage of girls and the increase in schooling and livelihood opportunities for girls. The output therefore contributes to SDG 4 on inclusive and equitable quality education and SDG 5 on gender equality.
47. Building on the successful introduction of fortified rice into school feeding programmes, the second output extends the benefits to the wider Bhutanese population by strengthening the capacities of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forests to deliver fortified foods and monitor food quality and safety. This will not only reduce the risk of foodborne illnesses and related diseases, but also provide the broader population with access to fortified foods that address micronutrient deficiencies and reduce the high levels of anaemia in children under 5, adolescent girls and women and girls of reproductive age, with positive effects on the nutrition and overall health of future generations. This output therefore contributes to SDGs 2 and 3.

Key activities

Activity 1: Assist the Government in its transition to a national school nutrition programme based on an integrated approach to school feeding that connects school feeding to nutrition education, school health and school agriculture and embeds gender, environmental and social safeguards in all activities, with strengthened supply chains and the optimization of school nutrition infrastructure

48. Following the successful piloting of an integrated approach in six schools near Thimphu, Bhutan's capital, WFP will provide technical assistance and capacity strengthening for helping the Government to establish and scale up a national school nutrition programme. WFP will take the lead in supporting core institutional stakeholders in the enhancement of policy, coordination and knowledge management, convening all relevant partners; mapping existing initiatives in, for example, farm-to-school linkages; strengthening ongoing nutrition education and the development of innovative material for social and behaviour change communication and menu design, school health and school agriculture that also addresses restrictive gender roles; improving the food basket for school feeding, including the use of fortified rice; providing support for the completion of the national school nutrition and health strategy; reviewing and developing nutrition guidelines for the national and district levels; supporting the development of a digitized school feeding monitoring and reporting system that is gender- and age-responsive and integrated into the Ministry of Education's monitoring and evaluation system; supporting optimization of the supply chain for school feeding and strengthening the day-to-day management of the national school nutrition programme; and

upgrading and building school kitchens and stores. Together with its partners, WFP will review lessons learned and best practices in different settings with a view to transferring knowledge to the Government and informing the design of the national school nutrition programme.

Activity 2: Provide technical assistance to the Government and the national food production and trade sectors to ensure that sound policies are in place and ensure the quality and safety of fortified foods, especially rice, throughout their supply chains

49. Now that rice fortification is incorporated into the school feeding programme, WFP will adopt a systems-oriented approach to its capacity strengthening for the Ministry of Agriculture and Forests and others in order to facilitate the institutionalization of sustainable regulatory, technical, infrastructural and commercial provisions for ensuring that the fortified rice, and eventually other fortified foods, delivered to schools and introduced into the supply chain is safe. As the Ministry of Agriculture and Forests amends the food act, WFP will provide technical assistance and policy advice on the act's provisions for food fortification. WFP will advise on the roles of the Bhutan standards bureau and the BAFRA in standard setting, including for fortified rice and its raw materials, and the monitoring of the implementation and enforcement of fortification standards and will help to establish practical guidelines for schools and cooks on the handling of fortified rice, train BAFRA food inspectors and develop an inspection plan. WFP will help build the capacities of BAFRA, food inspection services and the national food testing laboratory in such areas as inspection planning, sampling protocols and procedures and monitoring tools. WFP may also provide capacity building for food manufacturers (rice millers and blenders), assess critical infrastructure and partner with other United Nations agencies on research and studies on nutrition.

Strategic outcome 2: Government has strengthened capability to address food security and nutrition challenges and prepare for and respond to crises, including those resulting from climate change, by 2023

50. An inter-agency workshop on contingency planning for earthquakes, held in August 2017, and a simulation exercise jointly organized by the United Nations country team and the Government in July 2018 revealed gaps in national disaster preparedness and the capacity to respond to large, high-intensity natural disasters. To strengthen Bhutan's institutional capacity to respond to disasters, WFP will partner with the Government, United Nations agencies and national partners in three main areas: emergency preparedness, disaster management and coordination and data preparedness. This strategic outcome supports the national disaster risk management framework and contributes to SDG 17.9, UNSDPF outcomes 1 and 4 and WFP Strategic Result 5.

Focus area

51. This outcome focuses on resilience building.

Expected output

52. This outcome will be achieved through the following output:
- Food-insecure and other vulnerable people (tier 3) benefit from the Government's enhanced knowledge of vulnerability, emergency logistics and best practices for supply chain systems (including storage and decentralized strategic grain reserves) and enhanced ability to minimize losses and improve food security in times of need.
53. This output contributes to the outcome by reinforcing the linkages between preparedness and response. Support for preparedness will be focused on building the capacities of the Government and communities, while limited amounts of essential supplies will be pre-positioned in strategic locations and mobile storage units. All partners will ensure that response strategies, plans and actions support national measures and are informed by data

and vulnerability and needs assessments, take gender and disability issues into consideration and are linked to recovery and long-term development.

Key activity

Activity 3: Through WFP's leadership of the emergency logistics and communications sector working group, provide the Government with gender-informed and vulnerability-focused capacity strengthening relevant to its management of national emergency resources and its development, enhancement and testing of national emergency response plans and coordination systems

54. WFP will build the capacity of the Department of Disaster Management to put contingency plans into operation, develop standard operating procedures and facilitate regular inter-agency simulation exercises for testing disaster coordination mechanisms. WFP will provide technical assistance and capacity building on warehouse management for emergency response depots and on the optimization of warehouse management and supply chains for the national strategic food reserve; support the Department of Disaster Management and the Ministry of Agriculture and Forests on the development of a disaster logistics management plan; and provide training in emergency logistics, engaging both women and men and emphasizing the importance of identifying and responding to needs in emergencies. In the area of data preparedness, WFP will provide capacity strengthening support for the consolidation, cleaning and creation of relevant datasets to be compiled into a geodatabase; assistance in the creation of vulnerability maps for different types of disaster in order to inform both preparedness and response plans; strengthening of technical capacities in country through direct training and skill transfer sessions; and facilitation of data system testing through simulations based on various scenarios.

3.3 Transition and exit strategies

55. Rather than exiting from Bhutan at the end of 2018, in response to the Government's request for WFP's support for the country's efforts to cover the "last mile" in eradicating poverty and graduating from least developed country status, WFP is shifting from direct implementation of programmes to the provision of enabling support and technical assistance in food security, nutrition and emergency preparedness and response, with consideration of gender issues integrated into all activities. The Government will take over all school feeding activities and, with WFP's technical assistance in transforming the school feeding programme into a national school nutrition programme, aims to be able to expand the programme to all students in government schools by 2023, paying particular attention to rural and remote schools.

56. With WFP's technical and policy advice, the Government plans to establish standards for food quality and safety, including an adequate regulatory and compliance framework for fortified rice and other fortified foods by 2023, in preparation for making fortified foods available on the commercial market. WFP will complement its support for infrastructure enhancement with capacity strengthening for national stakeholders aimed at ensuring the proper use and maintenance of the infrastructure, which could serve as storage for emergency reserves. With its partners in the United Nations country team, WFP will assist the Government in strengthening its emergency preparedness and response plans and capacities through support aimed at enabling the Government independently to identify, map and prioritize vulnerable populations within 72 hours of a disaster and to coordinate the activities of national and international partners for timely effective response.

4. Implementation arrangements

4.1 Beneficiary analysis

Strategic outcome	Activity	Girls	Boys	Women	Men	Total
1	1. Assist the Government in its transition to a national school nutrition programme based on an integrated approach to school feeding that connects school feeding to nutrition education, school health and school agriculture and embeds gender, environmental and social safeguards in all activities, with strengthened supply chains and the optimization of school nutrition infrastructure.	80 000	80 000	5 500	6 300	11 800 (tier 3)
	2. Provide technical assistance to the Government and the national food production and trade sectors to ensure that sound policies are in place and ensure the quality and safety of fortified foods, especially rice, throughout their supply chains.	40 000	40 000			80 000 (tier 3)
2	3. Through WFP's leadership of the emergency logistics and communications sector working group, provide the Government with gender-informed and vulnerability-focused capacity strengthening relevant to its management of national emergency resources and its development, enhancement and testing of national emergency response plans and coordination systems.			125	125	250 (tier 3)
Total without overlap		80 000	80 000	5 625	6 425	172 050

* Girls and boys are beneficiaries under 18 years of age.

57. During implementation of the CSP for 2019–2023, the country office will focus on capacity development only and there will be no direct beneficiaries receiving food or cash transfers. WFP will therefore have only indirect beneficiaries (tier 3) under the CSP. The results of its support to national stakeholders could ultimately affect a total of 172,000 people. WFP's support for national programmes and initiatives under activity 1 may benefit more than 11,800 men and women (tier 3): 9,000 smallholder farmers supported under the programme for linking farmers to school feeding programmes; and 2,800 staff members of schools and district and central agencies, who will receive training on the integrated approach, monitoring and evaluation, food safety and kitchen and store management. As a result of these programmes, a total of 160,000 schoolchildren (tier 3) could ultimately benefit from

WFP's infrastructure enhancement, nutrition education, school health and school agriculture and monitoring and evaluation interventions.

58. Under activity 2, 80,000 schoolchildren (tier 3) will benefit from WFP's support for the national school nutrition programme, including for the provision of fortified foods and the establishment of a regulatory and compliance framework. Under activity 3 WFP will provide training and emergency simulation exercises, among other capacity strengthening activities, reaching 250 staff members (tier 3) of various government agencies working on emergency preparedness and response.

Capacity strengthening including South-South cooperation

59. Under the CSP, WFP will shift entirely to country capacity strengthening and the provision of technical assistance with a view to achieving interlinked thematic objectives. WFP will support the Government in improving its nutrition-specific and -sensitive policies and programmes by strengthening the evidence base and creating a demand for nutritious diets and complementary services through social and behaviour change communication. Leveraging the efforts of partners in this area, such as the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, IFAD and UNICEF and Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn of Thailand, WFP will focus on holistic knowledge transfer and systems strengthening and on defining how interventions can be replicated and scaled up in order to improve food security and nutrition outcomes.
60. WFP will improve disaster risk management practices, including preparedness and response capacities, by enhancing forecasting and the analysis of disaster impacts, standard operating procedures and capacities for emergency supply chains and the coordination of supply chain, emergency logistics and telecommunications and food security interventions among government ministries and military, civil society, United Nations and private sector organizations. WFP could also facilitate and broker the sharing of knowledge and technical expertise with regional partners, for example to draw on India's expertise in supply chains, demonstrated in its recent response to the floods in Kerala.

4.2 Supply chain

61. In providing the Government with support in the areas of food fortification, quality and safety (activity 2) and emergency preparedness and response (activity 3), WFP will focus on supply chains. Activity 1 will also involve work on supply chains in order to ensure that existing and future supply chain networks can better supply schools in a cost-effective manner. WFP will help optimize school feeding supply chains; provide advice and technical assistance on food safety and quality for the development of relevant policies and procedures; assist the Government in building capacities in emergency logistics by providing the relevant bodies with support for the improvement of coordination among government sectors and the international community; map and analyse data related to emergency preparedness and response and provide a platform for the better mapping of all the resources pre-positioned in different areas of the country for emergency preparedness and response; and provide training and capacity building to government emergency response agencies through emergency logistics training and simulation exercises.

4.3 Country office capacity and profile

62. The country office has fewer than ten employees and while most staff members have abundant experience in school feeding activities, the provision of capacity development is a relatively new area for them. Given WFP's shift from the direct implementation of food assistance activities to the provision of technical assistance for the national school nutrition programme, food fortification and safety and emergency preparedness and response, the country office must determine how to adapt the roles of its staff while building up strong technical capacities in areas such as nutrition and emergency preparedness and response. The transition creates an opportunity for national staff to expand their knowledge and skills

in new areas, but the office will also have to identify gaps and needs, which could be met by adding staff members, taking into consideration the need for gender parity and competencies in gender work, making adequate arrangements with other country offices and calling on support from the Regional Bureau in Bangkok.

4.4 Partnerships

63. In addition to its commitment to working with the Government and other United Nations agencies in order to “deliver as one”, the country office will leverage partnerships in ways that optimize its contributions and facilitate the achievement of collective outcomes. For example, WFP could mobilize its new strategic partnership framework with the World Bank in order to link its support for the national school nutrition programme to the joint food security and agriculture productivity project of FAO and the World Bank. The project addresses rural poverty, food insecurity and malnutrition by investing in smallholders’ livelihoods and linking smallholders to school feeding markets. The country office will also embark on joint nutrition efforts with UNICEF, including on capacity building and advocacy, and coordinate with UNFPA and UN-Women on girls’ education, addressing violence against women and girls and other issues relevant to the promotion of gender equality.
64. The country office’s primary partners for strategic outcome 1 will be the ministries of education, agriculture and forests and health, the School Health Steering Committee and core government agencies such as the Gross National Happiness Commission and the Ministry of Finance. WFP and the Ministry of Agriculture and Forests have established a joint task force on fortification with members from the ministries of education and health, BAFRA and the Food Corporation of Bhutan. Under strategic outcome 2, WFP will deliver a joint intervention with the rest of the United Nations country team in partnership with the Department of Disaster Management, the Ministry of Home and Cultural Affairs, the National Statistics Bureau and civil defence and civil society organizations.

5. Performance management and evaluation

5.1 Monitoring and evaluation arrangements

65. Performance management will be based on the Corporate Results Framework and will follow an approach that is gender-responsive and aligned with the corporate monitoring strategy, involving the measurement and analysis of process, output and outcome indicators. WFP will carry out project monitoring jointly with government partners. It will collect output data directly from partners and use the country office tool for managing effectively, COMET, for data management. Outcome monitoring will focus on increased national ownership and the enhancement of government capacities.
66. In line with WFP’s corporate CSP policy and the evaluation strategy, a CSP evaluation will be conducted during the penultimate year of CSP implementation in 2022 with the aim of informing the strategic orientation of WFP’s future work in Bhutan. In 2021, the country office will conduct a mid-term review in line with stakeholder demand and the requirements for evidence generation, learning and accountability. Findings from the mid-term review will also inform an evaluation of the UNSDPF to be conducted in 2022. A decentralized evaluation of WFP’s integrated approach will be conducted, with surveys for the establishment of baselines starting in 2019. As the country office will work solely on capacity strengthening of government partners, a series of qualitative assessments led and validated by stakeholders will be undertaken.
67. The country office will support the use of technologies for real-time, multisector, digital data collection and reporting, including in the Government’s monitoring of progress in the national school nutrition programme, the tracking of WFP’s achievements at the output level and more efficient monitoring of food safety and quality processes. WFP will prepare annual country reports and will meet the specific reporting requirements of donors by providing

briefs, annual reports and synthesis reports and arranging field missions in order to enable donors to view the results and benefits of activities.

68. In the context of the United Nations reform, the country office will collaborate with its partners in the United Nations country team in order to harmonize planning, quality assurance, monitoring, evaluation and reporting, adopting common indicators where feasible.

5.2 Risk management

Strategic risks

69. At the beginning of August 2018, the Government of Bhutan resigned upon the successful completion of its five-year term, handing over governing authority to the interim government, which is not entitled to make policy decisions. While the Gross National Happiness Commission (the Government's planning body) and other ministries have indicated that the CSP is in line with the country's priorities, only the new Government, which came into office in early November, can approve the 12th five-year plan, currently in draft form, during its first parliamentary session, scheduled for December 2018. The risk of misalignment with the new Government is small, and the manifesto of the ruling political party prioritizes the areas of collaboration identified in the CSP.
70. Climate change increases the risk of more frequent and intense natural disasters, including floods, mudslides or earthquakes, which could hamper Bhutan's hydropower projects, halting or reversing many recent economic and other development gains. WFP will address this risk through close monitoring and contingency planning while building the capacity of the Government to prepare and respond to disasters.
71. Another strategic risk is the possibility that WFP does not receive sufficient resources to fund the shift in the direction of its work and to have a meaningful impact on the achievement of SDG 2. To mitigate this risk, WFP has engaged closely with donors on the development of the CSP, and there have been positive preliminary indications of resourcing support, including multi-year funding, for the shift towards technical assistance on the national school nutrition programme and food fortification and safety. WFP and the rest of the United Nations country team will deliver a joint intervention on emergency preparedness and response, and they have the strong commitment of the United Nations Resident Coordinator to help mobilize resources for strategic outcome 2.

Programmatic risks

72. While the ministries of education and health are highly committed partners of WFP, it may be challenging for them to invest a great deal of time in building capacity and managing the transformation of the school feeding programme while also performing their regular work. To encourage participation in capacity development, WFP will continue to emphasize to the ministries of education and health and other government partners the importance of having sufficient, qualified staff for the transition to a national school nutrition programme and for broader nutrition and health interventions. Environmental and social safeguards will be integrated into the activities so that unwanted potential impacts can be avoided or mitigated.
73. Another programmatic risk is the possibility that WFP does not receive sufficient resources to fund the shift in direction of its work and to make a meaningful contribution to the achievement of SDG 2. To mitigate this risk, WFP has engaged closely with donors on the development of the CSP and there have been positive preliminary indications of resourcing support, including multi-year funding, for the provision of technical assistance for the national school nutrition programme and food fortification and safety. WFP will work with the other members of the United Nations country team on a joint intervention for emergency preparedness and response and has strong support from the United Nations resident coordinator, who has committed to helping to mobilize resources for the achievement of strategic outcome 2.

6. Resources for results

6.1 Country portfolio budget

Strategic outcome	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Total
1	1 844 652	1 612 809	1 454 637	1 591 538	866 555	7 370 191
2	355 083	328 152	280 852	306 012	301 761	1 571 861
Total	2 199 735	1 940 961	1 735 489	1 897 550	1 168 317	8 942 053

6.2 Resourcing outlook

74. The resourcing outlook for the CSP is positive and the thematic areas in which activities are planned are aligned with the interests of traditional, non-traditional and private sector donors. Investments in Bhutan are low in cost, high in impact and visible and the country office will capitalize on these characteristics in its resourcing efforts with partners. Efforts to diversify the donor base and engage new partners are under way and considerable gains have already been made. The resourcing outlook for certain activities, such as emergency preparedness and response initiatives where WFP has been asked to take the lead, is more favourable than for others.

6.3 Resource mobilization strategy

75. The country office is developing a resource mobilization plan for the CSP through which it seeks to diversify funding streams, capitalizing on strong partnerships with the Government and current donors while enhancing relationships with emerging and new donors, including in the private sector. Fundraising for work in Bhutan has become increasingly challenging as the country graduates from least developed country status, but the approaching graduation is also opening up new funding streams such as the financial institutions (the Asian Development Bank and the World Bank), which are investing heavily in development interventions, including in education, health and emergency preparedness and response. The limited presence of diplomatic missions from other countries has complicated resourcing efforts, but intensified engagement with partners investing in Bhutan from outside the country and via platforms such as the Executive Board is under way.
76. Joint resource mobilization with the resident coordinator and with other United Nations agencies is a cornerstone of WFP's in-country resourcing efforts. Potential opportunities include the India-United Nations development partnership fund for South-South cooperation and United Nations pooled funds. WFP's engagement with the Government and traditional donors will be complemented by increased investments from the private sector and global funds.

ANNEX I**LOGICAL FRAMEWORK FOR BHUTAN COUNTRY STRATEGIC PLAN (2019–2023)****Strategic Goal 1: Support countries to achieve zero hunger****Strategic Objective 2: Improve nutrition****Strategic Result 2: No one suffers from malnutrition****Strategic outcome 1: School-age children, women and vulnerable groups in Bhutan have improved nutrition in line with national targets by 2023**

Outcome category: Enhanced social and public-sector capacity to identify, target and assist nutritionally vulnerable populations

Nutrition sensitive

Focus area: root causes

Assumptions

With the shift from operational implementation towards capacity development, the staff in the country office are being trained and coached to adjust to these new roles, and where the internal capacity is not available and cannot be identified within the country, the support of international consultants and the regional bureau is sought.

There are sufficient and qualified staff in the relevant government sectors assigned to the programme.

Outcome indicators

Dietary Diversity Score

Proportion of eligible population that participates in programme (coverage)

Zero Hunger Capacity Scorecard

Activities and outputs

1. Assist the Government in its transition to a national school nutrition programme based on an integrated approach to school feeding that connects school feeding to nutrition education, school health and school agriculture and embeds gender, environmental and social safeguards in all activities, with strengthened supply chains and the optimization of school nutrition infrastructure. (CSI: Institutional capacity strengthening activities)

Targeted primary and secondary schoolchildren, including adolescent girls, (tier 3) benefit from healthy diets consisting of diverse foods, gender-transformative nutrition education and health services provided to boys and girls in order to improve their nutrition, combat non-communicable diseases (SDG 3) and enhance school performance (SDG 4). (C: Capacity development and technical support provided)

Targeted primary and secondary schoolchildren, including adolescent girls, (tier 3) benefit from healthy diets consisting of diverse foods, gender-transformative nutrition education and health services provided to boys and girls in order to improve their nutrition, combat non-communicable diseases (SDG 3) and enhance school performance (SDG 4). (E: Advocacy and education provided)

Targeted primary and secondary schoolchildren, including adolescent girls, (tier 3) benefit from healthy diets consisting of diverse foods, gender-transformative nutrition education and health services provided to boys and girls in order to improve their nutrition, combat non-communicable diseases (SDG 3) and enhance school performance (SDG 4). (F: Purchases from smallholders completed)

Targeted primary and secondary schoolchildren, including adolescent girls, (tier 3) benefit from healthy diets consisting of diverse foods, gender-transformative nutrition education and health services provided to boys and girls in order to improve their nutrition, combat non-communicable diseases (SDG 3) and enhance school performance (SDG 4). (L: Infrastructure and equipment investments supported)

2. Provide technical assistance to the Government and the national food production and trade sectors to ensure that sound policies are in place and ensure the quality and safety of fortified foods, especially rice, throughout their supply chains. (CSI: Institutional capacity strengthening activities)

Vulnerable populations (tier 3) benefit from the Government's increased capacity to monitor the safety and quality of fortified foods and thus to ensure that their basic food and nutrition needs are met. (C: Capacity development and technical support provided)

Vulnerable populations (tier 3) benefit from the Government's increased capacity to monitor the safety and quality of fortified foods and thus to ensure that their basic food and nutrition needs are met. (L: Infrastructure and equipment investments supported)

Strategic Goal 2: Partner to support implementation of the SDGs**Strategic Objective 4: Support SDG implementation****Strategic Result 5: Countries have strengthened capacity to implement the SDGs****Strategic outcome 2: Government has strengthened capability to address food security and nutrition challenges and prepare for and respond to crises, including those resulting from climate change, by 2023**

Outcome category: Enhanced capacities of public- and private-sector institutions and systems, including local responders, to identify, target and assist food-insecure and nutritionally vulnerable populations

Focus area: resilience building

Assumptions

With the shift from operational implementation towards capacity development, the profile of the staff in the country office are being trained and coached to adjust to these new roles and where the internal capacity is not available and cannot be identified within the country, support of international consultants and the Regional Bureau is sought.

Outcome indicators

Emergency Preparedness Capacity Index

Activities and outputs

3. Through WFP's leadership of the emergency logistics and communications sector working group, provide the Government with gender-informed and vulnerability-focused capacity strengthening relevant to its management of national emergency resources and its development, enhancement and testing of national emergency response plans and coordination systems. (CSI: Institutional capacity strengthening activities)

Food-insecure and other vulnerable people (tier 3) benefit from the Government's enhanced knowledge of vulnerability, emergency logistics and best practices for supply chain systems (including storage and decentralized strategic grain reserves) and enhanced ability to minimize losses and improve food security in times of need. (C: Capacity development and technical support provided)

Food-insecure and other vulnerable people (tier 3) benefit from the Government's enhanced knowledge of vulnerability, emergency logistics and best practices for supply chain systems (including storage and decentralized strategic grain reserves) and enhanced ability to minimize losses and improve food security in times of need. (H: Shared services and platforms provided)

Food-insecure and other vulnerable people (tier 3) benefit from the Government's enhanced knowledge of vulnerability, emergency logistics and best practices for supply chain systems (including storage and decentralized strategic grain reserves) and enhanced ability to minimize losses and improve food security in times of need. (L: Infrastructure and equipment investments supported)

Strategic Goal 1: Support countries to achieve zero hunger**C.1. Affected populations are able to hold WFP and partners accountable for meeting their hunger needs in a manner that reflects their views and preferences****Cross-cutting indicators**

C.1.1: Proportion of assisted people informed about the programme (who is included, what people will receive, length of assistance)

C.2. Affected populations are able to benefit from WFP programmes in a manner that ensures and promotes their safety, dignity and integrity**Cross-cutting indicators**

C.2.1: Proportion of targeted people accessing assistance without protection challenges

C.3. Improved gender equality and women's empowerment among WFP-assisted population**Cross-cutting indicators**

C.3.2: Proportion of food assistance decision-making entity – committees, boards, teams, etc. – members who are women

ANNEX II

INDICATIVE COST BREAKDOWN BY STRATEGIC OUTCOME (USD)			
	Strategic Result 2/ SDG target 2.2	Strategic Result 5/ SDG target 17.9	Total
	Strategic outcome 1	Strategic outcome 2	
Focus area	Root causes	Resilience building	
Transfers	5 150 281	993 801	6 144 082
Implementation	839 084	284 107	1 123 191
Adjusted direct support costs	931 002	198 018	1 129 020
Subtotal	6 920 367	1 475 926	8 396 293
Indirect support costs (6.5%)	449 824	95 935	545 759
Total	7 370 191	1 571 861	8 942 053

Acronyms used in the document

BAFRA	Bhutan Agriculture and Food Regulatory Authority
CSP	country strategic plan
GDP	gross domestic product
ITC	International Trade Centre
NKRA	national key result area
RFNS	review on food and nutrition security
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNSDPF	United Nations sustainable development partnership framework
WHO	World Health Organization