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Liberia country strategic plan (2019–2023)

Duration	1 July 2019–31 December 2023
Total cost to WFP	USD 50,169,116
Gender and age marker*	3

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

Executive summary

Liberia is a least-developed, low-income country with 51 percent of its estimated 4.5 million people living in poverty.¹ Although conditions for agriculture are very favourable, over 90 percent of agriculture is subsistence-based, and the country depends on imports for over 60 percent of its basic food needs.² In addition Liberia faces climate-related risks (floods, coastal erosion) with a potential impact on its food security.

At the political level, for the first time in 70 years a democratic transfer of power has taken place, with George Weah assuming the presidency in January 2018. The United Nations Mission in Liberia left in March 2018, after almost 15 years in the country.

This country strategic plan articulates WFP's engagement in Liberia from 2019 to 2023 in support of the Government's efforts to end hunger (Sustainable Development Goal 2) and to achieve all the Sustainable Development Goals through global partnership (Goal 17). Through this CSP, WFP

¹ United Nations Development Programme. 2017. *Human Development Index 2017*. GDP per capita, based on purchasing power parity, increased from USD 308.50 in 2004 to USD 796.50 in 2012 to USD 878 in 2013 (Bertelsmann Stiftung's Transformation Index. 2016. In 2017, per capita gross national income was USD 577 for females and USD 755 for males (131 percent).

² Comprehensive Food Security and Nutrition Survey, 2018.

Focal points:

Mr C. Nikoi
Regional Director
West Africa
email: chris.nikoi@wfp.org

Mr B. Djossa
Country Director
email: bienvendu.djossa@wfp.org

aims to transition from humanitarian assistance towards resilience building interventions with a focus on home-grown school feeding and increased country capacity strengthening for the Government and communities to ensure ownership and sustainability.

Increased partnerships with national counterparts, development partners, regional and subregional institutions, United Nations agencies and other key stakeholders remain the cornerstone of WFP's work in Liberia. The strategic shift has been informed by the 2017 national zero hunger strategic review, extensive multi-stakeholder and government consultations and lessons learned from past WFP activities.

The country office will continue to enhance gender mainstreaming in all its work and activities, ensuring that the particular food security and nutrition needs of women, men, girls and boys are addressed in a gender transformative manner. Accountability to affected populations, protection analysis, conflict sensitivity and environmental considerations remain core cross-cutting issues. Nutrition-sensitive approaches will be emphasized in all of WFP's integrated nutrition activities.

Consistent with the Government's priorities as set out in the 2018 Pro-Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development, other sectoral policies and the 2013–2017 United Nations development assistance framework for Liberia (extended to December 2019), the country strategic plan is built around three interrelated strategic outcomes designed to contribute to WFP's strategic results 1 and 5:

- Strategic outcome 1: Food-insecure populations, including school-age children in targeted areas, have access to adequate and nutritious food, including food produced locally, by 2030.
- Strategic outcome 2: Crisis-affected populations in targeted areas are able to meet their basic food and nutrition needs during and in the aftermath of crises.
- Strategic outcome 3: National and subnational institutions have strengthened capacities to design and manage food security and nutrition, social protection, emergency preparedness and response and disaster risk management systems by 2030.

Draft decision*

The Board approves the Liberia country strategic plan (2019–2023) (WFP/EB.A/2019/8-A/6) at a total cost to WFP of USD 50,169,116.

* 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. With an estimated gross domestic product (GDP) per capita of USD 6,94³ and a Global Hunger Index score of 35.3 in 2017, Liberia is a least-developed, low-income and food-deficit country. Its population of approximately 4.5 million is almost evenly distributed between males and females, with a gender ratio of 0.99. Pervasive poverty affects 50.9 percent of the population,⁴ contributing to Liberia's ranking of 181st of 189 on the 2018 Human Development Index.
2. Unemployment remains widespread, ranging between 80 and 85 percent (males: 77 percent; females: 94.1 percent).⁵ High youth unemployment continues to be of particular concern. Over 68 percent of employed Liberians work in the informal sector, without regular wages or benefits and with significant gender disparities (males: 69 percent; females: 90.9 percent).
3. The majority of Liberians, especially women, depend on agriculture-related activities for their livelihoods. Women account for 80 percent of agricultural labour force. More than 76 percent of rural households have low diet diversity,⁶ indicating that actions to improve access to food should focus on promoting the inclusion of vegetables, fruits, pulses and animal source foods in their diets.
4. The civil conflicts between 1989 and 2003 resulted in the death of more than 250,000 people and the forced displacement of a third of the population, with negative impacts on the country's economy and overall development. Liberia's post-conflict recovery and development was further disrupted by the 2014/2015 outbreak of Ebola virus disease, which caused almost 4,000 deaths – the highest ever Ebola death toll in West Africa.
5. Challenges abound in the education sector. Despite some progress in access and gender parity in primary education, retention remains a problem, with regional disparities.⁷ Liberia has 912,000 pupils enrolled in primary and secondary education, of which 74 percent are enrolled in primary education, with a large number of over-age students. Only 60 percent of students that start primary school finish (girls: 54.1 percent; boys: 63.2 percent). Net enrolment in primary school is 37.7 percent (girls: 36.4 percent; boys: 39 percent).⁸ Liberia's literacy rate of 47.6 percent ranks the country 156th in the world, with 32.8 percent of women literate compared to 62.4 percent of men. This gender disparity is also exhibited in young people, with 44 percent of females literate compared to 64.7 percent of males.
6. Liberia's healthcare delivery system is among the poorest in the world, contributing to high rates of malnutrition, communicable diseases and mortality. Access to sexual and

³ Central Bank of Liberia. 2017. Annual Report 2017. Available at https://www.cbl.org.lr/doc/annualreport_2017.pdf.

⁴ According to the World Bank Liberia Household Income and Expenditure Survey for 2016, the difference between men and women is 24.1 percentage points (69 percent versus 90.9 percent). See <http://microdata.worldbank.org/index.php/catalog/2986>.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ Comprehensive Food Security and Nutrition Survey, 2018.

⁷ Liberia Ministry of Education, Education Management Information System, 2015. Of 912,000 pupils, 441,000 are girls and 471,000 are boys.

⁸ *Ibid.*

reproductive health services is particularly challenging.⁹ Approximately 43,000 people aged 15 and above are living with HIV, of whom 53 percent are women.¹⁰

7. Despite significant progress in recent years, as evidenced by the peaceful 2017 election and the withdrawal of the United Nations Mission in Liberia, the country is still considered fragile, with a high risk of relapsing into crisis if the current peace and socio-economic stability are not carefully nurtured. Persistent challenges include the legacy of nearly two decades of civil war, a lack of inclusion (only 12.3 percent of lower house representatives are women) and strong dependence on primary commodities with highly volatile prices. Furthermore, the Mano River region is exposed to multiple exogenous climate, conflict and disaster risks. Liberia is particularly vulnerable to floods, windstorms, fires, sea erosion, landslides and environmental degradation, and it suffers from poor natural resource management.
8. These factors continue to hinder Liberia's efforts to become less fragile¹¹ and undermine stability and peace.

1.2 Progress towards SDG 2

Targets

9. Despite efforts made since the end of the civil conflict, many people – mostly women, girls and people living with HIV and disabilities – continue to face food insecurity, wasting, stunting and micronutrient deficiencies.
10. *Access to food:* With a 2017 Global Hunger Index score of 35.3 and a national prevalence of food insecurity of 18 percent (approximately 875,430 people),¹² there has been limited progress towards achieving Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) target 2.1 in recent years. There are widespread regional disparities, with food insecurity highest in the south-western (32 percent) and north-eastern (30 percent) counties, particularly in rural areas.¹³ Twenty percent of households in Liberia do not have access to an adequate diet.¹⁴ The underlying factors of food insecurity lie within insufficient agricultural productivity, with the production of staple foods that is adequate neither for subsistence nor for growing sustainable marketable quantities, long distances over which imported commercial rice and condiments must be transported from their ports of entry, bad road conditions and environmental and seasonal factors. These are further compounded by the depreciation of the Liberian dollar (against the United States dollar), persistent socio-cultural inequalities and a rise in the prices of basic commodities and corresponding fall in the purchasing power of households.¹⁵
11. *End malnutrition:* While global acute malnutrition has slightly decreased from 6.0 percent to 4.8 percent,¹⁶ stunting (35.5 percent) and underweight (15 percent) in children under 5 exceed the acceptable thresholds set by the World Health Organization (WHO), at 20 and

⁹ The Liberia Demographic and Health Survey 2013 indicated that maternal and child mortality rates remain high, estimated at 994 deaths per 100,000 live births and 94 deaths per 1,000 live births, respectively. See <https://dhsprogram.com/pubs/pdf/fr291/fr291.pdf>.

¹⁰ Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS. 2017. Available from: <https://www.aidsdatahub.org/unaid-data-2017-unaid-2017-0>.

¹¹ *Liberia Common Country Assessment* 2018. Available at <http://lr.one.un.org/content/unct/liberia/en/home/publications.html>.

¹² Comprehensive Food Security and Nutrition Survey, 2018. The findings also indicate that female-headed households (19 percent) were slightly more susceptible to food insecurity than their male (17 percent) counterparts.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ Data on access to food per type of household (header sex, size, etc.) not available.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ Data disaggregated by sex not available.

10 percent respectively. Infant and young child feeding practices remain poor, with 51 percent of infants 0–5 months of age exclusively breastfed, which is below the WHO threshold of above 60 percent.¹⁷ Only 11 percent of children aged 6–23 months receive a minimum acceptable diet, a critical complementary feeding indicator. With respect to minimum diet diversity, 23 percent of children consume foods from four out of seven food groups per day as recommended by WHO. Micronutrient deficiencies such as anaemia are widespread among children aged 6–35 months (59 percent)¹⁸ and women of reproductive age.¹⁹ Vitamin A deficiency was 13.2 percent among children aged 6–35 months and 2.2 percent among females aged 15–49 years.²⁰ The prevalence of overweight and obesity is increasing, with obesity in women becoming a more significant problem than underweight.²¹

12. *Smallholder productivity and incomes:* Although Liberia enjoys conditions favourable to agriculture, its agriculture sector is characterized by low productivity.²² Most of its food needs (60 percent) are met through imports, with imported rice subsidized by the Government (while domestic production is not). In 2015, agriculture and fisheries contributed 24 percent to GDP, primarily from exports of rubber, palm oil, cocoa, sugar cane and coffee.²³ The fisheries sector alone contributed 3 percent to GDP.²⁴ Despite the 182,000 hectares of land suitable for pasture, the livestock sector is relatively untapped, accounting for only 14 percent of agricultural GDP.²⁵ Major challenges include impaired market access due to limited road networks; limited scope for crop diversification; poor food value chains, including with regard to storage, processing and marketing channels; high post-harvest losses; unequal access to and control of productive resources, especially for women; and low institutional capacity. As a result, incentives to produce marketable surpluses are limited.²⁶ All these factors affect the livelihoods of small-scale producers, especially women, who account for more than 50 percent of the workforce in agriculture, forestry and fishing and up to 82 percent in the informal employment sector.²⁷
13. *Sustainable food systems:* Liberia is endowed with abundant natural resources for agricultural production, yet farming systems are weak and unsustainable. Over 90 percent of Liberia's agriculture is subsistence-based. Challenges include lack of improved crop

¹⁷ United Nations Children's Fund. 2017. *Tracking Progress for Breastfeeding Policies and Programmes*. Available at <https://www.who.int/nutrition/publications/infantfeeding/global-bf-scorecard-2017.pdf>.

¹⁸ Although differences may exist between girls and boys, the data are not available. Nevertheless, the 2013 Liberia Demographic and Health Survey showed that 5.6 percent of girls were wasted compared to 6.4 percent of boys. See <https://dhsprogram.com/pubs/pdf/fr291/fr291.pdf>.

¹⁹ The rates are 33 percent of non-pregnant women and 38 percent of pregnant women. See <http://slideplayer.com/slide/9415772/>.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ Zero hunger strategic review, 2017. In addition, the 2013 Liberia Demographic and Health Survey indicated an obesity rate of 9 percent for both men and women but that 26 percent of women aged 15–49 are obese. See <https://dhsprogram.com/pubs/pdf/fr291/fr291.pdf>.

²² Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. 2014. *Special Report: FAO/WFP Crop and Food Security Assessment – Liberia*. Available at <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i4278e.pdf>.

²³ Zero hunger strategic review, 2017.

²⁴ Liberia Ministry of Agriculture. 2014. *Fisheries and Aquaculture Policy and Strategy*. Available at http://www.moa.gov.lr/doc/fisheries_policy_doc.pdf.

²⁵ Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. 2012. *The State of Food and Agriculture: 2012* Available at <http://www.fao.org/publications/sofa/2012/en/>.

²⁶ Republic of Liberia. 2010. 2010 Liberia Agriculture Sector Investment Program (LASIP) Report. Available at www.moa.gov.lr/doc/LASIPJune1st.pdf.

²⁷ Liberian Institute of Statistics and Geo-Information Services, Ministry of Labour. 2011. *Report on the Liberia Labour Force Survey 2010*. Available at http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---stat/documents/presentation/wcms_156366.pdf.

varieties, lack of integrated pest management techniques, lack of land tenure in rural areas, degradation of the natural resource base, loss of biodiversity, structural inequalities and the effects of climate change.²⁸

Macroeconomic environment

14. Slowly recovering from multiple shocks, including the 2014/2015 Ebola outbreak, Liberia's economy remains unstable, with 2018 seeing headline inflation reach 24 percent in June, due in part to rising global oil prices. After 0.7 percent growth in 2014 and no growth in 2015, the economy contracted 1.6 percent in 2016. A modest pick-up in gold exports supported growth of 2.5 percent in 2017 and based on further growth in gold and iron ore exports and commercial palm oil production and the normalization of investment after the political transition, 3 percent growth was estimated for 2018. Nevertheless, medium-term growth is expected to remain below the pre-Ebola levels of over 7 percent.²⁹ There is no noticeable impact on people's daily lives, however, as 50.9 percent are considered poor.
15. As of October 2018, the Liberian dollar had depreciated by 56 percent since 2013. Public external debt increased from 23 percent of GDP in 2015 to 28 percent in 2016 and 36.7 percent in 2017.³⁰ The risk of debt distress is moderate but close to high, according to a 2018 debt sustainability analysis conducted by the International Monetary Fund. Additional decreases in export values could put the country at high risk of debt distress.³¹

Key cross-sector linkages

16. While some progress has been made, Liberia must still improve considerably to achieve the SDGs. Achieving zero hunger (SDG 2) is strongly interlinked with many other SDGs, namely, those relating to poverty (SDG 1), health (SDG 3), education (SDG 4), gender equality (SDG 5), ecological degradation (SDGs 13, 14 and 15) and peace (SDG 16).
17. Gender inequalities continue to contribute to Liberia's development status. Liberia ranked 154th of 160 countries on the 2018 Gender Inequality Index, with high rates of maternal mortality, early girl marriage, adolescent pregnancies, unmet needs for family planning and intimate partner violence, combined with low rates of female formal labour force participation and representation in decision-making bodies, including the national parliament. Enduring systemic gender inequalities are amplified by the high prevalence of gender-based violence, harmful traditional practices and pervasive abuse of the sexual and reproductive health and rights of women and adolescent girls.³² Women continue to face discrimination in the exercise of marital rights and parental authority, inheritance and access to land rights and financial services. The legal framework addressing violence against women is inadequate.³³

²⁸ Zero hunger strategic review, 2017.

²⁹ African Development Bank Group. 2018. *Liberia Economic Outlook*. Available from <https://www.afdb.org/en/countries/west-africa/liberia/liberia-economic-outlook/>.

³⁰ International Monetary Fund. 2018. *Staff Report for the 2018 Article IV Consultation—Debt Sustainability Analysis*. Available at <https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/dsa/pdf/2018/dsacr18172.pdf>.

³¹ African Development Bank Group. 2018. *Liberia Economic Outlook* (<https://www.afdb.org/en/countries/west-africa/liberia/>).

³² Liberia Ministry of Gender and Development. 2009. *Liberia National Gender Policy 2009*. Available at http://www.africanchildforum.org/clr/policy%20per%20country/liberia/liberia_gender_2009_en.pdf.

³³ While rape is the most frequently reported crime, offenders are rarely convicted. Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. 2016. *Addressing Impunity for Rape in Liberia*. Available at https://unmil.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/impunity_report_-_binding.pdf.

1.3 Hunger gaps and challenges

18. The zero-hunger strategic review (ZHSR) identified the following gaps in the national response to food security and nutrition challenges, all of which are underpinned by prevailing gender inequalities:
- *Weak institutional capacities:* Many experienced and highly trained Liberians left the country during the war; this “brain drain” has affected in particular public institutions with food security and nutrition responsibilities.
 - *Limited government capacity for emergency preparedness and response.*
 - *Low public-sector resource flow:* While the Maputo Declaration on Agriculture and Food Security in Africa requires that African countries commit at least 10 percent of their national budgets to agriculture, Liberia has not allocated more than 3 percent over the past three years.
 - *Crippling infrastructure deficit:* Liberia ranked 122nd of 140 countries in the World Economic Forum’s 2015/2016 Global Competitiveness Index and is in the bottom quintile of African countries with regard to infrastructure.³⁴
 - *Limited public awareness of good food security and nutrition practices, particularly in rural communities:* There is no comprehensive, effective, gender-responsive communication strategy for cost-effectively reaching the most vulnerable food-insecure people with appropriate, accurate information and messaging.
 - *Inadequate policy coherence and multisectoral coordination:* While agriculture and nutrition policies and strategies exist, they are not generally aligned with or sufficiently linked to policies and strategies in other areas that also affect food security and nutrition such as health, water and sanitation and education.
 - *Limited food production focus and lagging agricultural modernization:* Non-food agriculture (rubber, oil palm, cocoa and coffee) attracts more private sector investment than food agriculture. Liberia’s agricultural sector currently makes limited use of technology.
 - *Poor climate for significant private sector investment:* Liberia’s private sector suffers from horizontal inequity, with power and privilege exerted by foreign and domestic elites and poorly developed capacity within the indigenous segment of society. There is a shortage of credit for small and medium-sized enterprises, particularly in agriculture.
 - *Poor perception of agriculture in wealth creation:* Most Liberians, particularly young people, see agriculture only through the lens of subsistence farming and the poverty that has come to be associated with it.
 - *Social protection programming that is fragmented, uncoordinated, not gender-responsive and otherwise inadequate.*

³⁴ World Economic Forum. 2015. *The Global Competitiveness Report 2015–2016* Available at www3.weforum.org/docs/gcr/2015-2016/Global_Competitiveness_Report_2015-2016.pdf. The infrastructure index refers to the assessment of the general state of infrastructure, the quality of roads, the quality of railroad infrastructure, the quality of port infrastructure, the quality of air transport infrastructure, available airline seat kilometers, the quality of electricity supply, mobile-cellular telephone subscriptions and fixed-telephone lines.

1.4 Key country priorities

Government

19. Liberia has made efforts to address food insecurity and malnutrition through several strategic initiatives: the 2008 National Food Security and Nutrition Strategy One United Nations, the Comprehensive Food Security and Nutrition Survey 2018 (CFSNS), a 2008 poverty reduction strategy,³⁵ Liberia Rising 2030, the 2009 National Gender Policy and the 2012 Agenda for Transformation. These have informed the development of the 2013 National Social Protection Strategy and Policy and the 2018 Pro-poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development (PAPD).
20. In line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030, the Government has also designed national climate and disaster risk reduction policies, frameworks and strategies, including Liberia’s 2008 national adaptation programme of action and 2015 intended nationally determined contribution.
21. The PAPD, which is supported by development partners, is designed around four overarching pillars: power to the people; the economy and jobs; sustaining the peace; and governance and transparency.
22. In articulating its goal for building a sustainable economy and creating jobs, the Government has deemed the agriculture sector to be critical. Specifically, under strengthened social protection systems (pillar 1 of the PAPD), the Government recognizes school feeding as a critical social safety net and key driver of growth, with a specified target of providing school meals to over 300,000. School feeding will be coordinated by the Government and implemented by partners including WFP.
23. Given its impact on education and agriculture, home-grown school feeding (HGFS) continues to be recognized by the Government as a national priority, as mentioned in the ZHSR. In July 2018, under the patronage of the President, the Government and the United Nations jointly convened a national stakeholders’ conference on HGFS to identify partners (including WFP) and to establish the relevant mechanisms for the development of tools and the monitoring of the implementation of the Government’s HGFS programme.
24. In line with Liberia Rising 2030, the PAPD and the ZHSR, the Government’s priorities include strengthening access to markets, with priority given to investments in rural infrastructure and expansion of social protection programmes; improving infant and young child feeding practices; adopting multisectoral approaches to nutrition; transforming agriculture from subsistence to mechanized commercial agriculture through increased investments; increasing private investment in value chains; strengthening partnerships; and tackling the structural and socio-cultural gender inequalities that undermine sustainable development.
25. In addition, the Government sees an opportunity to create employment from agriculture by ensuring that food production systems are resilient and sustainable through effective linkages among SDG 2 interventions; addressing women’s limited access to land ownership and other productive assets and services; employing appropriate technology; developing government capacity for emergency preparedness; expanding community grain reserves; establishing emergency food reserves and buffer stocks; promoting climate change adaptation; and enforcing conservation laws and regulations.

³⁵ The poverty reduction strategy, which served as the previous Government’s development agenda, has been replaced by the PAPD.

United Nations and other partners

26. The United Nations development assistance framework (UNDAF) for Liberia for 2013–2017 has been extended to December 2019 to allow for full alignment with the four pillars of the PAPD (2019–2023). Food security priorities come under the second pillar (the economy and jobs).
27. To ensure effective planning and better-informed responses in supporting the implementation of the PAPD, WFP's country strategic plan (CSP) for 2019–2023 is designed to align with the Government's priorities alongside the forthcoming UNDAF for 2020–2024 to create better synergy of actions with sister United Nations agencies.
28. In accordance with the One United Nations initiative, several joint programmes form the backbone of many United Nations interventions in Liberia. Programmatic partnerships between WFP, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), WHO and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) serve to promote food security and improve nutrition status in Liberia. These include the Joint Programme on Rural Women's Economic Empowerment and United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security initiatives, which seek to build smallholder farmers' resilience and enhance livelihoods.
29. Given WFP's comparative advantage as the lead agency in nutrition in the country, it strategically positioned itself at the forefront in the establishment of the Renewed Efforts Against Child Hunger and Undernutrition (REACH) initiative, a United Nations inter-agency partnership with FAO, UNICEF, WHO and the International Fund for Agricultural Development to strengthen national capacities for nutrition governance and scale up nutrition actions to reduce malnutrition

2. Strategic implications for WFP

2.1 WFP's experience and lessons learned

30. WFP has provided food assistance in Liberia through its emergency and development activities since 1968. In 2013, WFP shifted to a five-year development portfolio, including social and productive safety nets, capacity strengthening and emergency preparedness and response. Recent evaluations and reviews of the work carried out under that portfolio have drawn attention to a number of lessons:
 - In response to the recommendations stemming from a 2017 decentralized evaluation of WFP activities in Liberia funded through the McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program, WFP improved synergies and collaboration with other development actors in supporting the school meals programme that is the cornerstone of Liberia's social protection programme.
 - Process monitoring in respect of the pilot HGSP programme in 2016 found that aggregating and delivering food commodities to schools was a challenge for farmers and farmer organizations. To mitigate this, the country office immediately implemented a recommendation that all farmers and farmer organizations be profiled to identify those with the capacity to aggregate and transport commodities to final distribution sites. This profiling exercise allowed WFP to target capacity building efforts according to farmers' local needs.
 - In 2016, the WFP Office of Evaluation conducted an evaluation of Liberia Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation (PRRO) 200550 (assistance programme for Ivorian refugees and vulnerable host populations) and an evaluation of WFP's Level 3 response to the Ebola virus disease crisis in West Africa in 2014–2015. Following recommendations from these evaluations, this CSP retains assistance for the most vulnerable refugees and includes support to strengthen national counterparts'

resilience through the implementation of Government-led disaster management systems, with a focus on early warning.

- Between February and July 2016, the Office of Evaluation conducted an evaluation of the WFP Policy on Capacity Development.³⁶ The evaluation sought to inform the transition from direct delivery of relief assistance to capacity strengthening for government agencies with regard to planning, resourcing and implementing their own emergency preparedness and response platforms. As a result, the Liberia country office has adopted a strategic approach to allow for a progressive shift from direct delivery to capacity strengthening for government institutions, leading to a takeover of activities by the Government.
 - A series of stakeholder consultations in 2017 as part of the CSP development process provided the country office with critical feedback from partners on realigning its activities for better results.
31. Several evaluations have highlighted considerations relevant to gender equality within the country office operations. These lessons suggest greater opportunities to address social and structural inequalities through gender-transformative approaches such as cash-based transfers, which are already being used in the HGSP and smallholder and market support programmes in Liberia:
- The PRRO evaluation called on WFP to “...apply relevant learning from the PRRO experience and to help address gender sensitivity [sic] gaps within the country programme....”
 - The Ebola response evaluation recommended that, in line with WFP’s Gender Policy (2015–2020),³⁷ WFP should tailor its guidelines on accountability to beneficiaries. Therefore, WFP ensured that the minimum standards for gender equality and women’s empowerment were applied in all its activities under the T-ICSP and the CSP, including through the disaggregation of data by sex and age and gender and age analyses.
 - The decentralized evaluation of WFP’s McGovern-Dole funded activities in Liberia found that gender sensitivity, including sex disaggregation of data, had been used appropriately in the implementation of the programme. Evaluation of the school feeding programme also found that girls take-home rations had been effective in improving gender parity in primary education by creating an incentive for girls to attend school regularly. WFP has built on this positive outcome and strengthened its gender targeting in its school feeding activities in its 2018 transitional interim country strategic plan.

2.2 Opportunities for WFP

32. Several opportunities have been identified based on the national priorities and the zero-hunger road map in the ZHSR, lessons learned and continual extensive consultations with the Government, United Nations agencies and development partners. In a post-conflict context such as Liberia, the CSP presents an opportunity for WFP to foster its enabling role in defining sustainable and nationally-owned zero hunger solutions through gender-transformative interventions.

³⁶ WFP/EB.2/2009/4-B.

³⁷ WFP/EB.A/2015/5-A.

33. In collaboration with a wide network of partners, WFP will continue to leverage its expertise and its robust, extensive deep-field presence in Liberia to achieve greater impact, including through:
- *Scaling-up HGSF:* WFP has supported the Government of Liberia in piloting and managing the national HGSF programme since 2016. Accordingly, WFP is well positioned to support the Government in progressively increasing the scope of this social safety net to attain equitable and inclusive economic growth as set in the Government priorities. HGSF is capable of delivering a Government-led, cost-effective, gender-transformative programme with a focus on purchasing locally grown produce from women and men smallholder farmers for the school feeding programme, minimizing the environmental footprint and promoting sustainable agricultural practices. This is a multi-faceted intervention that links to agriculture, nutrition, education and gender through an integrated and empowering approach and has the potential to serve as a mechanism for the handover of the school feeding programme to the Government of Liberia.
 - *Support for smallholder farmers and market support:* The country office's strong experience in this field was gained through the implementation of the five-year Purchase for Progress (P4P) and Bilateral Smallholder Rice Producing Farmers' programmes. Consequently, WFP will continue to strengthen smallholder farmers' production and access to markets linked to HGSF. This includes enhancing investments in food agricultural value chains through the small-scale creation and restoration of assets, including feeder roads and storage facilities, along with improved access to extension and financial services, for women and men equitably. In addition, this experience showed that the programme focused much of its energy on capacity development activities for farmer organizations, contributing to improved access by smallholder farmers to practices and infrastructure for agricultural production and post-harvest handling and expanding their market opportunities. It was also noted that farmer organization governance improved, including with regard to financial planning and management.
 - *Strategic capacity strengthening:* Working with the Government to enhance its capacity for emergency preparedness and food security and nutrition information management and scaling up gender-responsive social protection programmes (using WFP's SCOPE beneficiary and transfer management system and other relevant systems).
34. Considering the structural and sociocultural gender inequalities across all sectors of the country, WFP continues to apply gender-transformative and nutrition-sensitive approaches throughout its interventions. Such approaches have informed the design and implementation of all activities to reduce gender inequalities and foster equitable outcomes.

2.3 Strategic changes

35. In line with the Liberia 2018 transitional interim country strategic plan, WFP's role is continuing to gradually shift from that of an implementer to that of an enabler. WFP's approach has combined integrated resilience-building activities under strategic outcome 1 with enhanced country capacity strengthening interventions under strategic outcome 3 to continue to save lives and protect the livelihoods of those most vulnerable to food insecurity and malnutrition (men, women, boys and girls) while supporting national partners in developing and implementing sustainable, Government-led zero hunger programmes.
36. HGSF has provided a significant opportunity for WFP to leverage its comparative advantage and expertise to support a key government priority, gained through its extensive agricultural expertise, especially in Liberia under the P4P pilot, to advance SDG 2 as a platform for nutrition, livelihood and resilience activities. Complementarity and synergies with partners and other sectors (agriculture, education, gender and health) will be reinforced to maximize

impact. WFP's response is also anchored in Liberia's 2013 national social protection policy and other sectoral policies.

37. The progressive strategic shift from implementer to enabler has entailed a greater focus on advocacy and coordination for a multisectoral approach to nutrition while piloting innovative, effective and equitable approaches to resilience, including expanding the reach of social protection. The CSP's design places increased emphasis on implementing gender-transformative interventions to address systemic gender inequalities.
38. In line with national priorities, cost-effective zero hunger solutions focused on prioritized geographical areas and operational convergence have been identified with the Government and other partners. Within this, priority is given to joint programmes with United Nations agencies and other partners as well as flagship projects for the achievement of SDG 2, such as HGSF.
39. Accountability to affected populations, protection analysis, conflict-sensitivity and environmental and social considerations are important cross-cutting matters and will be mainstreamed in all of WFP's activities in Liberia.

3. WFP strategic orientation

3.1 Direction, focus and intended impacts

40. This CSP guides WFP's strategic presence and engagement in Liberia for the next four and a half years. During this period, WFP and partner support will focus on reinforcing national capacities to ensure increased Government ownership of sustainable zero hunger solutions. WFP's shift to a more enabling role has been informed by consultative processes, including ZHSR and the line of sight formulation, and is supported by the Government and partners.
41. WFP will leverage school feeding with a solid HGSF component to deliver climate-smart livelihood support activities that provide smallholder farmers, particularly rural women, with reliable and sustainable markets (strategic outcome 1). This outcome also entails strengthening vulnerable smallholder farmers' resilience to climate-related and other recurrent shocks through the creation or regeneration of productive community assets such as feeder roads, storage facilities and other agricultural assets to the equitable benefit of the diverse women and men in targeted communities.
42. Nutrition-sensitive approaches will be integrated into all the strategic outcomes as part of a lifecycle approach. WFP will focus on enhancing advocacy and coordination for a multisectoral approach to tackling the burden of chronic malnutrition in Liberia while ensuring that communities receive gender-aware social and behaviour change communications to improve their feeding practices.
43. In recognition of the success of its programmes during crisis and recovery periods in Liberia, WFP has positioned itself as a key partner for the Government in enabling nationally-owned, sustainable hunger solutions. As such, WFP will continue to gradually shift its focus from the direct delivery of relief assistance towards the provision of capacity strengthening to support government agencies in managing sustainable food security and nutrition programmes, social protection and resilience interventions and emergency preparedness and response systems in an equitable, inclusive and empowering manner.
44. WFP has adopted a progressive approach to country capacity strengthening, with the aim of working with the Government and others to augment the capacity in Liberia and thereby enable a gradual handover of WFP programmes to the Government. WFP's capacity strengthening interventions are demand-driven, defined by national counterparts and other key stakeholders to match the country's needs effectively and ensure greater impact and sustainability.

45. Due to the country's socio-political fragility and climate-related risks mentioned above, WFP will maintain its leading role in emergency preparedness and response through the introduction of a contingency plan for swiftly responding to sudden shocks (strategic outcome 2), while at the same time reinforcing institutional capacities under strategic outcome 3.
46. In accordance with WFP's commitments regarding accountability to affected populations, communities are at the centre of all actions, ensuring equitable community participation and ownership so that activities are incorporated into local development plans and structures. The CSP also integrates environmental and social considerations in line with WFP's 2017 Environmental Policy,³⁸ with gender equality, protection analysis and conflict-sensitivity constituting core cross-cutting issues.
47. Under the leadership of the Government, all CSP activities have been jointly identified and are planned to be implemented with key partners, with an increased focus on geographical and operational convergence to ensure greater impact and cost-effectiveness.
48. Achievements and lessons learned under this CSP will lay the groundwork for WFP's transition and exit strategies, thus serving as a reference for any future CSPs.

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

Strategic outcome 1: Food-insecure populations, including school-aged children in targeted areas, have access to adequate and nutritious food, including food produced locally, by 2030

49. This strategic outcome seeks to provide schoolchildren (48 percent girls and 52 percent boys)³⁹ in public and community primary schools in the counties with the highest food insecurity with safe, nutritious meals of mainly locally-produced foods. It also seeks to provide girls in the same counties with family take-home rations, targeting adolescent girls from grades 4 to 6 in schools where gender parity (completion and attendance rates) is disproportionately against girls. To ensure a steady supply of locally produced food to meet HGSF demand, WFP will continue to focus on enhancing the capacity of smallholder farmers to improve their production and productivity.

Focus area

50. This outcome focuses on resilience building.

Expected outputs

51. This strategic outcome will be achieved through the following four outputs:
 - Children attending school receive timely and adequate nutritious meals, including take-home rations for adolescent girls linked to local purchase, in order to meet their food and nutrition requirements, support school enrolment, attendance and retention and improve gender parity.
 - Adolescent girls and boys attending school and their communities receive social and behaviour change communication in order to support school retention, improve nutrition-related practices and essential life skills to help break the intergenerational cycle of malnutrition.

³⁸ WFP/EB.1/2017/4-B/Rev.1.

³⁹ The difference between girls and boys arises from the fact that more boys than girls are enrolled in public and community schools. Girls will be provided with take-home rations to improve their enrolment rate.

- Schoolchildren and their communities receive communication and training on small-scale agriculture in order to increase their awareness and knowledge of the agricultural value chain.
- Smallholder farmers – equitably women and men – and their communities benefit from improved capacities and restored productive assets in order to sustainably improve their productivity, resilience and access to local markets, including through home-grown school feeding.

Key activity

Activity 1: Provide an integrated, inclusive and gender-transformative school feeding package to food-insecure and nutritionally vulnerable schoolchildren, including take-home rations for adolescent girls, in a way that relies on and stimulates local production (home-grown school feeding).

52. Counties with high poverty and food-insecurity rates record the lowest school enrolment rates, as food-insecure households keep their children out of school so that they can engage in livelihood-generating activities. Activity 1 will target the counties with the highest levels of food insecurity and lowest enrolment rates: Nimba, Gbarpolu, Maryland, Grand Kru and Sinoe. During the CSP period, WFP will provide school meals to 110,000⁴⁰ schoolchildren, of which 53,900 (48.8 percent) are girls. In the same counties, WFP will provide family take-home rations, 25 percent of which will include cash-based transfers (CBTs), to 4,000 adolescent girls from grades 4 to 6 (and possibly girls in high schools) in districts where gender parity is disproportionately against girls. A total of 16,000 people⁴¹ will indirectly benefit from this programme. Furthermore, capacity strengthening actions will target national and local institutions, such as the Ministry of Education and parent-teacher associations, to enhance their capacity to own and manage the school feeding programme. In addition, fuel-efficient stoves will be introduced in schools through WFP's Safe Access to Fuel and Energy (SAFE) cookstove initiative. SAFE combines various activities, such as investing in sustainable natural resources through activities like tree seedling planting, nursery management and climate mitigation projects. Access to sustainable energy is crucial for proper natural resource management, which is itself important given the country's identified challenge regarding agricultural land degradation and loss of biodiversity.
53. Through "developmental procurement", i.e., procurement that promotes the strengthening of local production capacity, WFP will procure (or facilitate procurement of) food to provide daily meals through cash or in-kind transfers to schoolchildren. Established and certified farmer and producer organizations will be the link and will aggregate and transport the agricultural produce to be used in the programme. Targeting of people living with disabilities, women, men and schoolchildren under the HGSP initiative will be undertaken through an in-depth vulnerability analysis in collaboration with the Government and by ensuring that women and men smallholder farmers and their organizations are engaged and benefit equitably.
54. In order to sensitize communities in the geographic areas of CSP activities, 28,000 beneficiaries, including people living with disabilities, will be reached by WFP and its partners through training sessions and sensitization campaigns with messages to promote and raise awareness of market access and agriculture as a viable livelihood opportunity in locations with high agricultural potential. In addition, to reduce malnutrition, especially stunting, within the first 1,000 days, nutrition education through gender-equality-informed social and behaviour change communication activities and sensitization will be provided, primarily targeting smallholder farmers and households with pregnant and lactating women

⁴⁰ Enrolment rates are still below 42 percent in most part of the country; this number represents children that are currently enrolled, without consideration of school-aged children that are out of school, a number that is not currently recorded.

⁴¹ Second tier beneficiaries, including household members (four members per family).

and girls. The country office will develop inclusive plans for connecting the local agricultural food supply to the programme, including analyses of the costs and trade-offs of the arrangements, food quality, smallholder farmer capacity and possible risks associated with local purchase, along with strategies for mitigating those risks.

55. Community grain reserves have been one of the innovative and sustainable interventions in Liberia. WFP will continue to support existing reserves with the aim of transforming them into community food reserves and will construct three additional community food reserves, each with initial capitalization of 30 metric tons of grain stocks, drying floors and threshing machines, and train community food reserve members, who typically number from 75 to 100 members, in business development skills and group management. The business development and management training is intended to enable women and men farmers eventually to own and manage the reserves in an equitable, inclusive manner. Further capacity strengthening activities will be provided after the completion of food assistance for assets activities to ensure the correct use and maintenance of the assets created.

Strategic outcome 2: Crisis-affected populations in targeted areas are able to meet their basic food and nutrition needs during and in the aftermath of crises

56. In line with WFP's humanitarian mandate, this contingency strategic outcome is aimed at enabling crisis-affected populations in Liberia to meet their basic food and nutrition needs during and in the aftermath of crises, with the details of interventions to be determined based on the context-specific needs. In line with WFP's environmental policy, activities will be screened to ensure that negative environmental and social impacts arising from such activities are avoided, minimized or mitigated.

Focus area

57. This contingency strategic outcome focuses on crisis response.

Expected outputs

58. This strategic outcome will be achieved through the following four outputs:
- Crisis-affected beneficiaries receive timely and adequate food and nutrition assistance in order to meet their food and nutrition requirements.
 - Crisis-affected beneficiaries receive adequate, gender-responsive social and behaviour change communication in order to improve their nutrition-related practices.
 - Crisis-affected beneficiaries receive timely and adequate specialized nutritious foods in order to prevent and treat malnutrition.
 - Crisis-affected populations benefit from enhanced government capacity in vulnerability analysis and mapping and coordination of humanitarian assistance, in order to receive timely food and nutrition assistance.

Key activity

Activity 2: Provide an integrated emergency food and nutrition assistance package to vulnerable households affected by disasters or other disruptions

59. This activity is designed as a contingency measure to respond to crises as appropriate. It will target crisis-affected households through targeted general food assistance should an emergency arise. During the emergency, Supercereal or Plumpy'Sup will be used to treat moderate malnutrition in children under 5 and pregnant and lactating women and girls. The choice of specialized nutritious food will depend on availability, cost, lead time and other supply chain factors, as such food is not produced locally.

60. As this is a contingency activity, the exact number of beneficiaries will depend on the scope and severity of any eventual emergency. Figures will be based on annual national food security assessments, which will feed into the cadre harmonisé analysis, and rapid assessments will be conducted. The country office will ensure that gender and age analyses are taken into consideration during the assessment, planning, implementation and reporting phases of this activity. For planning purposes, the number of targeted beneficiaries is 37,000, and the male/female ratio of the beneficiaries is to be determined through gender analysis.

Strategic outcome 3: National and subnational institutions have strengthened capacities to design and manage food security and nutrition, social protection, emergency preparedness and response and disaster risk management systems by 2030

61. Strategic outcome 3 aims to contribute to enhancing and strengthening national capacity in food security and nutrition monitoring and surveillance so that national institutions can provide timely early warning and track progress towards zero hunger on a timely, regular and disaggregated basis. Through its support for the Government and other stakeholders in this area, WFP will seek to improve information management systems and strengthen disaster preparedness and management capacities.
62. This activity is a cornerstone of WFP's strategic shift in Liberia from direct delivery to providing support to the Government through gender-responsive capacity strengthening. It is therefore closely connected to other activities in this CSP. Improved early warning systems and disaster management policy will support WFP's efforts to ensure that Liberia mitigates risks while at the same time remaining ready to respond to emergencies (strategic outcome 2). Strengthened government capacities in the areas of food security, nutrition surveillance and information systems will also result in the availability to WFP, the Government and other partners of improved information for programming and targeting under strategic outcome 1.

Focus area

63. The focus area for this outcome is resilience building.

Expected outputs

64. This strategic outcome will be achieved through the following three outputs:
- Populations affected by natural disasters benefit from improved disaster management and response mechanisms in order to receive timely, adequate, equitable, consistent and predictable assistance from the Government and WFP and its partners.
 - Targeted populations benefit from strengthened national coordination mechanisms and information management systems in order to track progress towards zero hunger.
 - Targeted populations benefit from enhanced national and subnational capacities in order to manage the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) initiative.

Key activities

Activity 3: Provide capacity strengthening support to the Government and its partners to strengthen national coordination mechanisms and information management and monitoring systems for food security and nutrition and disaster risk management

65. WFP will work with the national disaster management agency and other key partners to strengthen national capacities in disaster risk preparedness and response, focusing on the development of early warning systems.
66. WFP will support the Government in strengthening central coordination mechanisms and information management relating to zero hunger, including by contributing to the CFSNS and a Cost of Hunger in Africa study and regular food price monitoring. WFP will also partner

with the Government through the Ministry of Health and other nutrition partners to strengthen and improve the coordination, governance and gender-responsiveness of nutrition interventions, drawing on experience with the SUN and REACH initiatives in the country. In line with WFP's environmental policy, all activities will incorporate environmental considerations and comply with WFP's environmental and social standards.

67. Given the country's lack of an effective early warning system, forecast-based financing systems will be established. At the national level, forecast-based financing systems will support the early identification of extreme weather events, improving government preparedness ahead of disasters. Along with the establishment of forecast-based financing systems, WFP will also work with the national meteorology/hydrology services to strengthen in-country weather forecasting capacities and integrate their early warning systems into national preparedness plans.

3.3 Transition and exit strategies

68. This CSP continues the transition started in the transitional interim CSP from food-based assistance to increased cash-based transfers, resilience building and capacity strengthening. Over the course of the CSP, WFP's interventions will be aimed at:

- *Strengthening the Government's engagement and ownership of school feeding programme management:* The findings from an analysis of SABER⁴² school feeding will inform a structured and formalized strategy for providing capacity strengthening to, and eventually handing over school feeding to, the Government. This will support the Government in operationalizing the national HGFSF programme.
- *Gradually shifting from traditional school feeding to HGFSF:* This includes advocating for increased, predictable government investment for the implementation of the national HGFSF programme while strengthening national counterparts' awareness of the new generation of school feeding programmes to ensure sustainability. This transition foresees an increase in smallholder farmer production capacity to meet the demand that will be created by the school feeding programme.
- Moving from nutrition-specific to nutrition-sensitive interventions and mainstreaming nutrition interventions across CSP activities while providing support for all line ministries in delivering integrated nutrition activities by 2023.
- Ensuring that grain reserves are transformed into fully managed community food reserves by the end of the CSP term.
- Enhancing capacities of national and subnational institutions in the core areas of disaster management, early warning systems and information management.
- Increasing the number of capacity strengthening interventions related to food safety and quality.

69. The planned transition and exit strategies will be guided by continued extensive consultations with national counterparts, key partners and the communities concerned and will be informed by gender analyses (to track progress on gender equality and women's empowerment) and analysis of context-specific concerns and sensitivities. Considering the limited national capacities, the transition and handover of WFP's activities to the Government will be progressive.

⁴² Systems Approach for Better Education Results (SABER) is a government-led process that helps to build effective school feeding policies and systems.

4. Implementation arrangements

4.1 Beneficiary analysis

70. As a general beneficiary targeting approach, gender and age analyses will continue to inform all beneficiary selection. The targeting criteria is guided by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development pledge to leave no one behind and to reach those furthest behind first. The targeting for strategic outcome 2 (contingency plan), which ensures access to food by crisis-affected populations, will be informed by the nature of any crisis that may occur.
71. WFP's SCOPE beneficiary and transfer management system will be used to register the beneficiaries of outcomes 1 and 2.

TABLE 1: FOOD AND CBT BENEFICIARIES BY STRATEGIC OUTCOME AND ACTIVITY				
Strategic outcome	Activity	Female	Male	Total
1	1	70 260	70 740	141 000
2	2	20 400	13 600	34 000
3	3	N/A	N/A	N/A
Total		90 660	84 340	175 000

4.2 Transfers

Food and cash-based transfers

72. In-country consultations undertaken by WFP indicate that CBTs are an effective transfer modality. In the context of HGSP, community-based farmer organizations are key suppliers of food commodities directly to schools. CBTs have been helping to diversify the menu at the school level as a variety of fresh commodities has been purchased by school-level food procurement and management committees in line with the national school health and nutrition framework. However, gender and age analysis, cost assessment and further consultations will continue to be undertaken to determine the exact levels and possible combination of transfer modalities and mitigate any risk. Markets in WFP implementation areas are predominantly rural yet largely dependent on imports. Subject to the availability of cash and informed by local assessments, the CSP will combine CBTs with in-kind food transfers for strategic outcomes 1 and 2.

	Strategic outcome 1						Strategic outcome 2		Strategic outcome 3
	Activity 1						Activity 2		Activity 3
Beneficiary type	Schoolchildren in counties with the highest food insecurity		Adolescent girls in counties with the highest food insecurity		Smallholder farmers, especially women and young people		Vulnerable households affected by disasters and/or other disruptions		National and subnational institutions
Modality	CBT	Food	CBT	Food	CBT	Food	CBT	Food	N/A
Cereals		120		111		3 000		400	
Pulses		35				400		60	
Oil		10		7		125		25	
Salt		4						4	
Sugar									
SuperCereal									
SuperCereal Plus									
Micronutrient powder									
Total kcal/day		655		2 385		13 673		1 919	
% kcal from protein		10.30		7.00		9.20		9.10	
CBTs (USD/person/day)	0.27		0.50		3		0.57		
Number of feeding days per year	178	178	300	300	30	60	45	60	

Food type/CBTs	Total (mt)	Total (USD)
Cereals	13 309	8 246 264
Pulses	2 533	65 963
Oil	911911	867 672
Salt	234	1 227 825
Total (food)*	16 986	10 407 723
CBTs		9 000 300
Total (food and CBT value)		19 408 023

* Discrepancies in the totals are due to rounding.

Capacity strengthening including South-South cooperation

73. All the strategic outcomes involve strengthening the capacity (including in respect of gender competencies) of government agencies to plan, resource and implement programmes with direct effects on food security and nutrition. Established partnerships with ministries at the local and national levels will ensure the development of skills and capabilities to support national ownership and sustainability, particularly relating to national HGSF, social protection and nutrition programmes.
74. Outcome 3 is specifically dedicated to strengthening national capacities relative to coordination mechanisms and information management systems for the Government and its partners in food security, nutrition, social protection, emergency preparedness and response and disaster risk management. At the local level, WFP's integrated resilience approach will continue to enhance the capacities of individuals and communities for improved, gender-transformative and sustainable changes in their food security and nutrition status.
75. To achieve this outcome, in the first year of the CSP, WFP in consultation with relevant national stakeholders will define a detailed capacity strengthening plan that identifies national capacity gaps and needs to be addressed. This plan will build upon the country office's partnership mapping, refine the key outcomes (including indicators for measuring progress over the term of the plan) and include the design of specific actions to be rolled out or readjusted from year 2 of the CSP.
76. WFP will use this CSP to build upon the previous exchanges of knowledge, skills and expertise that the Government has gained through South-South cooperation with the Government of Brazil facilitated by the country office and the WFP Centre of Excellence in Brazil. Partnerships aimed at facilitating further national ownership of the HGSF programme have been identified with the African Union, the Global Post-Harvest Knowledge and Operations Centre in Uganda, the new Centre of Excellence against Hunger and malnutrition in Côte d'Ivoire and other regional entities HGSF.

4.3 Supply chain

77. The supply chain situation in Liberia remains challenging due to poor infrastructure and a long rainy season, which has affected timely delivery in remote areas. Due to insufficient supply of local commodities, there is a need to import some items such as cereals, pulses, vegetable oil and micronutrient fortification powders while at the same time supporting local production.
78. Building upon the transitional interim CSP experience of using CBTs for crisis response, WFP will aim to enhance capacities to implement CBTs across all its operations, where appropriate. WFP will continue to progressively scale up locally produced commodities while steadily decreasing the purchase of imported commodities for schools. WFP will provide institutions with a capacity strengthening package in the areas of planning and sourcing strategy, local procurement and contracting, storage management (for farmers, schools and the Government), the sharing of market information and assurance of food safety and quality across supply chain processes.

4.4 Country office capacity and profile

79. With support from the regional bureau, the country office has established the organizational structure required to support the implementation of the CSP. This structure has built-in flexibility to adapt to the level of funding. Further actions have been taken to ensure the right level of staff awareness and effective employee engagement. Training and capacity building opportunities at the regional and corporate levels are availed to staff, as necessary. Plans are in place to eliminate gender imbalance.

4.5 Partnerships

80. Diversified and sustainable partnerships are fundamental to the successful implementation of this CSP. A robust and dynamic range of partners will increase the impact, cost-effectiveness and efficacy of WFP's programmes in Liberia.
81. WFP is a partner of choice for the Government in achieving national development priorities within the PAPD through the implementation of social safety nets. WFP has already fostered strong partnerships with the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Agriculture and key institutional bodies through the establishment of a multisector national planning and coordination committee. WFP will continue to leverage this existing collaboration to sustainably roll out HGSF and enhance advocacy partnerships with the Office of the President and key ministries. The national women's machinery will be involved, and capacities relevant to tackling gender inequality will be fostered.
82. In line with the One United Nations initiative, WFP's strong programmatic partnerships with other United Nations agencies will facilitate increased joint programmes, coordination, geographic convergence, joint advocacy and resource mobilization. Specific areas of collaboration include HGSF implementation and roll-out, incorporating resilience building and market support activities, with the other Rome-based agencies, UNICEF, the International Labour Organization, UN-Women and the United Nations Population fund (UNFPA) and streamlining sectoral crisis response with the WHO, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, UNICEF, UNFPA and other partners.
83. WFP continues to enhance its existing collaboration with traditional and new technical, financial and cooperating partners at the local, regional and international levels to achieve greater impact and enhance programmatic efficiency. Partnerships will also be pursued with Save the Children and other relevant national and international non-governmental organizations for the implementation of the national school feeding programme and the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies for coordinated crisis response mechanisms.
84. The country office will continue to facilitate South-South cooperation with the Centre of Excellence in Brazil on HGSF while increasing engagement with the Centres of Excellence in China on supporting smallholder agriculture market support and in India on nutrition-sensitive programming to tap into innovative hunger solutions from other countries. Partnerships will also be explored with the Global Post-Harvest Knowledge and Operations Centre in Uganda and the nascent Centre of Excellence against hunger and malnutrition in Côte d'Ivoire.
85. In line with WFP's corporate partnership strategy, the country office has developed a detailed partnership action plan to guide the country office's resourcing strategy for the implementation of the CSP.

5. Performance management and evaluation

5.1 Monitoring and Evaluation Arrangements

86. In the framework of a gender-responsive monitoring and evaluation system, WFP has developed and budgeted for a monitoring and evaluation plan aligned with WFP's Corporate Results Framework (2017–2021) measuring progress towards the strategic outcomes in order to ensure accountability and providing evidence of the results achieved as a basis for any necessary adjustments.
87. Data collected for beneficiary-related indicators will be disaggregated by sex and age and supported by gender and age analyses. Outcome and output achievement values will be reported in annual performance reports. Baseline data for outcomes will be established in 2019, where applicable.

88. A decentralized evaluation of activity 1 and a mid-term review covering activities 2 and 3 will be undertaken in the third year of the CSP (2022), with the support of the regional bureau. The decentralized evaluation is expected to focus on local agricultural value and supply chains and the extent to which they facilitate sustainable home-grown school feeding and contribute to smallholder income and economic empowerment, taking stock of WFP support for, and the gender dimensions of, the nexus between agricultural value and supply chains and school feeding. The findings of the review and the resulting recommendations will inform annual resource-based operational planning exercises to ensure that timely mid-course improvements are made as necessary. Led by the Office of Evaluation, a country strategic plan evaluation will be conducted in 2022 to assess progress and results against intended outcomes and objectives, including with regard to gender equity, equality and other cross-cutting corporate results, and to identify lessons for the design of the subsequent CSP.
89. The findings of the review and evaluation and the resulting recommendations will be disseminated to all relevant stakeholders, and efforts will be made to carry out community-level presentations on the key findings and recommendations to promote accountability to beneficiaries. Outcome monitoring will be done at least once a year, as applicable, for each outcome. Activity-level process and output monitoring will also be undertaken on an ongoing basis to track the achievement of targets and the quality of implementation. Process monitoring will generally be done through post-distribution monitoring. WFP will use the review and evaluation findings and recommendations, as well as monitoring data and findings, to identify opportunities for project implementation improvement.
90. WFP will use its in-house monitoring capacity to strengthen that of partner staff and will closely collaborate with other agencies of the United Nations country team on joint monitoring of performance indicators for the UNDAF.
91. Based on WFP's Gender Policy (2015–2020) and consistent with the regional gender implementation strategy for West and Central Africa, the CSP presents a valuable platform for the development of a gender action plan covering mainstreaming and targeted actions, which will be reviewed annually. All WFP employees have received basic training in gender and protection, and newly recruited personnel will be trained as well.
92. The web-based country office monitoring and evaluation tool (COMET) and online archive will be used to track performance indicators and generate performance reports. Data will be collected in the field and submitted electronically, with data analysis taking place in real time.
93. The monitoring and evaluation plan is included in the CSP budget proposal.

6.1 Risk management

Strategic risks

94. Strategic risks include localized natural disasters and inadequate community capacities. To address the former, WFP will continue to build on the existing national early warning system and strengthen the Government's capacity in emergency preparedness and response at the national and subnational levels. The risk presented by inadequate community capacities will be mitigated through the formulation and implementation of capacity development plans.
95. Recognizing a strategic risk of insufficient funding, WFP has taken significant steps in collaboration with the regional bureau and headquarters to increase resources raised and mitigate the negative funding trends, as detailed in section 6.3 of the resource mobilization strategy. WFP will work continuously with current partners, seek to broaden its funding base and strengthen joint fundraising with other organizations. WFP will encourage the

mobilization of funds, explore alternative financing solutions with the Government and develop capacity at all levels.

Operational risks

96. Potential operational risks include inadequate availability or capacity among government and cooperating partners with regard to both oversight and operational management. A dedicated strategic outcome 3 has been defined to address this concern and provide for the design of instruments to allow WFP to assist the Government through capacity building activities. Another operational risk is that access constraints may diminish WFP's ability to monitor and reach certain areas of the country due to poor infrastructure, exacerbated by unfavourable weather conditions. WFP is complementing the Government's efforts to improve road conditions and connections throughout the country under the PAPD through food assistance for assets activities related to feeder roads. WFP will mitigate these risks through regular reviews by country office multifunctional teams and oversight missions by the regional bureau. WFP will also ensure that gender analysis is undertaken for all interventions and activities.
97. Other operational risks relate to protection risks for beneficiaries and inadequate community capacity to participate in WFP activities. The country office has incorporated protection into its programme activities. Accountability to affected populations will feature in all aspects and phases of the CSP. Capacity development plans will be implemented. Environmental and social risk management will continue to be strengthened through community mobilization at the village level. To ensure community-level engagement and buy-in, the country office will be implementing WFP's three-pronged approach, which promotes integrated context analysis at the national level, seasonal livelihood programming at the subnational level and community-based participatory planning.

6. Resources for results

6.2 Country portfolio budget

98. The budget required to implement the Liberia CSP over its 54-month duration is USD 50.2 million, representing a USD 35.3 million decrease from the country programme budget for 2013–2018. Strategic outcomes 1 and 3, addressing resilience building, represent 87 percent of the budget, while strategic outcome 2, related to crisis response, represents 13 percent of the budget. The country office is prioritizing resource mobilization efforts with traditional and non-traditional partners for strategic outcomes 1 and 3 to ensure adequate funding throughout the CSP.

Strategic outcome	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Total
1	4 867 331	8 339 034	8 929 281	9 286 467	9 388 753	40 810 865
2	1 186 185	1 264 193	1 261 075	1 294 466	1 265 361	6 271 280
3	452 706	667 999	687 651	682 402	596 214	3 086 971
Total	6 506 221	10 271 226	10 878 007	11 263 334	11 250 327	50 169 116

99. Strategic outcome 1, with a budget of USD 40,810,865, represents 81 percent of the total budget. This strategic outcome aims to provide school feeding assistance through an increased HGSF component, girls' take-home rations and smallholder agriculture and market support including strengthening of the Government's capacity to manage food security and nutrition. This strategic outcome also incorporates transformative gender initiatives and nutrition-sensitive interventions.
100. Strategic outcome 2, with a budget of USD 6,271,280 representing 13 percent of the total, is a contingency strategic outcome to be activated during crises. Requirements for this strategic outcome may need to be revised based on the nature of any crisis and needs assessments.
101. Strategic outcome 3, with a budget of USD 3,086,971 representing 6 percent of the total, focuses on equipping the Government and national institutions with the technical expertise and capability to maintain early warning systems while tracking progress towards zero hunger.
102. Expenditures linked to gender equality activities across all strategic outcomes represent 19 percent of the total budget.

6.2 Resourcing outlook

103. This CSP strongly reflects alignment with government development priorities as shown by the extensive consultations led by the country office at various levels and reflected in the ZHSR. These consultations helped strengthen the existing WFP partnership with the Government and diversify its partner base by forging new partnerships, including with the private sector, international financial institutions and South-South cooperation partners. They are expected to be funded mainly through government partners (traditional and non-traditional), international multilateral financial institutions, foundations and the private sector.
104. The CSP targets the most vulnerable populations and takes into consideration the decreasing funding trends following the conclusion of the Ebola emergency response. WFP's ability to allocate resources across strategic outcomes gives the country office flexibility to scale up activities and increase beneficiary reach in line with the level of the resources received.
105. Positive indications from country office engagements with partners throughout the period of the transitional interim CSP position WFP well to mobilize sufficient resources to support the CSP throughout its four-and-a-half-years of implementation.

6.3 Resource mobilization strategy

106. In order to implement the planned CSP activities, WFP is seeking USD 50,169,116 for the period from July 2019 to December 2023.
107. Informed by its partnership action plan and WFP's position as a partner of choice for the Government, WFP will continue to prioritize strengthened and coordinated resource mobilization and partnership outreach. In recognition of the resourcing challenges experienced during the transition from the Ebola emergency response to a development context, the country office will redouble efforts to engage with an extensive portfolio of development partners (governments, international and regional financial institutions and regional and subregional institutions), United Nations agencies, non-governmental organizations, academia, the emerging private sector and local communities.
108. Given the CSP's focus on HGSF, WFP will leverage the momentum generated and the political commitments made by the Government to enhance advocacy with partners, international financial institutions and government agencies for prioritization and progressive budgetary allocation for the implementation of HGSF. The country office, building on engagements

between the Minister of Foreign Affairs and WFP senior management at headquarters, is enhancing efforts to secure the commitment expressed by the Government to support WFP's resource mobilization.

109. To reduce WFP's reliance on a traditionally small funding base, WFP will continue to pursue diversified funding opportunities, including through the private sector, South-South cooperation and multi-year funds (the Peacebuilding Fund, the Green Climate Fund and global funds). WFP will continue to advocate for flexible, multi-year funding to increase planning and the effective use of resources. The country office will also use the findings from previous interventions and cooperation (e.g. P4P and the community grain reserves programme) to demonstrate evidence-based results to renew traditional partnerships and attract new ones with non-traditional governments, particularly those increasing their presence in Liberia.

ANNEX I**LOGICAL FRAMEWORK FOR LIBERIA COUNTRY STRATEGIC PLAN****Strategic Goal 1: Support countries to achieve zero hunger****Strategic Objective 1: End hunger by protecting access to food****Strategic Result 1: Everyone has access to food****Strategic outcome 1: Food-insecure populations, including school-aged children in targeted areas, have access to adequate and nutritious food, including food produced locally, by 2030**

Outcome category: Nutrition sensitive

Maintained/enhanced individual and household access to adequate food

Focus area: Resilience building

Assumptions

Food pipeline and cash flow remain healthy all year round

Other non-food items and complementary services are provided by other partners (Government of Liberia, other United Nations agencies and NGOs)

No disruptive outbreak of communicable diseases such as Ebola Virus Disease, diarrhoea, etc., in programme intervention areas

Outcome indicators

Attendance rate

Consumption-based Coping Strategy Index (Percentage of households with reduced CSI)

Enrolment rate

Food Consumption Score

Food Consumption Score – Nutrition

Food Expenditure Share

Percentage of smallholder farmers selling through WFP-supported farmer aggregation systems

Percentage of WFP food procured from pro-smallholder farmer aggregation systems

Proportion of the population in targeted communities reporting benefits from an enhanced livelihood asset base

Retention rate / Drop-out rate (new)

SABER School Feeding National Capacity (new)

Value and volume of pro-smallholder sales through WFP-supported aggregation systems

Activities and outputs

1. Provide an integrated, inclusive and gender-transformative school feeding package to food-insecure and nutritionally vulnerable schoolchildren, including take-home rations for adolescent girls, in a way that relies on and stimulates local production (home-grown school feeding) (SMP: School meal activities)

Adolescent girls and boys attending school and their communities receive social and behaviour change communication in order to support school retention, improve nutrition-related practices and essential life skills to help break the intergenerational cycle of malnutrition (E*: Social and behaviour change communication (SBCC) delivered)

Adolescent girls and boys attending school and their communities receive social and behaviour change communication in order to support school retention, improve nutrition-related practices and essential life skills to help break the intergenerational cycle of malnutrition (F: Purchases from smallholders completed)

Children attending school receive timely and adequate nutritious meals, including take-home rations for adolescent girls linked to local purchase, in order to meet their food and nutrition requirements, support school enrolment, attendance and retention and improve gender parity (A: Resources transferred)

Children attending school receive timely and adequate nutritious meals, including take-home rations for adolescent girls linked to local purchase, in order to meet their food and nutrition requirements, support school enrolment, attendance and retention and improve gender parity (N*: School feeding provided)

Schoolchildren and their communities receive communication and training on small-scale agriculture in order to increase their awareness and knowledge of the agricultural value chain (E*: Social and behaviour change communication (SBCC) delivered)

Smallholder farmers – equitably women and men – and their communities benefit from improved capacities and restored productive assets in order to sustainably improve their productivity, resilience and access to local markets, including through home-grown school feeding (C: Capacity development and technical support provided)

Smallholder farmers – equitably women and men – and their communities benefit from improved capacities and restored productive assets in order to sustainably improve their productivity, resilience and access to local markets, including through home-grown school feeding (D: Assets created)

Strategic outcome 2: Crisis-affected populations in targeted areas are able to meet their basic food and nutrition needs during and in the aftermath of crises

Outcome category: Nutrition sensitive
 Maintained/enhanced individual and household access to adequate food
 Focus area: Crisis response

Assumptions

Security situation remains stable; and target groups and intervention areas are accessible

Complementary services and items such as healthcare, water, sanitation, hygiene, protection, non-food items, among others, are provided by the Government of Liberia and other United Nations agencies and NGOs

Outcome indicators

Consumption-based Coping Strategy Index (Percentage of households with reduced CSI)

Food Consumption Score

Food Consumption Score – Nutrition

Food Expenditure Share

MAM Treatment Default rate

MAM Treatment Mortality rate

MAM Treatment Non-response rate

MAM Treatment Recovery rate

Number of national food security and nutrition policies, programmes and system components enhanced as a result of WFP capacity strengthening (new)

Proportion of eligible population that participates in programme (coverage)

Proportion of target population that participates in an adequate number of distributions (adherence)

Activities and outputs

2. Provide an integrated emergency food and nutrition assistance package to vulnerable households affected by disasters or other disruptions (URT: Unconditional resource transfers to support access to food)

Crisis-affected beneficiaries receive adequate, gender-responsive social and behaviour change communication in order to improve their nutrition-related practices (E*: Social and behaviour change communication (SBCC) delivered)

Crisis-affected beneficiaries receive timely and adequate food and nutrition assistance in order to meet their food and nutrition requirements (A: Resources transferred)

Crisis-affected beneficiaries receive timely and adequate specialized nutritious foods in order to prevent and treat malnutrition (B: Nutritious foods provided)

Crisis-affected populations benefit from enhanced government capacity in vulnerability analysis and mapping and coordination of humanitarian assistance, in order to receive timely food and nutrition assistance (C: Capacity development and technical support provided)

Strategic Goal 2: Partner to support implementation of the SDGs

Strategic Objective 4: Support SDG implementation

Strategic Result 5: Developing countries have strengthened capacity to implement the SDGs

Strategic outcome 3: National and subnational institutions have strengthened capacities to design and manage food security and nutrition, social protection, emergency preparedness and response and disaster risk management systems by 2030

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

Availability of resources to support the implementation of capacity strengthening activities

Turn-over of staff at national and subnational institutions is not too frequent to undermine the intended effects of capacity strengthening activities

Complementary activities are undertaken by the Government, other United Nations agencies, NGOs and private sector institutions

Outcome indicators

Emergency Preparedness Capacity Index

Number of national food security and nutrition policies, programmes and system components enhanced as a result of WFP capacity strengthening (new)

Proportion of targeted sectors and government entities implementing recommendations from national zero hunger strategic reviews

Activities and outputs

3. Provide capacity strengthening support to the Government and its partners to strengthen national coordination mechanisms and information management and monitoring systems for food security and nutrition and disaster risk management (CSI: Institutional capacity strengthening activities)

Populations affected by natural disasters benefit from improved disaster management and response mechanisms in order to receive timely, adequate, equitable, consistent and predictable assistance from the Government and WFP and its partners (C: Capacity development and technical support provided)

Targeted populations benefit from enhanced national and subnational capacities in order to manage the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) initiative (C: Capacity development and technical support provided)

Targeted populations benefit from strengthened national coordination mechanisms and information management systems in order to track progress towards zero hunger (M: National coordination mechanisms supported)

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.1.2: Proportion of project activities for which beneficiary feedback is documented, analysed and integrated into programme improvements

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.2.2: Proportion of targeted people receiving assistance without safety challenges (new)

C.2.3: Proportion of targeted people who report that WFP programmes are dignified (new)

C.2.4: Proportion of targeted people having unhindered access to WFP programmes (new)

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

C.3.1: Proportion of households where women, men, or both women and men make decisions on the use of food/cash/vouchers, disaggregated by transfer modality

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

C.3.3: Type of transfer (food, cash, voucher, no compensation) received by participants in WFP activities, disaggregated by sex and type of activity

C.4. Targeted communities benefit from WFP programmes in a manner that does not harm the environment**Cross-cutting indicators**

C.4.1: Proportion of activities for which environmental risks have been screened and, as required, mitigation actions identified

ANNEX II

INDICATIVE COST BREAKDOWN BY STRATEGIC OUTCOME (USD)				
	Strategic Result 1 SDG Target 2.1		Strategic Result 2 SDG Target 17	Total
	Strategic outcome 1	Strategic outcome 2	Strategic outcome 3	
Focus area	Resilience	Crisis response	Resilience	
Transfers	25 722 270	4 099 418	1 818 307	31 639 995
Implementation	8 218 033	1 102 727	745 862	10 066 623
Adjusted direct support costs	33 940 303	5 202 145	2 564 169	41 706 617
Subtotal	4 379 759	686 380	334 395	5 400 534
Indirect support costs (6.5%)	2 490 804	382 754	188 407	3 061 965
Total	40 810 865	6 271 280	3 086 971	50 169 116

Acronyms used in the document

CBTs	cash-based transfers
CFSNS	Comprehensive Food Security and Nutrition Survey
CSP	country strategic plan
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GDP	gross domestic product
HGSF	home-grown school feeding
PAPD	Pro-Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development
P4P	Purchase for Progress
PRRO	protracted relief and recovery operation
REACH	Renewed Efforts Against Child Hunger and Undernutrition
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
UNDAF	United Nations development assistance framework
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
UN-Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
WHO	World Health Organization
ZHSR	zero hunger strategic review