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Summary report on the evaluation of the country strategic plan for Senegal (2019–2023)

Executive summary

The evaluation of the country strategic plan for Senegal for 2019–2023 was conducted between March 2022 and March 2023 and covered WFP's strategy, interventions and systems over the period between 2018 and mid-2022. Taking a utilization-focused, consultative approach, the evaluation served the dual purpose of accountability and learning and informed the preparation of the next country strategic plan. The evaluation assessed WFP's strategic positioning, its contribution to outcomes, its efficiency in implementation and the factors explaining its performance.

The country strategic plan marked a change from operation- and programme-based planning to country-level strategic planning aimed at producing more integrated action across sectors and focus areas and more harmonized long-term objectives.

The plan was aligned with and contributed to national development plans through high-level partnerships with national bodies. WFP interventions were relevant to the needs of the most food-insecure people and communities and WFP's approach to gender equality, women's empowerment and social inclusion in its targeting and monitoring activities was appropriate.

WFP's strategic positioning in the areas of school feeding and nutrition was successful, but opportunities exist to enhance its positioning in public policy discussions on social protection. In the area of resilience, there was room to improve WFP's capacities and coordination with other United Nations entities.

In line with WFP evaluation policy (2022) (WFP/EB.1/2022/4-C), to respect the integrity and independence of evaluation findings the editing of this report has been limited and as a result some of the language in it may not be fully consistent with the World Food Programme's standard terminology or editorial practices. Please direct any requests for clarification to the Director of Evaluation.

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Effectiveness was variable across intervention areas and cross-cutting themes. Climate change resilience activities and the response to the coronavirus disease 2019 pandemic showed the clearest results in addressing the needs of some of the most vulnerable population groups. School feeding was effective, with increased ownership by the Government, although its use as an entry point for addressing the needs of vulnerable groups and catalysing other WFP interventions remained limited.

Funding shortfalls, the pandemic and challenges with partner coordination affected WFP's performance. Considering these circumstances, WFP prioritized the speed of implementation over long-term institutional capacity strengthening. Moving forward, attention should turn to ensuring that outcomes and activities are sustainable, which will require effective institutional capacity strengthening.

The evaluation made six recommendations focusing on WFP's strategic positioning, the effectiveness and sustainability of its interventions, efficiency, school feeding, gender issues and monitoring and evaluation.

Draft decision*

The Board takes note of the summary report on the evaluation of the country strategic plan for Senegal (2019–2023) (WFP/EB.2/2023/6-A/11) and management response (WFP/EB.2/2023/6-A/11/Add.1) and encourages further action on the recommendations set out in the report, taking into account the considerations raised by the Board during its discussion.

* 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.

Introduction

Evaluation features

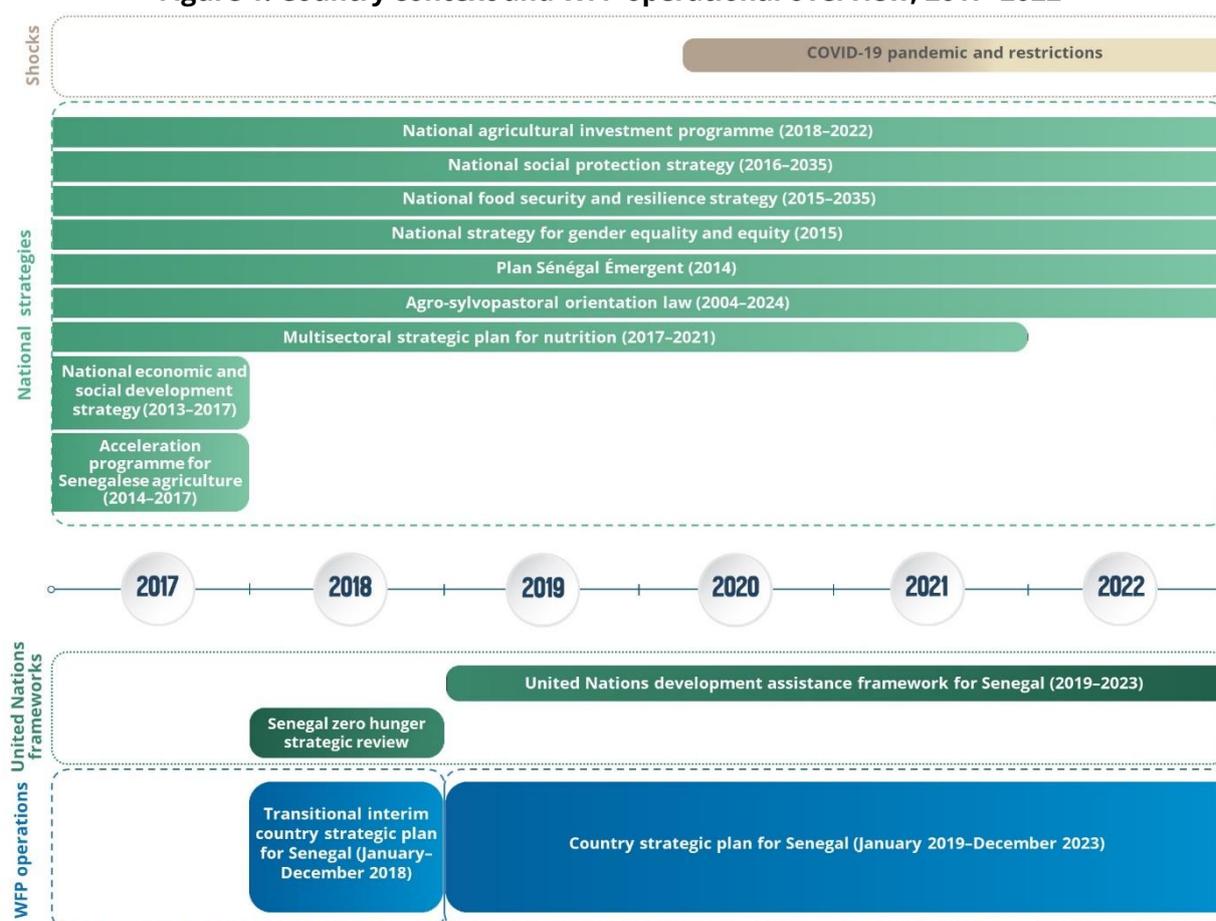
1. The evaluation of the country strategic plan (CSP) for Senegal for 2019–2023 was conducted between March 2022 and March 2023 with the main objectives of providing accountability and learning to inform the design of the next CSP for Senegal.
2. The evaluation covered WFP's activities implemented under the transitional interim CSP in 2018 and the CSP from January 2019 to June 2022, focusing on food security and nutrition, social protection and resilience in relation to climate change. An external independent team conducted the evaluation using mixed methods.
3. The main intended users of the evaluation are the WFP country office, the Regional Bureau for Western Africa, technical divisions at WFP headquarters, the WFP Executive Board, the Government of Senegal, other United Nations entities in Senegal, donors and civil society organizations.

Context

4. Senegal is a lower-middle-income country in West Africa with a population of 17.7 million inhabitants, 40 percent of whom live in urban areas. The country has been affected by climate change and faces issues such as aridity and drought, soil and land degradation, pollution and biodiversity loss, which impact the food security and vulnerability of poor households.
5. Although Senegal is ranked among the ten fastest growing economies in the world, poverty affects more than one third of its population and is particularly acute in rural areas. Agriculture, forestry and fishing contributed 15 percent of gross domestic product in 2021. The major challenges for smallholder farmers are droughts, floods and access to land and water.
6. Despite comprising more than 60 percent of the agricultural workforce, women have far less access to productive resources than men and are accordingly more vulnerable to food insecurity.
7. The United Nations system supports the Government's *Plan Sénégal Émergent 2035* through three strategic priorities set out in the United Nations development assistance framework for 2019–2023: inclusive and sustainable economic growth, access to basic social services and social protection, and governance, peace and security. The zero hunger strategic review conducted in 2017 is the main reference point for WFP's interventions in the country and the Government's focus for work on Sustainable Development Goal 2.
8. In response to the effects of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic, the Government set up an economic and social resilience programme and a food security emergency plan in 2020 aimed at revitalizing the economy and supporting vulnerable households with food kits.

SOCIOECONOMIC INDICATORS			
	Indicator	Value	Year
	Population total (million) (1)	17.7	2022
	Gross domestic product (USD, billions) (2)	27.63	2022
	Agriculture, forestry and fishing, value added (% of gross domestic product) (2)	15	2021
	National income poverty rate (% of population) (1)	37.8	2018–2019
	Global Hunger Index (rank) (3)	71 of 121	2022
	Prevalence of undernourishment (% of population) (3)	7.5	2021
	Prevalence of stunting (height-for-age – moderate and severe) (% of children 0–5 years of age) (4)	18.8	2021
	Prevalence of wasting (weight-for-age – moderate and severe) (% of children 0–5 years of age) (4)	7.5	2021
	Gender Inequality Index (rank) (5)	130 of 162	2019
	Literacy rate (% of population > 15 years) (1)	51.8	2021
	Primary school enrolment rate (% of primary school-age children) (1)	53	2021

Sources: (1) [Senegal's national agency of statistics and demography](#); (2) [World Bank Data, Senegal](#); (3) Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and others. 2021. *The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2021. Transforming food systems for food security, improved nutrition and affordable healthy diets for all*; (4) United Nations Children's Fund. 2021. *The State of the World's Children 2021: On My Mind – Promoting, protecting and caring for children's mental health*; and (5) United Nations Development Programme. 2022. *Human Development Reports – Senegal*.

Figure 1: Country context and WFP operational overview, 2017–2022

Source: Elaborated by the Office of Evaluation, based on the evaluation report.

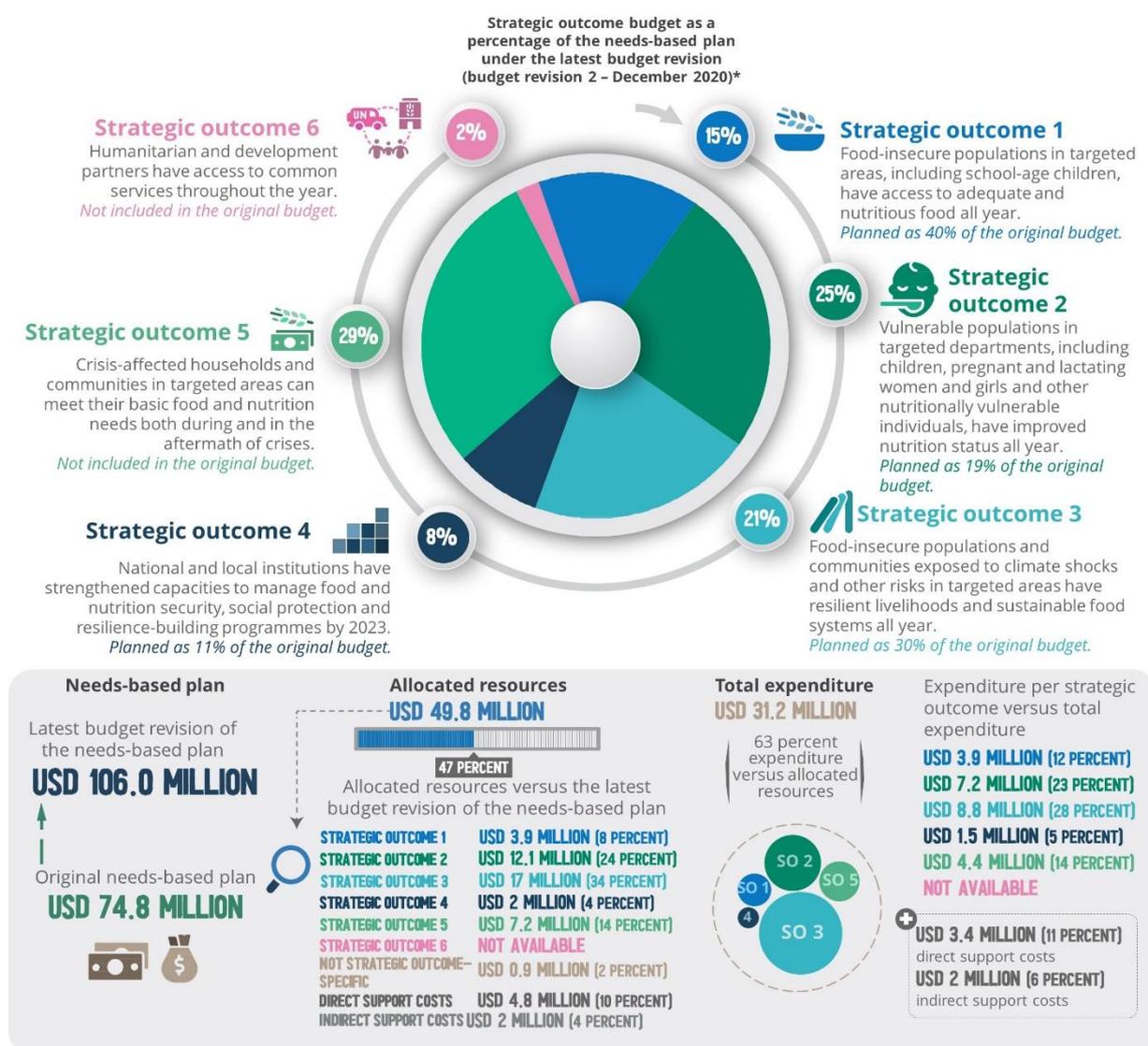
WFP country strategic plan

9. Approved by the Board in November 2018, the CSP followed a one-year transitional interim CSP for 2018 and marked a change in WFP's focus from operations- and programme-based planning to multi-year strategic planning. This shift allowed WFP to take a longer-term holistic approach to all activities and in all geographical areas with a view to facilitating integration among activities in the various focus areas and objectives. The initial five-year duration of the CSP, from 2019 to 2023, was extended by six months to June 2024 to ensure alignment with the United Nations sustainable development cooperation framework planning process. The CSP was based on three key themes: social protection, nutrition and resilience in relation to climate change. It had six strategic outcomes (figure 2) and nine activities.
10. Following two budget revisions, the CSP needs-based plan increased from USD 74.8 million for 1 million planned beneficiaries to USD 106 million for 1.56 million planned beneficiaries.¹ As of April 2023, the overall funding level of the CSP was close to 50 percent of the needs-based plan. Canada was the largest bilateral donor, followed by France. Trust funds and flexible funding allocations played a significant role, representing up to 40 percent of the total funding. Funding was spread unevenly among strategic outcomes, with strategic outcome 3, on resilience, being by far the best funded, at 88 percent of the needs-based plan, while the crisis response-related strategic outcomes were the least well-funded, with

¹ In July 2023, a third budget revision extended the CSP until June 2024, increasing the number of beneficiaries to 2.24 million and the total budget to USD 132 million.

strategic outcome 1 receiving 28 percent of the needs-based plan and strategic outcome 5 27 percent.

Figure 2: Senegal country strategic plan (2019–2023 (strategic outcomes, budget, funding and expenditures (as at July 2022)



* The percentages of the original and the last needs-based plans by strategic outcome are calculated at the transfer and implementation cost level, excluding direct and indirect support costs.

Sources: Country portfolio budget; Country strategic plan revision 2; Integrated Road Map analytics.

Evaluation findings

To what extent is the country strategic plan evidence-based and strategically focused to address the needs of the most vulnerable?

Evidence base and relevance to the needs of the most vulnerable

- The design and implementation of the CSP were informed by the zero hunger strategic review and the cadre harmonisé² but made little use of the results of relevant evaluations. Evidence from surveys and studies of food and nutrition security and resilience carried out

² The cadre harmonisé is a harmonized framework for the analysis and identification of areas at risk and food- and nutrition-insecure population groups. It is a unifying tool that helps to produce relevant, consensual, rigorous and transparent analyses of current and projected food and nutrition situations in most Sahel and coastal countries of West Africa.

by national and United Nations entities has regularly informed decisions regarding the geographical targeting of CSP activities, the numbers of beneficiaries and the types of assistance to be provided to specific beneficiary groups.

12. Geographical targeting directed interventions to the poorest areas and population groups most vulnerable to shocks. The vulnerable groups targeted included very poor households affected by seasonal hunger and the COVID-19 pandemic, children attending schools in very poor and marginal areas, children under 5, pregnant and breastfeeding women and girls, people living with HIV and poor rural communities in areas particularly affected by food and nutrition insecurity, the lean season and climate change.
13. WFP supported the United Nations system's emergency response to the COVID-19 crisis in Senegal, increasing the number of planned beneficiaries from 1 million to almost 1.6 million and expanding the use of cash-based transfers (CBTs) and specialized nutrition interventions: CBTs were largely used to cover the basic food, hygiene, health and schooling needs of families, while nutrition interventions responded to the emergency nutritional needs of children under 5 and pregnant and breastfeeding women and girls.

Strategic partnerships and positioning in evolving circumstances

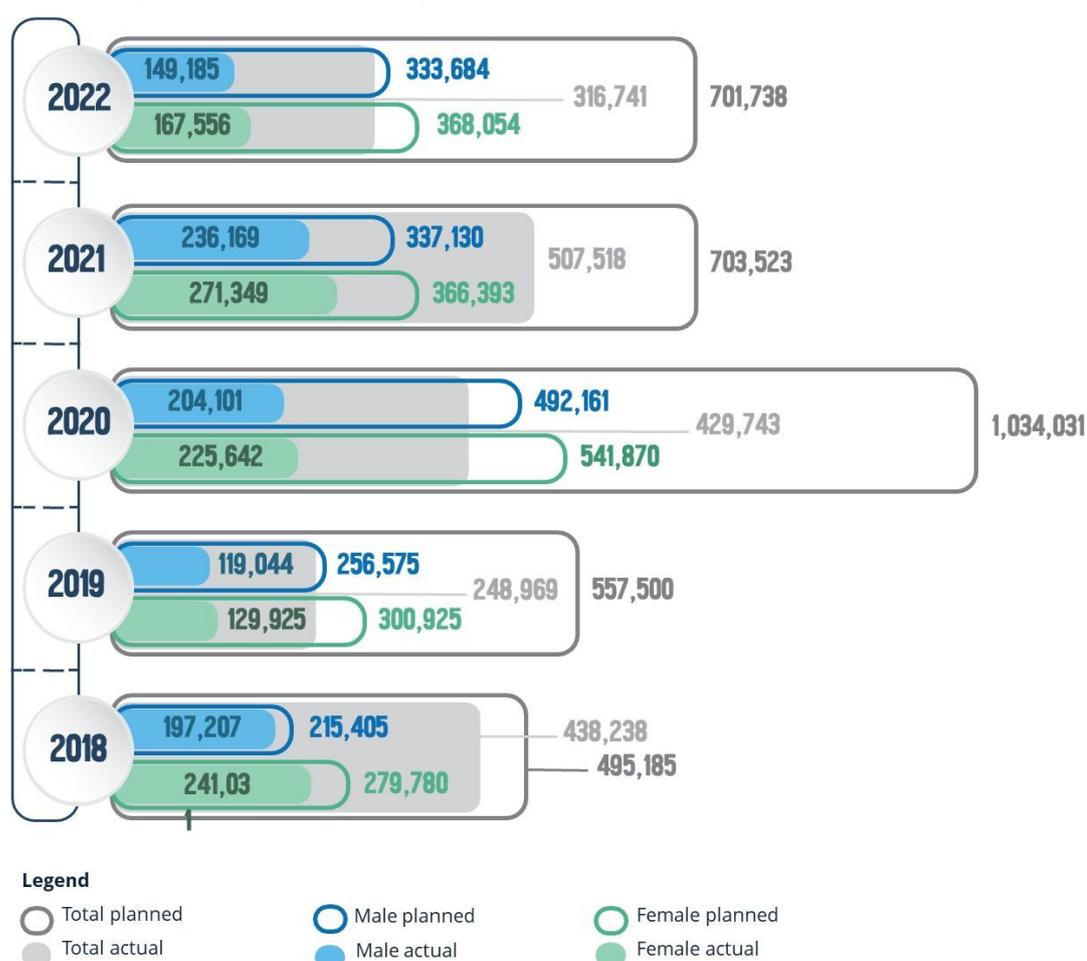
14. WFP's strategic orientation since the start of the transitional interim CSP has been largely in line with government policies. The CSP was aligned with the national development plan, *Plan Sénégal Émergent*, and contributed to that plan strategically through several high-level partnerships. WFP's positioning with national institutions has been particularly satisfactory in relation to school feeding and nutrition. By engaging with government partners, WFP has positioned itself as a champion of school feeding in terms of resource mobilization, advocacy and technical support and has supported national nutrition policy and programme implementation.
15. WFP is also positioning itself as an important player in improving resilience to climate change in rural areas and is mobilizing significant resources for work in that area, where it has a recognized advantage in agricultural insurance. However, WFP's technical competence in specific areas, such as value chains or watersheds, is questioned by some partners. Overall, WFP could make more use of decentralized government structures in the design and monitoring of interventions.
16. The original CSP did not clearly define its ambitions, outcomes and activities regarding social protection. WFP has aligned its interventions with the main relevant public policies, but the evaluation found that WFP collaboration was less fluid with the main national institutions in social protection than with institutions in other areas. The country office's participation in strategic discussions regarding national social protection policies has also been weak, although recent efforts have been made to improve it. WFP gave priority to the search for efficiency and the speed of implementation over close collaboration with the adaptive social protection mechanisms put in place by the Government.
17. WFP is a relatively minor player in the response to recurrent lean season droughts within the framework of the government-led national response plan, and a systematic analysis of its role in and contribution to the plan should be made.
18. The CSP was aligned with the strategic axes of the United Nations development assistance framework for Senegal for 2019–2023. Partnerships are in place with several other United Nations entities, including the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). There are substantial and important opportunities for strengthening operational coordination and synergies, particularly with the other Rome-based agencies.

What are the extent and quality of WFP's contribution to country strategic plan strategic outcomes in Senegal?

Beneficiary coverage

19. WFP reached the greatest share of its planned beneficiaries in 2018; fewer beneficiaries received assistance in 2019 due to funding gaps. In 2020, WFP managed only partially to fund the increased needs-based plan during the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite the operational challenges, WFP attained the highest number of beneficiaries in 2021, increasing the number reached by 18 percent compared with 2020. The 2022 figures presented cover the period up to July 2022.

Figure 3: Actual versus planned beneficiaries by sex, 2018–2022



Sources: Senegal annual country reports for 2018, 2019, 2020 and 2021 and WFP country office tool for managing effectively reports CM-R001b and CM-R020; 2022 figures are as of 8 July 2022.

Contribution to strategic outcomes³

20. **Strategic outcome 1 – lean season response.**⁴ WFP aimed to provide seasonal assistance to complement the Government's social transfers for food-insecure households during the lean season and to help facilitate access to food for some of the most vulnerable people. Unconditional CBTs were implemented during the lean seasons from 2018 to 2020, but the

³ Strategic outcome 6, which aimed to provide on-demand logistics and supplies, was not activated, so is not discussed in this section.

⁴ Between 2018 and 2020, an average of 63,159 beneficiaries (74 percent of the planned number) were reached under activity 1 and 123,345 (77 percent of the planned number) under activity 2.

duration of the activity was curtailed due to lack of resources. Lean season support was appreciated by beneficiaries but only partially covered needs: while WFP's intervention most likely limited the incidence of food insecurity, the evaluation team observed little improvement in households' food security outcomes – for example, 73 percent of beneficiary households had an acceptable food consumption score in 2021, which was the same level as in 2019 and below the target of 87.5 percent. WFP planned to hand over this activity to the Government after the first two years of CSP implementation, but the impact of COVID-19 on food security prompted WFP to instead reprogramme its lean season support under strategic outcome 5 on crisis response.

21. **Strategic outcome 2 – nutrition and school feeding.**⁵ Nutrition activities included distributions of specialized nutritious foods and behaviour change communication campaigns aimed at preventing and treating acute and chronic malnutrition among children under 5 and pregnant and breastfeeding women and girls. Activities also sought to support the Government in addressing micronutrient deficiencies, improve the availability of diverse, healthy and safe foods, and assist people living with HIV/AIDS. A range of factors, including resource limitations, access challenges and the effects of the pandemic, led to reductions in the planned coverage of activities.
22. The performance targets for moderate acute malnutrition treatment were largely met: the nutrition status of children with moderate acute malnutrition improved after three to six weeks of consuming ready-to-use supplementary food, while the consumption of composite flours allowed pregnant and breastfeeding women and girls to maintain satisfactory body weight and lactation during treatment. Moderate acute malnutrition recovery rates constantly exceeded 90 percent, well above the standard target of 75 percent. On the other hand, the desired changes in the proportions of children consuming a minimum acceptable diet and women achieving minimum dietary diversity did not occur. As a positive unintended outcome, malnutrition prevention activities resulted in increased consultations and visits to health centres, allowing improved vaccination coverage. Among food fortification results, the production volume, quality and consumption of iodized salt were significantly improved, while the production of fortified rice is promising, although its use in school feeding had not started at the time of the evaluation.
23. School feeding has been an important component of WFP's work in Senegal, and the good level of funding received has enabled the country office to position itself as a key partner of the Government as the latter increases its ownership of school feeding activities. WFP provided school meals to vulnerable children in targeted *départements* during the school year in a manner that sought to build on and stimulate local food production and trade. However, school canteens provided only a marginal entry point for nutrition activities and the strengthening of local production, despite initial intentions. School enrolment rates showed encouraging results and were the only outcome indicator monitored consistently over the years.
24. **Strategic outcome 3 – resilience.**⁶ Conceived as an extension of the Rural Resilience Initiative the set of activities funded by the Green Climate Fund comprised food assistance for assets activities, support for smallholder productivity, risk management and insurance schemes. Overall, the planned results in terms of the income generation and resilience of vulnerable communities and households were met or exceeded. A good level of integration was achieved between food assistance for assets initiatives and those supporting smallholder productivity. Among the positive results achieved, the agricultural areas sown and supported by WFP increased from 820 hectares in 2018 to 4,120 hectares in 2021. The

⁵ An average of 43,596 beneficiaries (38 percent of the planned number) were reached under activity 3 in 2018–2022, and 161,679 (124 percent of the planned number) under activity 9 in 2020–2022.

⁶ An average of 80,975 beneficiaries (49 percent of the planned number) were reached under activity 5 in 2018–2022.

insurance and risk management components showed mixed results: while climate information and financial inclusion services performed well, the support for community cereal banks struggled to put in place viable inventory credit mechanisms (warrantage). WFP's agricultural insurance programme broadened its coverage year by year but still faces occasional difficulties in terms of communication and beneficiary awareness and will require government subsidies to secure its sustainability in the short and medium terms. Among the unexpected results under this strategic outcome, income-generating activities supported new social interactions and social cohesion, although the simultaneous use of CBTs tended to reduce communities' commitment to investing or becoming involved in collective development actions.

25. **Strategic outcome 4 – institutional capacity strengthening.** WFP aimed to strengthen the ability of national institutions to manage food and nutrition security, social protection and resilience building. WFP activities under this strategic outcome had mixed results: national capacities have been greatly strengthened in the areas of school feeding and the prevention and treatment of malnutrition, and the Government is becoming increasingly autonomous in the management of those activities. In contrast, CBT activities in response to crises or for resilience support have not been accompanied by solid institutional capacity strengthening initiatives, nor have they sufficiently taken into account the Government's cash-based national social protection interventions. There is still no prospect of, or road map for, the Government's take-over of WFP's CBT activities in response to crises or for resilience support.
26. **Strategic outcome 5 – COVID-19 crisis response.**⁷ Overall, cash-based assistance contributed to improvements in beneficiaries' food consumption, and the proportion of households with an acceptable food consumption score increased from 58.5 percent in 2020 to 73.5 percent in 2021. No significant changes were observed in dietary diversity among women and in the consumption of a minimum acceptable diet among children. This is explained by the short duration of the interventions, their low coverage and their lack of links to awareness-raising activities.

Gender

27. There was relatively equal participation of men and women in WFP interventions, with high levels of women's participation in resilience building activities focused on financial inclusion, which were designed to support women's financial empowerment and social cohesion in communities. Beyond this result, the contribution of the CSP to gender equality has yet to be demonstrated. At the time of the evaluation, the country office's gender strategy was still undergoing validation and was therefore only partially shared and implemented with WFP partners. There was no clear explanation of the gap between the high gender and age marker score and the deterioration of some gender-related indicators, such as those on joint decision-making by women and men within households.

Humanitarian principles, protection and accountability to affected populations

28. WFP activities were conducted in accordance with the fundamental humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality and impartiality. While activities were implemented in line with the principle of independence, they were not wholly independent of donor preferences, as illustrated, for example, in the funding received for resilience building compared with the reductions in funding for crisis response.

⁷ An average of 73,292 beneficiaries (23 percent of the planned number) were reached under activity 7 in 2020 and 2021 and 21,062 (31 percent of the planned number) under activity 8 in 2021.

29. All CSP interventions focused on protecting the most vulnerable people, in line with the WFP protection and accountability policy. Cooperating partners were trained accordingly. However, the CSP lacked tailored approaches to assisting specific vulnerable groups, such as people with disabilities or victims of violence.
30. The country office made efforts to increase beneficiaries' awareness of the assistance and introduced tools such as a toll-free number for complaints, which improved relations with beneficiaries. Although the number of beneficiaries informed of the assistance has increased, it remains low.

Environment

31. In 2020 and 2021, three quarters of contracts with partners were screened for environmental and social risks, but there is a need to better harmonize this process with government procedures. According to implementing partner reports, resilience building activities contributed to natural resource conservation and ecosystem resilience, but more rigorous studies of watersheds are needed to inform lowland development and soil conservation work.

Sustainability and the triple nexus

32. Expenditure on national capacity development was low compared with planned needs. Institutional capacity strengthening efforts laid the foundations for increased government ownership of school feeding and malnutrition management, but full handover to government entities of crisis response and resilience building activities is not yet realistic. The results of some nutrition-related actions appear fully sustainable, such as the iodine fortification of salt. On the other hand, the results of the response to the hunger gap and some resilience building activities are only partially sustainable or not sustainable at all.
33. Agricultural insurance is the only CSP activity with a clear exit strategy, which seeks to empower beneficiaries through a five-year graduation process. The Government is considering maintaining its subsidies for the insurance scheme as part of its social protection policy.
34. The degree of ownership by the Government, at the central and decentralized levels, is highly varied across CSP activities. The highest levels of ownership are in the areas of school feeding and nutrition. The ownership of resilience building activities by beneficiary groups was high, but with some limitations to sustainability, including in regard to the maintenance of the assets created.
35. The integration of humanitarian and development actions was generally well managed from a financial and programmatic point of view and has strengthened social cohesion among affected populations, particularly through school feeding and food assistance for assets activities.

To what extent has WFP used its resources efficiently in contributing to country strategic plan outputs and strategic outcomes?

Timeliness

36. In general, WFP responded swiftly and flexibly to changing circumstances, requests from the Government and the needs of the United Nations system, for example in response to COVID-19. Implementation times, however, varied greatly between activities, with the shortest delays reported for crisis response activities and more significant delays recorded in CBT interventions and the delivery of nutrition inputs.

37. Limiting factors included government approval processes, a slowdown in imports of specialized nutritious foods due to COVID-19 and difficulties with “last mile” access during the rainy season. The accelerated transition to “mobile money” suffered from lengthy tendering procedures, limited operational monitoring and infrastructure challenges.

Targeting

38. The results of the cadre harmonisé and the use of the single social registry and community-based beneficiary targeting committees allowed WFP to reach some of the most vulnerable people and communities in Senegal. However, better targeting would have reduced the geographical dispersion of activities and improved integration between them. There are opportunities for better synergies in targeting across WFP activities, such as by combining the treatment of child malnutrition with CBT distributions for the children's households in order to prevent relapse.

Cost-efficiency and cost-effectiveness

39. The gradual shift to CBTs – first vouchers, then mobile money – has greatly improved logistics and operational efficiency, along with transparency, traceability, fluidity and accountability, while reducing the transaction and operational costs of transfers. The use of mobile money has predominated since the shift from the transitional interim CSP to the CSP, and more than doubled in 2020 during the COVID-19 response, bringing improvements in implementation speed compared with the use of vouchers.
40. WFP has considered and tested alternative CBT service providers, seeking to achieve results at the lowest cost, in the shortest time and with maximum geographical coverage. WFP has worked to further improve the efficiency of CBTs through negotiations with various mobile phone operators, achieving better network coverage, user satisfaction and overall efficiency.
41. Supplies and deliveries for nutrition activities faced shortages in 2020 and 2021 owing to the limited availability of transporters and the increased costs of imported products. On the other hand, the local production of fortified flours has had positive effects on procurement and delivery costs.

What are the factors that explain WFP's performance and the extent to which it has made the strategic shift expected under the country strategic plan?

Partnerships and coordination

42. Strategic partnerships with government agencies were relevant but varied in their depth and degree of collaboration. WFP's engagement in public policy discussions on social protection could be reinforced, as could its engagement with international financial institutions. WFP's approach has been to work in parallel with the Government's adaptive social protection programme rather than in an integrated and complementary manner. This has affected WFP's strategic positioning, the governance of the implementation of public social protection policies, and coordination at the decentralized level. Coordination within the United Nations system was generally good, with WFP engaging in strategic and technical committees and working groups. At the implementation level, coordination with the other Rome-based agencies should be strengthened.

Financial resources

43. Resource mobilization was a challenge during the first years of CSP implementation, but the situation has improved since 2020, following COVID-19, with new contributions from the Green Climate Fund and the Mastercard Foundation. Overall, contributions were relatively flexible, with about 40 percent of funds earmarked at the activity or strategic result level and oriented mainly towards resilience building activities.

Human resources

44. Country office and sub-office staff were qualified and experienced. However, high turnover in leadership positions has hampered the establishment of a coherent strategic vision and effective high-level partnerships. Job descriptions and lines of responsibility could be revised and gaps filled in the strategic skills of WFP personnel including in the areas of policy dialogue and social protection.

Monitoring

45. The monitoring and evaluation system has undergone a series of improvements since the end of 2021, but its accessibility and use by management to inform strategic decision-making can still be increased. Data collection processes are confronted with operational and administrative bottlenecks and structural difficulties – both internal, such as an overly complex monitoring system and staff shortages, and external, such as slow and incomplete reporting by partners.

Other factors affecting WFP's performance

46. The COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 was the main external factor affecting WFP's performance, with impacts on operational effectiveness and efficiency. The coordination challenges faced by the Government in taking coherent joint actions have affected the implementation of the CSP. In addition, the quest for rapid execution in response to crises is sometimes achieved at the expense of adequate involvement of government bodies in the design and monitoring of activities.

Conclusions

47. Overall, the CSP was relevant to Senegal and well aligned with government policies. It responded to proven needs for access to food in the short term, nutrition support and resilience building, laying the foundation for sound interventions for the most vulnerable people and communities. As a result, WFP is highly valued as a partner by the Government and by its technical and financial partners.
48. Some gaps in WFP's strategic positioning were observed. These concerned WFP's linkages to the national adaptive social protection programme; school canteens, which did not provide the intended entry point for addressing the needs of vulnerable groups, such as those related to nutrition or smallholder access to markets; and support for resilience, which could usefully rely more on the central and decentralized government institutions and the other Rome-based agencies.
49. The effectiveness of WFP's interventions varied. While the response to COVID-19 and the climate change resilience programme have been successful in addressing the needs of some of the most vulnerable people and communities, mixed results were observed for unconditional CBTs during the lean season, the prevention and treatment of malnutrition and institutional capacity strengthening. WFP has made a significant contribution to the establishment of the Government's national school feeding programme, but tangible results are still unclear.
50. While the implementation of WFP assistance was based on parity and produced parity-related results, few changes were observed regarding women's place in household decision-making or women's empowerment and the country office's action has not been rooted in a solid analysis of gender issues, even though relevant data is gradually being collected. Profound changes, such as those concerning women's roles in society and the household, are difficult to achieve over a five-year period and require long-term strategies.

51. CSP interventions were delivered with varying degrees of efficiency: there were significant delays in implementation, but transfer costs decreased owing to the shift to CBTs. In the face of COVID-19, resources were mobilized and response activities implemented within a very short timeframe, meeting the needs of affected populations swiftly while containing costs.
52. External factors such as funding shortfalls and the COVID-19 pandemic affected the functioning of the country office and the performance of CSP activities. In addition, the institutional framework of WFP's strategic partners and the coordination of technical and financial partners in social protection did not evolve optimally over the CSP period. Faced with challenging circumstances, WFP prioritized the speed of implementation over long-term institutional capacity strengthening. Moving forward, the search for the sustainability of interventions is a priority, requiring additional efforts in institutional capacity strengthening.

Recommendations

#	Recommendation	Recommendation type	Responsible WFP offices and divisions	Other contributing entities	Priority	Deadline for completion
1	Strategic positioning: Continue to support government institutions in strengthening their central and decentralized capacities to implement policies for food and nutrition security, social protection, emergency response and resilience to climate change.	Strategic	Country office	Regional bureau; relevant government institutions	High	December 2027
1.1	Launch an in-depth dialogue and carry out a high-level strategic review involving the Government of Senegal and technical and financial partners – notably international financial institutions, in particular the World Bank – in order to formally define a common social protection and resilience strategy that can be integrated into the framework of national strategies and public policies and can effectively support their deployment and improve their impacts.	Strategic	Country office	Regional bureau; WFP headquarters for strategic relations with the World Bank and other international financial institutions; relevant government institutions	High	December 2023
1.2	In particular, strengthen collaboration with the <i>Délégation générale à la protection sociale et à la solidarité nationale</i> (government body charged with social protection) including the national family social security grant programme and the national food security agency, in order to strengthen the planning, coordination, monitoring and oversight of the implementation of public policies on cash-based transfers for vulnerable households, food and nutrition security, agricultural and rural development and climate change resilience.	Strategic	Country office	Regional bureau; relevant government institutions	Medium	December 2023

#	Recommendation	Recommendation type	Responsible WFP offices and divisions	Other contributing entities	Priority	Deadline for completion
1.3	Increase resources and national capacity strengthening efforts to better prepare for the handover of management responsibilities for all programmes, particularly the cash-based food assistance for assets and climate change resilience programmes. Preparation for the handover should be based partly on conventional approaches, such as training programmes and exit strategies based on needs analysis, but should also involve the adoption of a new comprehensive approach to institutional capacity strengthening and national systems that is based on joint creation and design processes with the Government and relies less on road maps and more on rapid feedback mechanisms that allow an iterative approach. ⁸	Strategic	Country office	Regional bureau; relevant government institutions	Medium	December 2027
1.4	Contact international financial institutions and strengthen WFP's capacity to enter into dialogue with them with a view to improving WFP's positioning in social protection, particularly on the basis of studies of seasonality carried out in collaboration with the <i>Délégation générale à la protection sociale et à la solidarité nationale</i> .	Strategic	Country office	Regional bureau; WFP headquarters for strategic relations with the World Bank, the African Development Bank and the Islamic Development Bank; IFAD; French Development Agency	High	December 2023

⁸ Such as the "doing development differently" movement and the problem-driven iterative adaptation approach.

#	Recommendation	Recommendation type	Responsible WFP offices and divisions	Other contributing entities	Priority	Deadline for completion
1.5	Advocate at the highest level of the state for assigning a new mandate to the social protection thematic group. Within the renewed group, (re-)position WFP as a leader and key actor in strengthening the Government's social protection policy.	Strategic	Country office	European Union; French Development Agency; the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland; UNICEF; World Bank; African Development Bank; Islamic Development Bank; IFAD: relevant government institutions	Medium	December 2024
1.6	Strengthen the strategic positioning of the country office by acquiring the human resource profiles and skills necessary for high-level negotiation with the Government and the scaling up of initiatives, particularly in social protection, digitalization, cash-based transfers, school feeding, agricultural insurance and economic analysis.	Strategic	Country office	Regional bureau	High	December 2023
2	Effectiveness and sustainability: Improve the convergence and coherence of operations so as to increase effectiveness and ensure the sustainability of results, in collaboration with the Government, especially in social protection, resilience building and nutrition programmes.	Strategic	Country office	Regional bureau; relevant government institutions	Medium	December 2027

#	Recommendation	Recommendation type	Responsible WFP offices and divisions	Other contributing entities	Priority	Deadline for completion
2.1	To limit the geographical dispersion of activities, improve the targeting of regions, communes and beneficiaries within the framework of food and nutrition assistance interventions supported by cash-based transfers for the most vulnerable households and facilitate multi-year interventions in the same communities in order to maximize impact and sustainability.	Strategic	Country office	Relevant government institutions; World Bank	High	December 2024
2.2	Following a holistic approach based on nutrition objectives, improve the effects of WFP's activities in household health and food and nutrition security, and their sustainability, by ensuring that all programmes and projects are nutrition-sensitive from the design to the evaluation stage, including by integrating nutrition indicators and conducting nutrition impact studies on, for example, the nutrition impacts of cash-based transfers for vulnerable households, school feeding and resilience building activities.	Strategic	Country office	Regional bureau; relevant government institutions; UNICEF; United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women)	High	December 2024
2.3	Strengthen medium- and long-term efforts to promote good feeding practices for children, pregnant and breastfeeding women and girls and other vulnerable people (including those living with HIV) at the community level through health posts, schools, other United Nations entities and TV, radio and other media.	Strategic	Country office	Relevant government institutions; UNICEF; UN-Women; FAO; non-governmental organizations	Medium	December 2024

#	Recommendation	Recommendation type	Responsible WFP offices and divisions	Other contributing entities	Priority	Deadline for completion
2.4	Support the Government in developing a food system approach to achieving Sustainable Development Goal 2 through the promotion of school canteens, support for producers in feeding the community, support for access to healthy, safe and nutritious food, etc.	Strategic	Country office	Relevant government institutions; UNICEF; UN-Women; FAO; non-governmental organizations	Medium	December 2024
2.5	Improve the sustainability of the results of climate change resilience support by strengthening the involvement of and collaboration with all relevant state bodies at the central and decentralized levels in the planning, coordination and monitoring of implementation.	Strategic	Country office	Relevant government institutions	High	December 2024
2.6	Systematically seek synergies, stronger integration and multi-sectoral complementarity between WFP's interventions and the actions of its partners.	Operational	Country office	United Nations system; Government of Senegal; cooperating partners, the private sector, civil society	Medium	December 2024
3	Efficiency: Provide solutions that shorten the time needed to sign agreements with cooperating partners and speed up electronic money transfers so as to enhance their digitalization.	Operational	Country office	Regional bureau; relevant government institutions; Mobile money	Medium	December 2024

#	Recommendation	Recommendation type	Responsible WFP offices and divisions	Other contributing entities	Priority	Deadline for completion
3.1	Strengthen advocacy and dialogue with partners such as the <i>Secrétariat Exécutif du Conseil National de Sécurité Alimentaire</i> (National Food Security Council Secretariat), the <i>Délégation Générale à la Protection Sociale et à la Solidarité Nationale</i> and the <i>Conseil National de Développement de la Nutrition</i> (National Nutrition Development Council) to promote their rapid and deeper ownership of the management of food and nutrition security operations and results with regard to operations supporting vulnerable households during the lean season.	Operational	Country office	Relevant government institutions	High	December 2025
3.2	Explore new technologies that facilitate financial operations for businesses, banks and individuals through the development of new digital products, and better clarify the terms of contracts with traditional financial partners before starting operations in order to facilitate money transfers and better contribute to efforts by the Government and WFP to foster financial inclusion.	Operational	Country office	Mobile money	Medium	December 2024
4	School feeding: Consolidate and strengthen support for the Government's national school feeding programme and strengthen efforts to promote the home-grown school feeding approach.	Operational	Country office	Office of the Presidency, Ministry of Finance, Parliament and other relevant government institutions; FAO; IFAD	High	December 2027
4.1	Systematically integrate home-grown school feeding into the revision of the policy and strategy document of the national school feeding programme, continuing the work in this area initiated under the Mastercard Foundation project.	Operational	Country office	Ministries of education and agriculture; FAO; IFAD	High	December 2023

#	Recommendation	Recommendation type	Responsible WFP offices and divisions	Other contributing entities	Priority	Deadline for completion
4.2	Continue to strengthen the capacities, particularly the organizational ones, of the school canteens and the decentralized structures of the Ministry of Education in relation to the implementation of a home-grown school feeding approach, including its multi-sectoral dimensions.	Operational	Country office	Ministries of education and agriculture; FAO; IFAD	High	December 2023
4.3	Continue advocacy at the government and partner levels – including with international financial institutions – through a resource mobilization round table, with the ultimate aim of achieving coverage of the 7,000 primary schools planned under the national school feeding programme.	Operational	Country office	Technical and financial partners; relevant government institutions; FAO; IFAD	Medium	December 2024
4.4	Strengthen the nutrition dimension of the school feeding programme using schools as a platform for behaviour change activities in the area of nutrition, for example through nutrition education for teachers and pupils and the implementation of behaviour change communication activities.	Operational	Country office	School canteens division at the Ministry of Education	Medium	December 2023
5	Gender: Based on sound analysis, agree and communicate the country office's strategy for addressing gender issues and women's empowerment.⁹	Operational	Country office	<i>Direction de l'Équité et de l'Égalité du Genre</i> (Gender Equity and Equality Directorate – DEEG); ministries of agriculture, and the environment and sustainable development	Medium	December 2027

⁹ Recommendation 5 is in line with recommendation 8 of the WFP gender policy evaluation carried out in 2020.

#	Recommendation	Recommendation type	Responsible WFP offices and divisions	Other contributing entities	Priority	Deadline for completion
5.1	Develop and disseminate to partners a gender strategy with an action plan designed to contribute to the achievement of the objectives of the country strategic plan for 2023–2027.	Operational	Country office	Regional bureau	High	December 2023
5.2	Develop monitoring systems that better assess, quantitatively and qualitatively, the effects of WFP interventions in the areas of gender equality and women's empowerment. This work should include a review of the gender compendium indicators related to financial inclusion (access to investment capital, access to credit) and access to self-employment (the creation of income-generating activities).	Operational	Country office research, assessment and monitoring unit	DEEG; UN-Women, UNICEF	Medium	December 2027
5.3	Contribute to the advancement of women and girls by strengthening strategic partnerships at the national level with the Government, through the signing of a memorandum of understanding with the <i>Direction de l'Équité et de l'Égalité du Genre</i> (Gender Equity and Equality Directorate) and at the local level, with women-led micro and small enterprises with a view to increasing women's participation in the food processing and marketing aspects of food value chains and the development of rural women's entrepreneurship.	Operational	Country office	DEEG; UN-Women, UNICEF; WFP sub-offices for increased participation of women-led small enterprises in food value chains	Medium	December 2024
5.4	From the project design stage onwards, systematize specific budget lines for gender activities in WFP implementation budgets and in the budgets of public and cooperating partners.	Operational	Country office	DEEG; UN-Women and UNICEF to benefit from their experience in the budgeting of gender activities	High	December 2027
5.5	Systematically consider sensitive cross-cutting issues such as gender equality and protection when targeting beneficiaries.	Operational	Country office	WFP sub-offices; cooperating partners	Medium	December 2027

#	Recommendation	Recommendation type	Responsible WFP offices and divisions	Other contributing entities	Priority	Deadline for completion
6	Monitoring and evaluation: Continue the monitoring efforts of the country office in data collection, analysis and reporting and promote the triangulation of information sources – partners’ reports, monitoring reports, reports from community feedback mechanisms and post-distribution monitoring reports.	Operational	Country office	Cooperating partners; relevant government institutions	High	December 2023
6.1	Strengthen the country office research, assessment and monitoring unit with the recruitment of at least one additional staff member and the promotion of a policy to retain the existing country office team.	Operational	Country office	Cooperating partners; relevant government institutions; regional bureau research, assessment and monitoring unit	High	December 2023
6.2	Improve monitoring tools by focusing on dynamic, interactive and accessible solutions that better support rapid decision-making.	Operational	Country office	Cooperating partners; relevant government institutions; regional bureau research, assessment and monitoring unit	Medium	December 2023

#	Recommendation	Recommendation type	Responsible WFP offices and divisions	Other contributing entities	Priority	Deadline for completion
6.3	Improve communication among management, activity managers and the programme unit through more frequent reporting to allow better monitoring of the implementation of activities.	Operational	Country office	Cooperating partners; relevant government institutions; regional bureau research, assessment and monitoring unit	Medium	December 2027

Acronyms

CBT	cash-based transfer
COVID-19	coronavirus disease 2019
CSP	country strategic plan
DEEG	<i>Direction de l'Équité et de l'Égalité du Genre</i> (government body charged with gender equity and equality)
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UN-Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women