



World Food Programme
Programme Alimentaire Mondial
Programa Mundial de Alimentos
برنامج الأغذية العالمي

Executive Board
Second regular session
Rome, 17–21 November 2025

Distribution: General

Date: 30 October 2025

Original: English

Agenda item 7

WFP/EB.2/2025/7-A/6

Operational matters – Country strategic plans

For decision

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Sierra Leone country strategic plan (2026–2030)

Duration	1 January 2026–31 December 2030
Total cost to WFP	USD 148,730,683
Framework on accountability for results score*	3.0

* The framework on accountability for results is a performance measurement approach that incorporates programme and financial tracking and delivers a results-based approach to people-centred programming.

Executive summary

Food insecurity remains a chronic and structural challenge in Sierra Leone, affecting a majority of the population. Despite the country's agricultural potential and natural wealth, economic instability, land degradation, extreme weather events and systemic barriers continue to hinder access to safe and nutritious food. Addressing these challenges requires integrated and transformative solutions that strengthen food systems, build resilience among vulnerable communities and ensure that children receive adequate nutrition for healthy development.

Building on achievements of the country strategic plan for 2020–2025 and in alignment with the Government's commitment to address the underlying drivers of food insecurity through the Feed Salone Strategy, WFP will continue to prioritize the food security needs of the most vulnerable populations. The country strategic plan for Sierra Leone for 2026–2030 will focus on reinforcing the home-grown school feeding programme, supporting smallholder farmers and scaling up initiatives to ensure greater access to diverse and nutritious diets, particularly for children and vulnerable communities.

To achieve scale and impact WFP will adopt a food systems approach and strengthen the entire value chain ensuring that vulnerable communities benefit from better access to nutritious food and essential services. Special attention will be given to promoting rural women's economic empowerment and creating employment opportunities for rural young people within priority food value chains.

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Aligned with national frameworks and the priorities set out in the United Nations sustainable development cooperation framework for Sierra Leone for 2025–2030, the country strategic plan for 2026–2030 will focus on sustainable, context-specific solutions through the following three integrated outcomes:

- *Outcome 1.* Crisis-affected populations are better able to meet their food and nutrition needs before, during and after shocks.
- *Outcome 2.* Pre- and primary schoolchildren and vulnerable groups at risk of malnutrition in targeted districts have improved year-round access to locally produced, safe and diverse nutrient-dense food, contributing to healthy diets and strengthened human capital by 2030.
- *Outcome 3.* Populations in targeted areas, especially women and youth, have more resilient and improved livelihoods through better natural resource management, enhanced skills, improved access to finance and markets, contributing to the development of local value chains by 2030.

The country strategic plan addresses key cross-cutting issues, including nutrition, protection, accountability and environmental sustainability, aims to reduce disparities and strengthens people's ability to meet their own needs and priorities. Anchored in humanitarian principles and human rights, it emphasizes the "do no harm" approach and focuses on marginalized and vulnerable populations.

Draft decision*

The Board approves the Sierra Leone country strategic plan (2026–2030) (WFP/EB.2/2025/7-A/6) at a total cost to WFP of USD 148,730,683.

* 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 and needs assessment

1. Sierra Leone faces persistent and deepening food security challenges driven by a combination of structural and contextual factors. The proportion of food-insecure people increased from 45 percent in 2010 to 57.3 percent in 2020.¹ These trends have continued and by 2025 the situation had further deteriorated with more than 1.2 million people experiencing severe food insecurity and requiring targeted assistance.² Food insecurity is most severe in rural areas, where dependence on subsistence farming, limited market access and poor infrastructure exacerbate vulnerabilities.³
2. Successive external shocks and currency depreciation have fuelled a sharp rise in inflation, which climbed from 18 percent in 2021 to 37 percent in 2022 before reaching 56 percent in October 2023, the highest in 25 years.⁴ The resulting macroeconomic instability has deepened food insecurity, as escalating prices and diminished household purchasing power force many families to choose between food and other essentials, reducing dietary diversity and overall food intake.⁵ In addition, inflation and a heavy reliance on imports have strained the Government's fiscal capacity, limiting its ability to provide basic services.
3. The long-term effects of the civil war that ended in 2002 remain evident in the form of economic marginalization, weak governance, limited access to quality education and healthcare, high youth unemployment and uneven development across regions. With an annual population growth rate of 2.2 percent and a median age of 19, Sierra Leone has one of the youngest and fastest-growing populations in the world. Despite this demographic potential, the country ranks 184th of 193 on the 2022 Human Development Index and faces major challenges in ending hunger.
4. Agriculture is the backbone of the economy and the primary source of livelihoods, engaging 55 percent of the population and accounting for approximately 58 percent of GDP.⁶ The sector is dominated by smallholder farmers, 75 percent of whom cultivate less than 2 hectares of land and depend on rain-fed agriculture. Limited access to financing, mechanization, extension services and adaptive technologies for sustainable livelihoods prevents farmers from adopting improved practices, making them highly vulnerable to extreme weather events and economic stressors.⁷ Land degradation further exacerbates these challenges by reducing soil fertility, increasing erosion and decreasing arable land, ultimately threatening food security and livelihoods.⁸
5. Structural barriers further constrain the agricultural sector. Poor infrastructure, fragmented markets and weak private sector investment make it difficult for farmers to access markets, with farmers having to travel an average distance of 15 kilometres to the nearest functioning market. Poor road networks drive up costs and transport times, exacerbating post-harvest losses estimated at 30 percent.⁹ Meanwhile, low investment in agroprocessing leaves most agricultural commodities unprocessed, limiting opportunities for income diversification for

¹ WFP. 2021. *State of Food Security in Sierra Leone 2020: Comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerability Analysis*.

² WFP. 2025. *Country-Level Food Insecurity Trends in West Africa* (based on Cadre Harmonisé/Integrated Food Security Phase Classification projections).

³ WFP. 2021. *State of Food Security in Sierra Leone 2020: Comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerability Analysis*.

⁴ International Monetary Fund. 2024. *IMF Country Report No. 24/321: Sierra Leone*.

⁵ WFP. 2024. *Food Security Monitoring System Report, February 2024*.

⁶ Government of Sierra Leone. 2024. *Sierra Leone's Medium-Term National Development Plan (2024–2030): A Transformative Acceleration Agenda for Food Security, Human Capital Development and Job Creation*.

⁷ International Monetary Fund. 2024. *IMF Country Report No. 24/321: Sierra Leone*.

⁸ United Nations. 2024. *Common Country Analysis Sierra Leone 2023*.

⁹ WFP. 2021. *State of Food Security in Sierra Leone: 2020: Comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerability Analysis*.

smallholder farmers.¹⁰ Women in particular face additional constraints, including restricted access to land, financial services and essential inputs, and frequently cultivate less fertile and less resilient plots, further limiting their productivity.

6. Sierra Leone ranks among the countries of the world most vulnerable to environmental hazards, with high poverty rates, food insecurity and reliance on rain-fed agriculture limiting household adaptive capacity.¹¹ Rapid land degradation, driven by deforestation and unsustainable farming methods such as shifting cultivation and slash-and-burn, is further depleting ecosystems and increasing weather-related risks. These challenges underscore the urgent need for targeted, data-driven strategies for enhancing resilience and reducing vulnerability.¹²
7. Education outcomes remain poor, with only 64 percent of children completing primary school.¹³ Poverty, food insecurity and weak education infrastructure, particularly in rural areas, contribute to low retention rates. These same factors also exacerbate child malnutrition. Some 26 percent of children under 5 are stunted, 11 percent are underweight and 5 percent suffer from wasting.¹⁴ In 2021, acute malnutrition affected 8.5 percent of adolescent girls and 10.7 percent of adolescent boys. Despite efforts to improve access to health and education, significant rural–urban disparities persist, with rural populations facing disproportionate challenges in accessing essential services.
8. Dietary diversity remains a critical concern, particularly for young children. While breast milk is a key component of infant diets, overall nutrition remains heavily grain-based, with insufficient consumption of micronutrient-rich foods, animal-source proteins, fruits, legumes and vegetables. Only 23 percent of children 6–23 months of age meet the minimum dietary diversity required for healthy growth,¹⁵ with high rates of anaemia among children under 5. The availability and affordability of specialized nutritious foods remain limited, particularly in rural and food-insecure regions. Food policies have historically favoured staple crops like rice over micronutrient-rich foods.¹⁶ Regulations address micronutrient deficiencies but weak infrastructure, inadequate quality control and limited enforcement of fortification standards continue to hinder access to fortified foods, particularly for vulnerable populations.

2. National priorities and collective assistance

9. The development of WFP's country strategic plan (CSP) for Sierra Leone for 2026–2030 has been informed by an extensive consultative process to ensure alignment, synergies and broad stakeholder buy-in within the framework of key national priorities. WFP's engagement approach included high-level bilateral meetings with government officials, donors,

¹⁰ Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, French Agricultural Research Centre for International Development and European Union. 2022. *Food Systems Profile – Sierra Leone: Catalysing the sustainable and inclusive transformation of food systems*.

¹¹ International Monetary Fund. 2024. *IMF Country Report No. 24/321: Sierra Leone*.

¹² World Bank. 2022. *West Africa Food System Resilience Program (FSRP) Phase 2 (P178132) – Project Appraisal Document, Report No. PAD4940*.

¹³ United Nations Children's Fund. *Access to education and marketable skills remains a challenge for children in Sierra Leone*.

¹⁴ Sierra Leone Ministry of Health and Sanitation and United Nations Children's Fund. 2021. *Sierra Leone National Nutrition Survey 2021*.

¹⁵ United Nations. 2024. *Common Country Analysis Sierra Leone 2023*.

¹⁶ Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, French Agricultural Research Centre for International Development and European Union. 2022. *Food Systems Profile – Sierra Leone: Catalysing the sustainable and inclusive transformation of food systems*.

development partners, civil society organizations and women's organizations through national multistakeholder workshops and consultations.

10. Sierra Leone's medium-term national development plan, covering 2024–2030,¹⁷ outlines the country's vision of having an inclusive and green middle-income economy by 2039. Within this broader agenda, the Feed Salone Strategy, covering 2023–2028,¹⁸ serves as the Government's flagship initiative to address food insecurity and rural poverty through investments in mechanization, aggregation, rural finance, market linkages, sustainable agriculture and employment for women and young people, costed at USD 1.6 billion. This strategy is complemented by broader economic and governance reforms – collectively referred to as the “big five game changers” – which focus on strengthening human capital, economic diversification and infrastructure development.¹⁹ Reflecting this strong policy commitment, the Government had increased its budget allocation to the agriculture sector from 2 percent to 7 percent by 2024, with the objective of reaching 10 percent by 2025,²⁰ in line with the Malabo Declaration.²¹ Together, these initiatives represent the most comprehensive government effort to address the root causes of poverty and food insecurity and accelerate progress towards ending hunger since the end of Sierra Leone's civil war.
11. Development partners play a critical role in supporting the implementation of the Feed Salone Strategy, with a strong focus on food system resilience, nutrition-sensitive agriculture and rural livelihoods. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) is mobilizing technical expertise and investment to enhance agricultural productivity and food security, while an International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) livestock and livelihoods development project²² aims to boost rural incomes, particularly for women and young people. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) promotes sustainable food systems through sustainable agriculture, forest-positive farming and resilience initiatives.²³ WFP complements these initiatives by investing in smallholder farmers, expanding local procurement to strengthen market linkages and enhancing food availability at the community level. In addition, development banks – including the World Bank,²⁴ the African Development Bank and the Islamic Development Bank – are financing large-scale investments in value chain development, environmental adaptation and food system transformation.
12. The national school meals programme is the largest government-led programme. Launched in 2018 to enhance educational outcomes, food security and nutrition, it is recognized as a key element of the Government's human capital development agenda.²⁵ Coordinated by a school feeding secretariat and funded by the Government and donors, the programme has expanded significantly, with contributions from WFP, Catholic Relief Services and

¹⁷ Government of Sierra Leone. 2024. *Sierra Leone's Medium-Term National Development Plan (2024–2030): A Transformative Acceleration Agenda for Food Security, Human Capital Development and Job Creation*.

¹⁸ Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security. 2023. *Feed Salone Strategy: A Blueprint for Agricultural Transformation in Sierra Leone: 2023–2028*.

¹⁹ Government of Sierra Leone. 2024. *Sierra Leone's Medium-Term National Development Plan (2024–2030): A Transformative Acceleration Agenda for Food Security, Human Capital Development and Job Creation*.

²⁰ Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security. 2024. *Feed Salone One Year Report: 2023–2024*.

²¹ African Union. 2016. *Malabo Declaration on Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Transformation for Shared Prosperity and Improved Livelihoods*.

²² International Fund for Agricultural Development. 2024. *IFAD and Sierra Leone partner to boost farm productivity with Livestock and Livelihoods Development Project*.

²³ United Nations Development Programme. 2025. *Country programme document for Sierra Leone (2025–2030)*.

²⁴ World Bank. 2022. *West Africa Food System Resilience Program (FSRP) Phase 2 (P178132) – Project Appraisal Document, Report No. PAD4940*.

²⁵ Government of Sierra Leone. 2024. *Sierra Leone's Medium-Term National Development Plan (2024–2030): A Transformative Acceleration Agenda for Food Security, Human Capital Development and Job Creation*.

Plan International, from 50,000 pupils at its inception to approximately 800,000 students in the 2024/2025 school year,²⁶ or 36 percent of all school-age children nationwide. Aiming for universal coverage by 2030,²⁷ as a member of the School Meals Coalition established at the 2021 United Nations food systems summit the Government has identified home-grown school feeding (HGSF) as a policy and investment priority; HGSF is implemented under the leadership of the Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education, with support from the Ministry of Planning and Economic Development. Limited fiscal space continues to constrain national financing capacity,²⁸ however, and despite significant donor interest and support implementation is currently limited to selected districts, highlighting the need for continued investment to accelerate progress.

13. A national social protection policy framework is in place²⁹ but its implementation is fragmented and lacks coordination among national institutions.³⁰ The system relies on external donor funding, which enabled the temporary expansion of the social safety net's coverage from 35,500 to 100,000 households during the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic, including through support from WFP.³¹ Given the high level of poverty, expanding and strengthening national programmes and systems, including their ability to respond to shocks and support food security and nutrition, is essential to providing vulnerable households with stable support, reducing economic hardship and enhancing resilience in the face of future crises.³²
14. The implementation of national development plans is hampered by constrained fiscal space and rising public sector debt, which limit the Government's ability to invest in social sectors and sustain large-scale development initiatives.³³ In addition, weak coordination mechanisms and gaps in data systems hinder sectoral ministries and local governments in monitoring progress and implementing necessary reforms. As traditional donor funding faces uncertainty due to global economic shifts, expanding financing sources – in particular through greater private sector engagement – will be essential for sustaining long-term development efforts.
15. In disaster risk management, forecasting capacity remains a critical gap that limits the government's ability to anticipate and respond to extreme weather events, which are increasing in frequency and intensity. A 2021 country hydromet diagnostic exercise identified several areas of weakness in Sierra Leone's meteorological agency, including a lack of weather observation stations and inadequate forecasting capability and coordination mechanisms for emergencies such as droughts, floods, landslides and storms.³⁴ These gaps delay the operation of early warning systems and hinder the dissemination of critical weather information, posing challenges to the protection of vulnerable populations and food systems from climate shocks.
16. Sierra Leone's national disaster management agency (NDMA) serves as the central coordinating body for disaster response and is supported through an institutional framework that stretches from the chiefdom level to the national level. Investments from

²⁶ International Monetary Fund. 2024. *IMF Country Report No. 2024/322: Sierra Leone: Selected issues*.

²⁷ Global Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty. 2024. [Governments and partners commit to doubling school meals for children in the most affected countries by 2030](#).

²⁸ International Monetary Fund. 2024. *IMF Country Report No. 2024/322: Sierra Leone: Selected issues*.

²⁹ Sierra Leone Ministry of Labour and Social Security. 2021. *National Social Protection Strategy for Sierra Leone: 2022–2026*.

³⁰ United Nations. 2024. *Common Country Analysis Sierra Leone 2023*.

³¹ Government of Sierra Leone. 2024. *Sierra Leone's Medium-Term National Development Plan (2024–2030): A Transformative Acceleration Agenda for Food Security, Human Capital Development and Job Creation*.

³² International Monetary Fund. 2024. *IMF Country Report No. 2024/322: Sierra Leone: Selected issues*.

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ Nigerian Meteorological Agency. 2021. *Country hydromet diagnostic, Sierra Leone 2021 Peer Review*. (Not available online.)

WFP, other United Nations partners and the World Bank have strengthened NDMA's core capacity, but Sierra Leone remains highly vulnerable, ranking 179th of 187 countries in the Notre Dame Global Adaptation Index³⁵. Further investment in resilience and early warning systems is essential to reducing vulnerability and mitigating the long-term effects of weather events.

17. The United Nations sustainable development cooperation framework (UNSDCF) for Sierra Leone for 2025–2030 provides a coordinated structure for advancing the country's development agenda, with a strong emphasis on equity, human rights and structural barriers affecting equal opportunities, including for women.³⁶ Closely aligned with the medium-term national development plan, the framework identifies three priority areas where WFP's expertise will be leveraged: food systems resilience in the face of shocks and stressors, climate action and sustainable resource management; investment in human capital, essential services and employment; and governance reforms alongside economic diversification.

3. WFP's comparative advantage, capacity and ability in Sierra Leone

18. WFP has reinforced its leadership in food security in Sierra Leone through the CSP for 2020–2025, reaching over 315,000 individuals affected by shocks and the COVID-19 pandemic. During the term of the CSP more than 270,000 pre- and primary schoolchildren received nutritious meals each year, improving school attendance and retention while creating market linkages and livelihood opportunities for local smallholder farmers. In addition some 60,000 community members in the most food-insecure areas benefited from asset creation aimed at improving water conservation, irrigation and farmlands, as well as training in sustainable agriculture, post-harvest management, storage and financial literacy. WFP also procured local rice and pulses from more than 12,000 smallholder farmers by working through rural traders, strengthening food systems while expanding national partnerships, including with the private sector.
19. WFP's ability to deliver at scale while leveraging field-based partners, suppliers and market actors is critical in Sierra Leone, where the most food-insecure areas are remote, infrastructure is weak and local partners often lack the capacity for large-scale implementation. District-level resources and institutional capacity remain limited, making WFP's field presence a key advantage unique among United Nations partners. Through its seven field locations, WFP ensures quality oversight, coordination with partners and local authorities and effective community engagement and real-time monitoring.
20. An evaluation of the CSP for 2020–2025³⁷ highlights WFP's clear comparative advantage in Sierra Leone, particularly in integrating food security, nutrition, school meals and resilience within a cohesive programmatic framework. By combining direct implementation with system-strengthening efforts, WFP works effectively towards meeting the immediate needs of the most food-insecure communities while also working with them to build their long-term resilience through people-centred and protection-sensitive approaches. WFP's district and community-level presence enables context-specific interventions aligned with government-led initiatives under the Feed Salone Strategy.
21. The evaluation also recognized the HGSF programme for its role in strengthening local food systems by connecting school meals to local markets through WFP's expertise in procurement, smallholder farmer support and nutrition-sensitive programming. As part of

³⁵ University of Notre Dame. 2024. [Notre Dame Global Adaptation Initiative: Country Index: Rankings](#).

³⁶ United Nations. 2024. [United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework UNSDCF 2025-2030: Supporting the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and National Development Priorities](#).

³⁷ WFP. 2025. [Evaluation of Sierra Leone WFP Country Strategy Plan 2020–2025 \(Summary Terms of Reference\)](#).

- the programme's transition to national ownership, WFP will focus on working with government counterparts to strengthen policies, improve supply chains, expand local procurement and build institutional and operational capacity.
22. Findings from a decentralized evaluation of asset creation and livelihood activities in Sierra Leone³⁸ suggest that resilience-building provides the most context appropriate strategy for addressing chronic food insecurity. Investments in local food value chains, HGSF and resilience have strengthened long-term food security by addressing structural barriers to food access and availability. The new programme design builds on the project's key achievement – the establishment of an inland valley swamp model that emphasizes community ownership, fosters sustainable soil and water management and enables year-round crop yields that are resilient and adapted to local conditions. Moving forward WFP will deepen alignment with the Feed Salone Strategy by supporting smallholder farmers and aggregators and leveraging investments in agribusiness centres to strengthen market integration and improve value chain efficiency.
 23. District level institutional challenges, including inadequate staffing, weak logistics and limited data systems, impede coordination and oversight. To address these gaps WFP will invest in training for local actors, enhance non-governmental organization (NGO) involvement in monitoring and community engagement and support subnational coordination to strengthen local programme delivery. By strengthening data systems and reporting mechanisms, WFP, alongside FAO and IFAD, will work to ensure that interventions under the Feed Salone Strategy are effectively implemented and scaled.
 24. HGSF has provided smallholder farmers with a stable market but procurement inefficiency and payment delays have caused cash flow challenges for participating farmers, exacerbated by inflation-driven price fluctuations. In response WFP will optimize procurement processes to expedite payments, improve engagement with traders and aggregators and enhance financial literacy and credit access for smallholder farmers to create a more predictable and sustainable value chain and reduce their exposure to financial risk.
 25. Recognizing schools as a platform for integrated interventions to improve children's nutrition and health, the evaluation of the CSP for 2020–2025 highlights the need for increased effort in cross-sector collaboration, particularly with water, sanitation and hygiene and health sector partners. As WFP scales up the HGSF programme, there is an increasing demand on food supply and operational systems, highlighting the need to expand the partnership base for implementation. By working closely with UNSDCF partners and other actors, WFP will facilitate the integration of water, sanitation and hygiene, nutrition education and health services into school-based programmes. Beyond school meals, leveraging partnerships with the Government, development banks, private sector actors and research institutions will be critical to expanding value chain development, resilience and innovative financing solutions. As traditional donor funding faces uncertainty, securing diverse funding sources and private sector investment will be key to long-term sustainability and impact.

³⁸ WFP. 2023. *Evaluation of Asset Creation and Livelihood Activities in Sierra Leone from January 2020 to December 2023*.

4. Strategic positioning, programme priorities, and partnerships

Country strategic plan direction and intended impacts

26. With a majority of its population affected by food insecurity, Sierra Leone faces structural challenges that require systemic and transformative responses to achieve long-term food and nutrition security for the most vulnerable people. WFP's strategic approach in the CSP for 2026–2030 prioritizes direct support for the most food-insecure communities, strengthening their resilience in the face of future shocks while aligning with the structured investments of the Feed Salone Strategy to enhance the national food system. This dual approach ensures that WFP's interventions remain community-driven and impact-oriented while also contributing to national efforts to strengthen food systems, nutrition and resilience.
27. As co-lead of UNSDCF pillar 1, on food systems, WFP will contribute to sustainable natural resource management, resilience-building and disaster risk reduction. A nutrition-sensitive food systems approach will guide efforts to expand sustainable agriculture, enhance local food procurement and reduce food losses and thereby reduce reliance on seasonal or crisis-driven food assistance. WFP will work closely with the Government, other United Nations bodies, NGOs, research institutions and the private sector to implement these efforts.
28. WFP will continue to address food security and malnutrition among the most at-risk populations, including school-age children, smallholder farmers, breastfeeding women and girls, and children 6–23 months of age. By maintaining a strong field presence and working closely with local actors, the Sierra Leone country office will focus on hard-to-reach and underserved districts, ensuring targeted support in the most food-insecure communities.
29. The CSP will reinforce the strategic shift toward systems strengthening and resilience, balancing direct assistance with enabling actions by strengthening food value chains and enhancing market access for smallholder farmers to improve people's access to locally produced, safe, affordable and nutritious food. Over time WFP will increasingly shift toward enabling approaches, supporting policy implementation at the subnational level and enhancing last-mile market access through private sector engagement. Guided by the long-term objective of national ownership, WFP will implement a scalable HGSP model through strong collaboration with national stakeholders. Key efforts will concentrate on building institutional capacity, strengthening supply chains and integrating HGSP into government plans and financing structures to enable a sustainable handover.
30. The country office will strengthen its role in evidence generation by investing in data collection, analysis and monitoring to inform advocacy, targeting and programme implementation. By working closely with partners and national systems, WFP will track food security trends, assess vulnerability and support the Government in responding to shocks. The integration of weather-related and early warning data further enhances risk assessment, disaster preparedness and resilience building efforts. Through data-driven advocacy, WFP will also contribute to policies that align food security interventions with broader development and adaptation goals.
31. WFP's targeting approach is guided by data from a comprehensive food security and vulnerability analyses, food security monitoring system surveys, Cadre Harmonisé assessments and other food security and nutrition assessments, focusing on geographic areas with the greatest food insecurity and exposure to natural and economic shocks. Applying a vulnerability-based and inclusive targeting methodology, the programme prioritizes households headed by women and young people, as well as persons with disabilities. Community engagement and the involvement of local authorities are central to the identification, validation and verification of targeted households, ensuring transparency,

accountability and community acceptance. WFP also applies conflict-sensitive and do-no-harm principles to promote social cohesion and minimize the risk of exclusion or participation errors.

Programme integration

32. WFP will ensure the geographic convergence of its interventions by prioritizing the most food-insecure districts, linking smallholder farmers and micro-enterprises to HGSF and focusing the production and marketing of fortified complementary food in areas with high stunting and moderate acute malnutrition rates and micronutrient deficiencies to prevent malnutrition. To promote healthy diets, WFP will incorporate social and behaviour change (SBC) interventions across its activities and will continue working with health and water, sanitation and hygiene actors to tackle underlying factors contributing to malnutrition. WFP's strong field presence will support decentralized governance, improving coordination, resource allocation and the long-term effectiveness of food security, nutrition, disaster risk management and school meal programmes.

Strategic engagement with partners

33. Building on lessons from the CSP for 2020–2025 and evaluation recommendations, WFP will strengthen cross-sectoral collaboration to maximize synergies. Partnerships with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), World Vision International and other actors will enhance the integration of water, sanitation and hygiene, and nutrition services into school meals programmes, supporting broader student health and learning objectives. Collaboration with IFAD, FAO, UNDP and NGO partners, multilateral development banks, including the African Development Bank, the Islamic Development Bank and the World Bank, the private sector and academia will also drive resilience-building efforts, promoting environmental sustainability while expanding economic opportunities for smallholder farmers, women and young people. In particular WFP will coordinate closely with FAO, drawing on FAO's technical leadership while utilizing its operational reach to ensure integrated and effective support aligned with national priorities. Key national counterparts include the ministries responsible for basic and senior secondary education, agriculture and food security, planning and economic development and health, the national commission for social action, NDMA, the Sierra Leone Agricultural Research Institute and the Sierra Leone Standards Bureau.
34. WFP will continue to support United Nations country team activities, sector coordination mechanisms and thematic initiatives. Collaboration in these areas is strengthened through joint workplans and operational partnerships under the UNSDCF, including a United Nations Peacebuilding Fund project³⁹ with UNDP and an integrated nutrition programme undertaken in collaboration with UNICEF, the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Population Fund and FAO. The CSP also aligns with key national frameworks, including the 2021 national school feeding policy, the 2020 national social protection policy, the 2024 national disaster risk management policy, the 2021 national nutrition policy and the 2022 Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Act.

³⁹ United Nations. 2024. [Peacebuilding: Sierra Leone](#).

Country strategic plan outcomes and activities

Country strategic plan outcome 1: Crisis-affected populations are better able to meet their food and nutrition needs before, during and after shocks

35. Under CSP outcome 1 WFP will address the humanitarian needs of shock-affected populations by working with the Government to strengthen its disaster management capacity, including through shock-responsive national systems and programmes. At the same time, complementary investments under CSP outcome 3 will build the resilience of smallholder farmers so that they are better able to withstand future shocks and reduce their dependence on emergency assistance.
36. As a key humanitarian partner to the Government, WFP will continue to support national disaster risk management capacity by working with it to strengthen systems, policies, protocols and procedures at the national and subnational levels. This will include providing technical support to NDMA to strengthen preparedness and response mechanisms for priority hazards, including floods and landslides, alongside efforts to build synergies and improve the responsiveness of social safety nets to shocks.
37. Through its analytical and digital expertise, including its food security monitoring system, comprehensive food security and vulnerability reports and market monitoring, WFP will track food security trends, price fluctuations and vulnerabilities, enabling timely and adaptive responses while enhancing government capacity to anticipate and manage shocks. Including through its asset impact monitoring system,⁴⁰ WFP will engage in data-driven advocacy to support policies that align food security efforts by strengthening activities that increase adaptability, improving coordination across sectors and reinforcing environmental protection mechanisms.
38. WFP will collaborate with national meteorological services to strengthen national early warning systems through the improvement of weather data collection, analysis and application. Through collaboration with the United Nations Systematic Observations Financing Facility and other partners,⁴¹ WFP will provide technical and procurement assistance to facilitate efforts to enhance weather monitoring systems and thus ensure the availability of timely and accurate data for early warning alerts. This will support both seasonal and long-term adaptation strategies by facilitating the integration of improved data into national disaster response frameworks, including the national disaster preparedness and response plan.
39. At the subnational level WFP will assist in the development of district-level disaster risk management systems in shock-prone regions. This will involve training district disaster management committees, strengthening coordination with community-based organizations and conducting simulation exercises in close collaboration with Sierra Leone's Red Cross.
40. Upon request, and in the event the need for emergency assistance exceeds the national capacity to respond, WFP will provide targeted food security and nutrition assistance to crisis-affected populations. To the extent possible WFP will aim to channel such support through existing national shock-responsive systems.

⁴⁰ WFP. 2020. [Asset Impact Monitoring System \(AIMS\): Project overview](#).

⁴¹ United Nations Systematic Observations Financing Facility. 2025. [Homepage](#).

Alignment with national priorities

41. WFP's interventions are fully aligned with Sierra Leone's national priorities, including those laid out in its 2021 national disaster preparedness and response plan, 2024 national disaster risk management policy, 2020 national social protection policy and the UNSDCF.

Country strategic plan outcome 2: Pre- and primary schoolchildren and vulnerable groups at risk of malnutrition in targeted districts have improved year-round access to locally produced, safe and diverse nutrient-dense food, contributing to healthy diets and strengthened human capital by 2030

42. Under CSP outcome 2 WFP will work closely with the Government to tackle underlying causes of malnutrition while improving access to quality education and early childhood development as key drivers of human capital development.
43. WFP will expand the HGSF programme under activity 2, focusing on hard-to-reach and underserved areas, in order to provide children with safe, nutritious and diverse meals and to support school attendance and retention, sourcing food directly from smallholder farmers. In addition WFP will support the installation of energy-efficient stoves to reduce firewood consumption and promote sustainable cooking practices. To strengthen food safety and storage, WFP will invest in improved kitchen infrastructure and proper food storage facilities that ensure meal quality and minimize waste.
44. Building on investments under activity 4 and informed by detailed value chains assessments, WFP will expand its procurement of staple grains, including rice, beans and yellow cassava, from smallholder farmers and aggregators to supply school meals. Through cash transfers WFP will enable school management committees to source fresh vegetables, including orange-fleshed sweet potatoes, directly from local farmer-based organizations and smallholder farmers, the majority of whom are women. This dual approach will strengthen the nutritional value of school meals while creating a stable, predictable market for smallholder farmers. WFP will progressively scale up coverage each school year, aiming to reach a total of 352,000 students by 2030 in five priority districts,⁴² ensuring a phased and sustainable expansion of the programme.
45. WFP will support the Government in the scale-up, monitoring and implementation of the national school meals programme and in formalizing its commitments to the School Meals Coalition; to that end it will focus on implementing a financing strategy that amplifies the programme's positive effects on education, nutrition and local food systems. In parallel WFP will support the organization of a Systems Approach for Better Education Results exercise to develop a capacity strengthening plan to facilitate the implementation of the national school feeding policy. WFP will closely work with World Vision International, UNICEF and WHO to complement WFP's school-based interventions by improving access to safe water, sanitation and essential health and nutrition services, alongside the promotion of proper hygiene practices.
46. Under activity 3, in conjunction with activity 4, WFP will provide fortified complementary foods to at-risk children under 2 to prevent malnutrition in districts with high stunting rates. Through vouchers distributed via local pharmacies and rural traders, caregivers will obtain locally produced fortified complementary food (*Nyam Nyam Pap*), which will be complemented by SBC initiatives implemented through local health clinics to promote optimal infant and young child feeding practices. In addition WFP will collaborate with the Government to align and embed SBC within existing safety net interventions.

⁴² The five districts are Kenema, Bonthe, Kambia, Karene and Pujehun.

47. To further reinforce positive feeding practices, WFP will expand its support for mother support groups, leveraging them as community platforms for advancing nutrition knowledge and promoting healthy diets. Through SBC, WFP will equip mothers with practical skills enabling them to diversify household diets, adopt optimal infant and young child feeding practices and plant backyard gardens to improve household food security and nutrition.
48. Complementing these efforts, WFP will, through technical assistance and policy support, support the Ministry of Health and Sanitation and the Sierra Leone Standards Bureau in strengthening the local development and consumption of safe and nutritious specialized complementary and fortified foods, including through the development of relevant policies, standards, specifications, technical platforms and infrastructure. In addition, SBC initiatives will engage producers, retailers and consumers in promoting healthy diets and ensuring greater access to nutritious foods.

Alignment with national priorities

49. To align with national priorities, CSP outcome 2 activities will utilize established coordination mechanisms at both the national and subnational levels such as the national school feeding secretariat, the Scaling Up Nutrition Business Network and the Social Protection Inter-Agency Forum. Outcome 2 activities will also contribute to UNSDCF pillar 2: Human capital, essential services and employment.

Country strategic plan outcome 3: Populations in targeted areas, especially women and youth, have more resilient and improved livelihoods through better natural resource management, enhanced skills, improved access to finance and markets, contributing to the development of local value chains by 2030

50. To strengthen food security and build resilience among smallholder farmers, WFP will scale existing livelihood interventions to create and rehabilitate community assets, safeguard natural resources and the environment, develop value chains and improve access to markets and post-harvest management. Through activity 4 WFP will provide conditional transfers for asset creation and skills development, prioritizing vulnerable rural populations in hard-to-reach areas in at least seven food-insecure districts,⁴³ with particular focus on farmers working in inland valley swamps and communities near forests where unsustainable land use and deforestation pose environmental risks.
51. To strengthen local food markets, smallholders and other value chain actors will receive business and financial management training and be linked to aggregation mechanisms through HGSE, thus improving their market access. In close partnership with the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, the Sierra Leone Agricultural Research Institute and FAO, WFP will also support smallholder farmers by providing training in adaptive approaches and post-harvest management techniques. These efforts will improve access to and stimulate demand for diverse, nutrient-rich crops, complementing development partner investments in local food value chains.
52. To increase the availability of affordable fortified and specialized nutritious foods for the prevention of moderate acute malnutrition, WFP will scale up support for the local development and marketing of *Nyam Nyam Pap*. In partnership with specialized agencies such as the German Agency for International Cooperation, WFP will continue its support for women-led processing groups by providing training in food safety, quality control and business management while also facilitating access to equipment and financial resources enabling these groups to expand their enterprises.

⁴³ Such districts include but are not limited to Kenema, Pujehun, Bonthe, Karene, Kambia and Falaba.

53. Recognizing the barriers that women face in local food value chains – including limited knowledge and restricted access to technology and financing – WFP will actively promote and prioritize their participation and leadership in farmer-based organizations, food processing and marketing; it will also adopt strategies aimed at reducing their workloads, such as the promotion of access to labour-saving technologies. WFP will also engage a wide network of local youth contractors to promote participation by young people and tailor interventions to their needs, including through support for financial and digital literacy.

Alignment with national priorities

54. CSP outcome 3 is closely aligned with the Government's flagship Feed Salone Strategy, which aims to strengthen food and nutrition security by advancing sustainable agriculture and strengthening local food systems. It also contributes to the UNSDCF.

5. Prioritization and sustainability

Prioritization approach

55. With the development of a partnership and resourcing strategy by the country office, WFP will embark upon the CSP with a strong and diverse partnership base for delivering across all programme focus areas. While continued resource mobilization is essential, the financial commitments already obtained provide a solid foundation for advancing programmatic goals across all CSP outcomes throughout the implementation of the CSP.
56. If anticipated funding falls short, WFP will prioritize integrated programmes to maximize the impact of available resources. A primary focus will be on HGSP, which delivers cross-cutting benefits by strengthening local agricultural markets, improving education outcomes and enhancing child nutrition. In addition WFP will prioritize interventions by targeting the most food-insecure and underserved areas and leveraging partnerships that enable complementary investment. Efforts will also focus on reinforcing government and local partner capacity to gradually hand over key programme responsibilities, ensuring sustainability within existing financial constraints.

Sustainability and transition strategies

57. WFP's community-driven approach aims to strengthen local capacity and reduce dependence on external assistance. While the Feed Salone Strategy provides a supportive framework for food systems development, its success depends on sustained government investment and national ownership. Insufficient national investment would weaken the enabling environment, limiting both the scale and long-term impact of food systems interventions supported under the CSP. To mitigate these risks WFP will engage in strategic partnerships and advocacy, identify opportunities for private sector engagement and leverage regional initiatives to maintain momentum on food system resilience.
58. The Government's co-investment in WFP's programmes reinforces national ownership and ensures long-term sustainability by embedding key initiatives, such as HGSP and smallholder farmer resilience activities, within national systems and programmes to ensure continuity and serve as a catalyst for leveraging additional donor investments.
59. The Government's prioritization of HGSP under the medium-term national development plan and the Feed Salone Strategy provides a foundation for mobilizing resources, improving coordination and integrating smallholder farmers into structured markets. WFP will support the long-term transition to a government-led model, but delays in national investment could slow this shift, limit the coverage of the school meals programme and reduce incentives for farmer participation.

60. To support the gradual transition to long-term national system ownership, WFP will support efforts to strengthen planning and service delivery by prioritizing policy development, institutional capacity building, data systems and decentralized coordination. National and subnational structures will be reinforced through technical assistance, training and system improvements. This will ensure the co-creation of a sustainable national school meals programme fully aligned with the Government's vision and ambitions.

ANNEX I

SUMMARY LINE OF SIGHT OF THE SIERRA LEONE COUNTRY STRATEGIC PLAN FOR 2026–2030			
Goal	Ending hunger	Ending hunger	Ending hunger
Target	Access to food	End malnutrition	Sustainable food systems
Focus area	CRISIS RESPONSE	RESILIENCE BUILDING	RESILIENCE BUILDING
CSP outcome	CSP outcome 1: Crisis-affected populations in Sierra Leone are better able to meet their food and nutrition needs before, during and after shocks.	CSP outcome 2: Pre- and primary schoolchildren and vulnerable groups at risk of malnutrition in targeted districts have improved year-round access to locally produced, safe, and diverse nutrient-dense food, contributing to healthy diets and strengthened human capital by 2030.	CSP outcome 3: Populations in targeted areas, especially women and youth, have more resilient and improved livelihoods through better natural resource management, enhanced skills, improved access to finance and markets, contributing to the development of local value chains by 2030.
Activity	Activity 1: Provide food and nutrition assistance package to crisis-affected people and strengthen national capacities in evidence generation, emergency preparedness and early response, and shock-responsive government-led assistance.	Activity 2: Provide nutritious school meals to pre- and primary schoolchildren and provide technical assistance and capacity strengthening for the expansion of the national home-grown school feeding programme.	Activity 4: Provide a context-specific package of interventions to enhance the resilience of vulnerable smallholder farmers and value-chain actors to climate and economic shocks, support local capacities, and foster partnerships to sustainably increase access to nutrient-dense foods.
		Activity 3: Provide comprehensive malnutrition prevention support, including complementary food to children aged 6–23 months and nutrition messaging to breastfeeding mothers and adolescent girls while supporting national actors to increase availability and affordability of locally fortified food, including through the national systems and programmes.	

ANNEX II

Monitoring, evaluation, evidence and risk management

Monitoring, evaluation and evidence generation arrangements

1. In line with the Executive Director's circular of July 2024¹ on minimum monitoring requirements and community feedback mechanism standards, under the CSP for 2026–2030 the country office will continue to invest adequate resources in monitoring, evaluation and community feedback mechanisms. Investments in monitoring and evaluation will aim to strengthen the analysis of poverty, food security and nutrition, improve targeting and implementation and support the Government in enhancing service delivery and programme governance. WFP will conduct a food security monitoring system survey once a year, alongside a comprehensive food security and vulnerability analysis, regular market monitoring and dedicated process monitoring of programme implementation, all aligned with national priorities, the UNSDCF for 2025–2030 and WFP's corporate results framework.
2. To enhance effectiveness, WFP will expand the use of cooperating partners for process monitoring and has reinforced staffing in seven field locations to enable more regular monitoring and oversight alongside district counterparts. In collaboration with FAO, WFP will support the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security in strengthening institutional capacity to generate and utilize food security evidence for informed decision making, policy development and the implementation of the Feed Salone Strategy.
3. WFP will support the Ministry of Health and Sanitation in conducting a national nutrition survey to identify key drivers of malnutrition. It will also collaborate with partners through the nutrition network to generate evidence on healthy diets in order to ensure that interventions are consistent with national nutrition priorities and global best practices.
4. A comprehensive community feedback mechanism, including a dedicated helpdesk, will track cases, address complaints related to programme implementation and allow communities to express concerns.
5. WFP will undertake reviews, qualitative analyses and research studies to inform learning and resource mobilization. A decentralized evaluation of the HGSP programme will take place in 2027 and 2028; a mid-term review of the CSP will be conducted in 2028 and a centralized CSP evaluation will take place in 2029.

Risk management and mitigation measures

6. To give effect to the CSP's strategic direction and expanded focus on scalable development interventions, particularly with regard to human capital, support for national systems and programmes, adaptive livelihoods, strengthening policies and building institutional and operational capacity within government counterparts, WFP will require multi-year funding.
7. The country office will continuously improve programme quality, applying assurance measures to ensure that assistance reaches intended beneficiaries while achieving demonstrable outcome-level results. To ensure adherence to core standards in targeting, assessment and oversight of last mile transportation and warehouse management, WFP intends to conduct a global assurance assessment before the start of CSP implementation.

¹ WFP. 2024. Executive Director's circular OED2024/006. *Minimum monitoring requirements (MMRs) and community feedback mechanism (CFM) standards in WFP country offices.*

8. Through the regular assessment and monitoring of markets, supply chains and food security, WFP will maintain the flexibility to adjust its activities to mitigate financial risks related to inflation, commodity price volatility and economic shocks. With the limited banking infrastructure in Sierra Leone, particularly in rural areas, and fluctuating local currency, WFP has expanded the use of mobile money and pegged its transfer value to the United States dollar to safeguard beneficiary purchasing power against currency depreciation.

Social and environmental safeguards

9. As food security needs continue to far exceed available resources, particularly in hard-to-reach areas, there is a tangible risk of social tension if targeting is seen as unfair. To mitigate this risk WFP applies a community-based targeting approach that ensures transparency, strengthens community ownership and reinforces social cohesion.
10. WFP will minimize the environmental impact of its operations by continuing to implement the recommendations resulting from the deployment of an environmental management system in the country office in October 2022 and by ensuring that all environmental data are entered into WFP's Archibus platform, a software solution for facility management designed to optimize energy management and support green initiatives. Efforts will focus on reducing the organization's environmental footprint throughout the term of the CSP.
11. Resilience programmes are designed to protect and restore ecosystems and natural resources in order to enhance productivity and promote sustainable livelihoods, with a strong emphasis on sustainable agriculture and agroforestry. Including through its collaboration with its asset impact monitoring systems, WFP will monitor landscape changes, assess deforestation and use satellite imagery for advocacy and programme planning.
12. At the operational level, prioritizing cash-based transfers (CBTs) and expanding mobile money solutions will significantly reduce transport-related fossil fuel consumption while at the same time having a multiplier effect on local rural economies.
13. Risk screening will remain an integral part of WFP's due diligence processes, applying to all field-level agreements, memorandums of understanding with government entities and partners and service contracts.

ANNEX III**Country portfolio needs budget and cost breakdown by CSP outcome (USD)**

TABLE 1: COUNTRY PORTFOLIO NEEDS BUDGET (USD)							
CSP outcome	Activity	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	Total
1	1	2 783 313	2 550 311	2 254 459	2 418 497	2 299 293	12 305 873
2	2	17 863 827	18 577 175	18 684 568	20 074 966	21 368 861	96 569 398
	3	1 241 198	1 077 254	1 108 744	1 145 691	1 138 524	5 711 412
3	4	9 771 064	7 178 062	6 810 847	5 267 053	5 116 974	34 144 001
Total		31 659 403	29 382 802	28 858 618	28 906 208	29 923 652	148 730 683

TABLE 2: INDICATIVE COST BREAKDOWN BY COUNTRY STRATEGIC PLAN OUTCOME (USD)				
	WFP strategic outcome 1	WFP strategic outcome 2	WFP strategic outcome 3	Total
	CSP outcome 1	CSP outcome 2	CSP outcome 3	
Focus area	Crisis response	Resilience building	Resilience building	
Transfers	9 298 197	76 677 179	23 729 608	
Implementation	921 586	8 322 496	4 601 649	13 845 731
Direct support costs	1 335 027	11 038 643	3 728 837	16 102 508
Subtotal	11 554 810	96 038 319	32 060 094	139 653 224
Indirect support costs	751 063	6 242 491	2 083 906	9 077 460
Total	12 305 873	102 280 810	34 144 001	148 730 683

ANNEX IV

TABLE 3: BENEFICIARIES BY YEAR						
	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	Total
Total beneficiaries (without overlaps)	338 929	367 712	390 645	406 196	420 089	457 959*

* The country office estimates that an additional 380,000 individuals will indirectly benefit from WFP's interventions, including household members of smallholder farmers who receive post-harvest management or business management training and sell their produce to local schools via rural aggregators and traders.

ANNEX V

FOOD RATION (g/person/day) AND CASH-BASED TRANSFER VALUE (USD/person/day) BY COUNTRY STRATEGIC PLAN OUTCOME AND ACTIVITY								
	CSP outcome 1		CSP outcome 2			CSP outcome 3		
	Activity 1		Activity 2		Activity 3	Activity 4		
Beneficiary type	General food distribution (emergency) response)	Prevention of acute malnutrition – general food distribution top-up	School meals for pre- and primary schoolchildren			Children 6–23 months	Cash/food assistance for assets	
Modality	Food	CBTs	Food	CBTs	CBTs	CBTs	CBTs	Food
Cereals	400		120					400
Pulses	60		30					60
Oil	25		10					25
Salt	5		2					5
Sugar								
Super Cereal								
Super Cereal Plus								
Micronutrient powder								
Total kcal/day	2 100		1 501					1 996
% kcal from protein	12		18.5					16.0
CBTs (USD/person/day)		0.58		0.06	0.22	0.43	0.58	
Number of feeding days per year	90	90	170	150	30	90	60	60

ANNEX VI

Links to technical and related resources

More operational and budgetary information is available through the [CSP data portal](#).¹

Specific information will be provided for the full duration of the CSP and will be updated annually, including the following:

- a) the transfer modality for each CSP outcome and activity;
- b) an overview of beneficiaries, broken down by age group, sex and residence status, and data on beneficiaries disaggregated by beneficiary group, sex and transfer modality for each CSP outcome and activity;
- c) the distribution of food rations or transfers for each CSP outcome and activity;
- d) a breakdown of transfers by modality;
- e) quantitative information in US dollar value for each CSP outcome and activity and by tonnage where applicable; and
- f) a prioritization plan calibrating implementation plans to reflect the resource outlook.

¹ As mandated by the 2016 [Policy on country strategic plans](#).

Acronyms

COVID-19	coronavirus disease 2019
CSP	country strategic plan
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
HGSF	home-grown school feeding
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
NDMA	national disaster management agency
NGO	non-governmental organization
SBC	social and behaviour change
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNSDCF	United Nations sustainable development cooperation framework
WHO	World Health Organization