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For decision

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Draft Timor-Leste country strategic plan (2026–2030)

Duration	1 January 2026–31 December 2030
Total cost to WFP	USD 41,255,303
Framework on accountability for results score*	2.6

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

Executive summary

Timor-Leste is a least-developed country and a small island developing state with a population of 1.3 million. Since gaining independence in 2002, the country has continued to make significant progress in terms of reconstruction, human rights and sustainable development. However, it still faces challenges related to malnutrition and food insecurity, which are exacerbated by natural hazards.

The prevalence of stunting in children under 5 years of age is among the highest in the world. An Integrated Food Security Phase Classification analysis published in 2024 found that 27 percent of households faced acute food insecurity, while an updated cost of diet analysis in 2023 revealed that 75 percent of households cannot afford a nutritious diet, with food costs rising by 78 percent between 2019 and 2023. These challenges are driven by low agricultural productivity, poor maternal and child nutrition practices, high poverty rates, limited safety net coverage and frequent climatic shocks, all of which weaken food systems and household resilience.

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WFP proposes a five-year country strategic plan, which will align with the United Nations sustainable development cooperation framework 2026–2030 for Timor-Leste, and the Government of Timor-Leste's Strategic Development Plan for 2011–2030. It comprises the following three outcomes:

- *Outcome 1. Communities vulnerable to and affected by crises in Timor-Leste benefit from the improved capacities of government systems and partners to prepare for and deliver assistance before, during and after shocks*. WFP will support the Government in preparing for responses to shocks, with a focus on capacity strengthening for national supply chains. As part of contingency planning, WFP will retain the option to directly respond to shocks under the Government's leadership, activated upon request.
- *Outcome 2. School-aged children and people vulnerable to food insecurity, malnutrition and shocks in targeted municipalities in Timor-Leste have improved nutrition, strengthened human capital and more sustainable livelihoods by 2030.* WFP will work towards improving food security and nutrition outcomes by providing capacity-strengthening support to national safety nets, including the school feeding programme. In alignment with the Government's *Merenda Escolar* programme and its home-grown school feeding model, WFP will provide technical assistance and implementation support to enhance sustainability and impact, while also contributing to the Government's broader social protection efforts to support food-insecure people.
- *Outcome 3. Communities vulnerable to and affected by crises in Timor-Leste benefit from improved services and the enhanced capacities of the Government and humanitarian and development actors to prepare for and respond to crises by 2030*. WFP will retain the capability to deliver on-demand procurement and supply chain services at the request of Government and partners in order to temporarily augment their capacities.

These country strategic plan outcomes set out a strategic direction for WFP in Timor-Leste, building on areas of strength under the country strategic plan (2023–2025) and the organization's strong partnership with the Government.

Draft decision*

The Board approves the Timor-Leste country strategic plan (2026–2030) (WFP/EB.2/2025/7-A/7) at a total cost to WFP of USD 41,255,303.

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

1. Country analysis and needs assessment

1. Timor-Leste is a small island developing state with a population of 1.3 million, ranking 142nd on the Human Development Index.[1]

2. Since gaining independence in 2002, the country has achieved notable socioeconomic progress, with gross domestic product per capita increasing from USD 534 in 2002 to USD 1,503 in 2023.[2] The Government of Timor-Leste places strong emphasis on human capital development, and considers fostering long-term peace and stability a key priority.

3. Timor-Leste is a least developed country where 48.3 percent of the population currently face multidimensional poverty. The 2024 triennial review by the Committee for Development Policy found that the country no longer met the criteria for graduation, citing concerns about child malnutrition and reliance on petroleum revenues. The review identified economic diversification as key to achieving graduation.[3]

4. While the prevalence of malnutrition has fallen, it remains a serious concern. In 2020, the prevalence of stunting in children under 5 stood at 47.1 percent, down from 50.2 percent in 2016 and 58.1 percent in 2010.[4] The prevalence of wasting has declined to 8.6 percent, reflecting a "medium" level of concern according to World Health Organization thresholds.[5] Women and girls face multiple forms of malnutrition: in 2020, 18.8 percent of non-pregnant women were underweight, while 19.3 percent were overweight or obese.[6] The prevalence of anaemia – which in 2019 affected 46 percent of children aged 6–59 months and 30 percent of women of reproductive age – reflects widespread micronutrient deficiencies.[7]

5. A 2024 Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) analysis estimated that, in early 2024, 27 percent of households faced high levels of acute food insecurity (IPC phase 3 or above).[8] Although these data reflect the lean season and the impact of the El Niño–Southern Oscillation, they also highlight a reality in which poverty and food inflation are exacerbating food insecurity and eroding coping capacities.

6. In 2019, the cost for a family of five to meet a nutrient-adequate diet was USD 5.68 per day.[9] An update to the cost of diet analysis in 2023 estimated that the cost had risen to USD 10.09 per day – a 78 percent increase – driven by food inflation, reduced purchasing power, and the lingering impacts of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic and the 2021–2022 floods.[10] While agriculture remains the main source of livelihood for most Timorese, challenges related to productivity and investment persist, and imports continue to play a key role in meeting cereal demand.[11]

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[1] United Nations Development Programme. 2025. *Human Development Report 2025 – A matter of choice: People and possibilities in the age of AI*.

[2] World Bank Group. 2024. GDP per capita (current US$) – Timor-Leste.

[3] United Nations. 2024. *Committee for Development Policy – Report on the twenty-sixth session (4–8 March 2024)*.

[4] Government of Timor-Leste. 2022. *Timor-Leste Food and Nutrition Survey 2020*.

[5] Ibid.

[6] Ibid.

[7] World Health Organization. 2025. WHO Global Anaemia estimates, 2025 Edition.

[8] IPC. 2024. Timor Leste: Acute Food Insecurity Situation November 2023 – April 2024 and Projection for May – September 2024.

[9] WFP. 2024. *Timor-Leste: Cost of the Diet Analysis – 2023 Update*.

[10] Ibid.

[11] Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). 2025. GIEWS – Global Information and Early Warning System – Country Briefs: Timor-Leste.

7. Natural hazards pose a significant threat to the country's development; Timor-Leste ranked 122nd of 187 countries in the Notre Dame Global Adaptation Initiative index in 2023.[12] Timor-Leste faces severe weather-related hazards, including increasing frequency and intensity of floods, landslides, cyclones, droughts, and soil erosion, all of which have cross-cutting impacts across sectors. The cost of recovery from Cyclone Seroja in 2021 was estimated at USD 422 million, equivalent to one third of government expenditure for that year.[13]

8. The root causes of malnutrition and food insecurity in Timor-Leste are complex and affect the entire food system. These include limited agricultural productivity, poor access to diverse and nutritious foods, challenges in safe food utilization, and weak market linkages.[14] These issues are compounded by poverty, low household incomes and a heavy reliance on subsistence farming, which heightens vulnerability to natural hazards. Additionally, poor health services, inadequate water, sanitation and hygiene facilities, and limited nutrition education further exacerbate undernutrition, particularly among women and children.[15]

9. Women in Timor-Leste are pivotal agents of change, driving household nutrition, agricultural productivity and community resilience.[16] At the same time, they face systemic barriers that disproportionately increase their vulnerability to food insecurity and malnutrition, including limited access to land, loans, agricultural inputs and education, as well as a reliance on subsistence farming and informal employment for income.

10. Timor-Leste is an active participant in multilateral forums and a founding member of the Group of Seven Plus (g7+), which advocates country-led development and peacebuilding. It also leads the Global Task Force on Social Protection for Nutrition promoting national systems that advance sustainable development. Through these engagements, Timor-Leste fosters knowledge exchange, strengthens South–South cooperation and supports scalable solutions for fragile and conflict-affected countries.

2. National priorities and collective assistance

11. Timor-Leste has the potential to scale up nationally led programmes and emergency response measures. However, reliance on depleting petroleum revenues, insufficiently diversified funding sources, and capacity constraints limit the development of sustainable solutions. Current oil and gas revenues are unable to sustainably support these interventions at scale.

12. Large-scale safety nets, such as the *Bolsa de Mãe* (reaching over 68,000 vulnerable households in 2024)[17] and *Merenda Escolar* (the nationwide school feeding programme covering all primary schoolchildren), play a critical role in supporting nutritionally vulnerable mothers and children throughout Timor-Leste. These initiatives have made significant progress in reducing poverty and food insecurity, improving child well-being and increasing school attendance. While these achievements are significant, opportunities remain to address gaps in programme design, implementation and coverage to further enhance impact.

[12] University of Notre Dame. 2023. Notre Dame Global Adaptation Initiative – Country Index: Rankings.

[13] World Bank. 2021. *Learning from Tropical Cyclone Seroja: Building Disaster and Climate Resilience in Timor-Leste.*

[14] FAO and others. 2024. *The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2024 – Financing to end hunger, food security and malnutrition in all its forms*.

[15] Ibid.

[16] TOMAK. 2023. *Sharing the load: Labour-saving technologies, gender dynamics and food security in Timor-Leste*.

[17] Tatoli. 2025. Programa Bolsa da Mãe paga prestação a mais de 68 mil beneficiários (in Portuguese).

13. Timor-Leste acceded to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2023 and has developed a national action plan on disability, alongside a social safety net for persons with disabilities. However, limited institutional capacity and financing constraints affect both the coverage and the sustainability of support. Strengthened data systems and more effective policy implementation are needed to ensure that all persons with disabilities are covered.

14. In recent years, Timor-Leste has made progress in strengthening its national supply chain capacity. In 2024, the Civil Protection Authority revised its organizational structure to improve national and subnational humanitarian coordination, supporting better crisis prevention, mitigation and response. Field assessments, training sessions and consultations with supply chain actors have highlighted areas for improvement, including warehousing, disaster preparedness, financing and data management. While challenges remain, these efforts provide a strong foundation for addressing gaps and building on existing progress.

15. The United Nations sustainable development cooperation framework (UNSDCF) adopts four main pillars, which are aligned with the four priorities of the Government's Strategic Development Plan (SDP) for 2011–2030,[18] namely:

- social capital and inclusive services;
- economic development;
- disaster and climate resilience, and resilient infrastructure; and
- democratic governance and institutional framework.

16. WFP, other United Nations entities and development partners work closely with the Government in the development of joint analyses and approaches, ensuring alignment at all levels. One recent example is the food systems assessment, which recommends priority actions that the Government and United Nations partners can take to strengthen Timor-Leste's food systems.[19]

17. A series of consultations on this country strategic plan (CSP) with the Government, development partners and other United Nations entities in 2025 ensured strategic alignment and support from those stakeholders. Ongoing engagement with the Government at the technical level will ensure that programming remains aligned with national priorities.

3. WFP's comparative advantage, capacity and ability in Timor-Leste

18. Building on the CSP for 2018–2022, WFP has solidified its role as a key partner in Timor-Leste's food security and nutrition efforts. Its comparative advantage lies in emergency response, exemplified in the El Niño–Southern Oscillation drought response, which reached 18,000 people; and the strengthening of scalable national systems, particularly in social protection and nutrition. While implementation capacity within government institutions remains limited, WFP's interventions are designed to model scalable solutions for future government-led programmes in addition to generating evidence and enhancing institutional capacity.

[18] Government of Timor-Leste. 2011. *Timor-Leste Strategic Development Plan 2011–2030.*

[19] WFP. 2023. *Food systems assessment, Timor-Leste.*

19. Although no evaluation was undertaken of the CSP for 2023–2025, the evaluation of the CSP for 2018–2022[20] remains relevant and has informed the design of the CSP for 2026–2030. Relationships strengthened with key government ministries and development partners during the implementation of the CSP for 2023–2025 laid the foundation for a more integrated approach in the next CSP.

20. The CSP for 2023–2025 built on past successes and responded to emerging priorities for WFP in Timor-Leste, including the following:

- enhancing complementary interventions for *Merenda Escolar*. Such interventions are greatly appreciated by the Government and have attracted increasing interest from development partners; they constitute entry points for work across food systems;
- enhancing joint data collection and analysis, including support for a food security assessment,[21] an IPC analysis,[22] a return-on-investment study[23] and a food systems assessment.[24] These have helped to define the evidence base for this CSP and outline joint areas of work in food security and nutrition for partners; and
- introducing agile and flexible responses to emerging crises in partnership with other actors and under government leadership, such as the 2024 response to drought-like conditions associated with the El Niño–Southern Oscillation.

21. From 2023 to 2025, WFP implemented these areas of work through four budget revisions, which expanded support for nationally led safety nets – particularly *Merenda Escolar* and *Bolsa da Mãe* – and enhanced its flexibility to respond to shocks and government requests. WFP's transition strategy focuses on modelling scalable approaches that can be institutionalized by national systems, enabling a gradual transition to government ownership. This adaptive approach has allowed WFP to incorporate lessons from the evaluation of the CSP for 2018–2022 and align programming with emerging needs and operating environments.

22. The key areas for WFP investment, as recommended by the food systems assessment, are addressed in this CSP. These include improving national storage and warehousing capacity, and providing supplementary nutritious food during the first 1,000 days of life (CSP outcomes 1 and 3). The assessment also highlights the need to increase the production of nutritious food by farming households; operationalize a home-grown school feeding (HGSF) programme; support nutrition-related social and behaviour change (SBC) campaigns; and increase the consumption of fortified rice by vulnerable population groups. These areas are addressed in CSP outcome 2.

23. With a strong field presence across municipalities, and staff co-located within government facilities, WFP is uniquely positioned to provide national systems with valuable inputs from municipalities, particularly those most affected by food insecurity and poverty. This proximity also enables WFP to implement capacity-strengthening activities at all government levels. These efforts are designed to support the institutionalization of key programmes by the Government, paving the way for the transition of responsibilities and the sustainability of interventions at scale.

[20] WFP. 2020. *Evaluation of Timor-Leste WFP Country Strategic Plan 2018-2020*.

[21] WFP. 2024. *Food Security Assessment – Timor-Leste 2023*.

[22] IPC. 2024. *Timor Leste: Acute Food Insecurity Situation November 2023 – April 2024 and Projection for May – September 2024*.

[23] [link to be inserted when the assessment is published]

[24] WFP. 2023. *Food systems assessment, Timor-Leste*.

24. Since the CSP evaluation covering the period 2018–2022, and in line with its recommendations, the country office has expanded its funding base and has a more positive funding outlook. The CSP for 2026–2030 is fully aligned with the Government's SDP and the UNSDCF.

4. Strategic positioning, programme priorities, and partnerships

Country strategic plan direction and intended impacts

25. This CSP builds on WFP's strong track record under the CSP for 2023–2025 and its revisions. WFP's unique role includes providing support for national emergency preparedness, particularly in terms of strengthening the capacity of national supply chains; support for national safety nets, including school feeding, contributing to nutrition and social capital outcomes; and an agile response, filling gaps and responding to crises when required.

26. WFP will deepen its engagement with national safety nets, supporting government efforts to strengthen shock-responsive mechanisms and better target vulnerable households. At the request of the Ministry of Social Solidarity and Inclusion, WFP will provide technical assistance for integrating nutrition into the *Bolsa da Mãe* and advancing evidence-based, adaptive safety nets. In addition, WFP will maintain flexibility to provide on-demand support and direct responses whenever critical gaps or urgent needs arise.

27. This CSP contributes to joint, national and United Nations outcomes as outlined in the SDP and UNSDCF. It contributes to all pillars of the UNSDCF's strategic priorities, most significantly those on social capital and disaster resilience.

28. By 2030, WFP's efforts will have strengthened government-led emergency response systems, improved the nutrition status of school-age children through their consumption of more nutritious and diversified diets, enhanced smallholder farmers' livelihoods, and contributed to more people-centred, nutrition-sensitive and shock-responsive national systems and programmes.

Programme integration

29. The CSP outcomes and activities are linked, ensuring a holistic and integrated approach to strengthening food security and nutrition. Opportunities for programme integration are highlighted below.

30. *Nutrition-sensitive and shock-responsive safety nets*. The Government has historically responded to shocks through safety net mechanisms, including in-kind and cash-based transfers (CBTs) during the COVID-19 pandemic. Strong crisis response systems help to stabilize communities, thereby creating a foundation for long-term improvements in food security. WFP anticipates opportunities to improve targeting and enable national programmes to scale up in response to shocks. WFP will also support efforts to increase the ability of the national school feeding programme to withstand shocks and adapt to the needs of schoolchildren and families in crisis situations. In addition, WFP's integration of resilience into school feeding, safety nets and emergency preparedness aims to reduce the livelihood risks faced by farming households and contribute to more resilient local food production.

31. *HGSF and strengthened livelihoods.* By linking smallholder farmers to school feeding programmes, WFP will strengthen local food systems and improve food security and nutrition outcomes. This work will enhance access to safe, nutritious and locally sourced meals; increase food availability by fostering stable demand and strategic procurement; and promote healthy diets within communities. By supporting sustainable agriculture and resilient livelihoods, HGSF will help to reduce poverty while improving student attendance, concentration and learning outcomes. With growing government investment,

Merenda Escolar is a scalable model for reinforcing local economies, combatting poverty and advancing good-quality education.

32. *Data-driven decision making*. WFP's expertise in research, assessment and monitoring will contribute to strengthening national data systems under CSP outcomes 1 and 2, ensuring that all interventions are evidence-based and sensitive to the specific needs of women, men, girls and boys.

33. *Integrated support for vulnerable populations*. The CSP aims to ensure that vulnerable population groups – such as schoolchildren, smallholder farmers, women and disaster-affected communities – benefit from multiple complementary interventions. For instance, school-age children will receive meals through the HGSF programme, while their families – many of whom are smallholder farmers – will improve their livelihoods through capacity strengthening initiatives and better access to markets. Similarly, households affected by shocks are expected to benefit from safety net mechanisms (under outcome 2) and improved emergency preparedness and response capacities (under outcome 1). Evidence-based vulnerability targeting and strengthened safety net mechanisms will support access to food and nutrition.

34. *Availability of fortified and specialized nutritious foods.* WFP will continue efforts to expand the availability of fortified rice through HGSF and explore its potential inclusion in other programming, including emergency responses. This CSP includes options to provide supplementary nutritious food through activities under all CSP outcomes; namely, emergency response (outcome 1), the safety net system (outcome 2), and on-demand service provision (outcome 3).

35. *Comprehensive support for supply chain capacity.* Drawing on long-standing partnerships and experience in supply chain capacity strengthening, WFP will support the Government and partners in building resilient national supply chains (primarily under outcome 1). Under outcome 2, WFP will engage actors in municipalities and communities in efforts to strengthen the *Merenda Escolar* food value chain. This will include a focus on supporting smallholder farmers in improving food storage and transportation practices. Under outcome 3, WFP will maintain the option to provide supply chain services to fill gaps in partner programming, if required.

Strategic engagement with partners

36. WFP has developed strategic and technical partnerships with the Government at all levels to support the identified areas of work. WFP will collaborate with key government institutions that shape national policies on school feeding, emergency preparedness and response, safety nets, food security and nutrition. Strategic partnerships with the Government[25] will support a coordinated and sustainable approach to addressing food and nutrition challenges.

37. Collaboration with other entities will contribute to achievement of the CSP outcomes. For example, for nutrition and health, WFP will collaborate with the World Health Organization; for nutrition, the United Nations Children's Fund; for safety nets, the International Labour Organization and the United Nations Development Programme; and for sustainable food systems and smallholder farmer support, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.

[25] Including with the Ministry of Education; the Ministry of Social Solidarity and Inclusion; the Ministry of Health; the Civil Protection Authority; the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries; the Ministry of Rural Development; the National Institute of Statistics of Timor-Leste; and the Ministry of the State Administration.

38. WFP will align interventions with government-led coordination mechanisms, including the National Council for Food Security, Sovereignty and Nutrition; the Unit of Mission to Combat Stunting; and the Inter-Ministerial Task Force for Social Affairs. It will promote data sharing for evidence-based planning and engage with local governments, civil society and development partners to ensure targeted and people-centred interventions, while avoiding duplication.

Country strategic plan outcomes and activities

Country strategic plan outcome 1: Communities vulnerable to and affected by crises in Timor-Leste benefit from the improved capacities of government systems and partners to prepare for and deliver assistance before, during and after shocks

39. Increasingly severe floods, landslides, cyclones, droughts and soil erosion and frequent earthquakes require a focused approach to emergency preparedness and response that strengthens government and community responses. Under outcome 1, WFP will strengthen the Government's capacity to prepare for and respond to natural shocks, and to provide food and nutrition assistance to vulnerable and shock-affected people at all stages of emergency preparedness and response.

40. WFP will work with line ministries (including the Ministry of Social Solidarity and Inclusion), the Civil Protection Authority and other humanitarian partners to enhance the Government's emergency preparedness and response capacity. Currently, the limited availability of robust information tools hampers the effectiveness and timeliness of emergency preparedness and response interventions, leaving vulnerable populations at high risk of acute food insecurity and malnutrition during crises. WFP will therefore invest in improving data systems critical to emergency preparedness and response and integrate weather-related risks into government emergency preparedness and response strategies, thereby enabling effective early warning and anticipatory action.

41. Complementing efforts to strengthen national emergency preparedness and response capacity, WFP will support emergency response efforts as needed by directly assisting vulnerable populations affected by shocks, including people in rural and disaster-prone areas. To enhance the shock responsiveness of safety nets, including school feeding, WFP will work closely with emergency preparedness and response authorities to ensure that these programmes can adapt to evolving needs during crises. Triggered at the request of the Government, these efforts will be closely coordinated under government leadership and will leverage national systems**.**

Activity 1: Provide technical assistance in emergency preparedness and response to the Government and partners

42. Under activity 1, WFP will strengthen national emergency preparedness and response capacity by enhancing the quality and availability of critical data on food security, nutrition, hazards and multidimensional risks and vulnerabilities. WFP will support the Government's capacity to gather and analyse data disaggregated by sex, age and disability, thereby enhancing the effectiveness of emergency response and contributing to evidence-based emergency preparedness and response interventions.

43. Building on long-standing partnerships, WFP will continue strengthening the Government's capacity to manage national supply chains. WFP will support the Government in assessing capacity gaps in storage infrastructure, procurement practices, quality control and general management practices. In alignment with the country capacity strengthening framework, these efforts will include support for technical working groups, training sessions and simulation exercises at various levels, which will further enhance institutional capacity and coordination. WFP will also assist the Civil Protection Authority, the Ministry of Social Solidarity and Inclusion, and other actors with the pre-positioning of food stocks and

non-food items, and will work with government counterparts to develop or update standard operating procedures for emergency planning.

44. WFP will strengthen Timor-Leste's emergency preparedness policy framework by enhancing disaster risk management systems and supporting local adaptation. This will involve close collaboration with the Civil Protection Authority and other partners to identify and address gaps in existing policies, coordination mechanisms and implementation structures. Through technical assistance, SBC initiatives, capacity strengthening and data-informed assessments, WFP will help to refine national contingency planning and response coordination, ensuring that response frameworks are people-centred and aligned with international best practices.

45. These activities will address systemic gaps in emergency preparedness and response and contribute to long-term institutional capacity strengthening, enabling faster and more effective responses to shocks while fostering resilient national systems and governance structures.

Activity 2: Provide food and nutrition assistance to vulnerable and shock-affected people

46. Complementing its efforts to strengthen national emergency preparedness and response systems and capacities under activity 1, WFP will deliver food and nutrition assistance to targeted populations affected by shocks and crises, including women, children, persons with disabilities and other vulnerable groups.

47. Based on context and market analysis, WFP will identify the most appropriate modalities of assistance, such as in-kind food assistance, specialized nutritious food, fortified food or CBTs.

48. WFP will deliver this assistance at the request, and under the leadership, of the Government. WFP will coordinate with United Nations entities and other partners, leveraging national systems and tools. Through government systems and robust vulnerability-based targeting informed by disaggregated data, WFP will ensure that emergency response efforts reach those most in need.

Alignment with national priorities

49. Outcome 1 falls under the "crisis response" focus area. It contributes to the Government's priorities in relation to social capital and infrastructure development (parts 2 and 3 of the SDP), and to strategic priority 3 of the UNSDCF, which focuses on disaster and climate resilience, and resilient infrastructure.

Country strategic plan outcome 2: School-aged children and people vulnerable to food insecurity, malnutrition and shocks in targeted municipalities in Timor-Leste have improved nutrition, strengthened human capital and more sustainable livelihoods by 2030

50. Through outcome 2, WFP aims to improve the nutrition of school-age children; strengthen the sustainable livelihoods of smallholder farmers and other actors along the food value chain of the school feeding programme; and help to reduce stunting by strengthening national systems and programmes. A key focus will be on strengthening the technical capacities of key line ministries[26] that oversee implementation of the targeted programmes. WFP will link the national school feeding programme to local food value chains to ensure that vulnerable households benefit from improved nutrition through the availability of locally sourced and diversified school meals.

51. Despite ongoing efforts, malnutrition remains a persistent challenge in Timor-Leste, with high rates of stunting and micronutrient deficiencies among children under 5. Concurrently,

[26] Including the Ministry of Education; the Ministry of Health; the Ministry of State Administration; the Ministry of Social Solidarity and Inclusion; and the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries.

smallholder farmers and other actors in food value chains face numerous challenges, including low productivity, weak market linkages and limited capacity to produce diverse and nutritious foods. Linking smallholder farmers to the school feeding programme will address these issues by providing farmers with market linkages and an incentive to produce, and by ensuring a steady supply of nutritious foods for schoolchildren. In the long run, this will contribute to more sustainable livelihoods and enhanced human capital through improved child nutrition.

52. National safety nets, including the school feeding programme, play a critical role in reducing food insecurity and malnutrition during shocks. However, these systems currently lack the flexibility to respond effectively to shocks and are not fully optimized to improve nutrition outcomes. WFP will therefore support national and subnational institutions in strengthening policies and programmes. To make safety nets more people-centred, nutrition-sensitive and shock-responsive, efforts will include enhancing targeting mechanisms, strengthening monitoring systems and improving the decentralized delivery of assistance.

53. While particular attention will be given to groups facing heightened vulnerability – such as pregnant and breastfeeding women, young children and marginalized communities – WFP will support the development and strengthening of national systems that can protect all individuals in need.

Activity 3: Provide capacity strengthening to national and local governments, schools, communities and other actors along the food value chain of the home-grown school feeding programme

54. Under activity 3, WFP will enhance the sustainability and multisectoral benefits of the national HGSF programme by strengthening the capacities of government institutions, schools and food systems actors, including smallholder farmers and millers. This work will include technical assistance aimed at improving policies and regulatory frameworks, such as the development of a food fortification law; capacity strengthening initiatives for school administrators and staff to enhance programme implementation and monitoring; use of SBC strategies to promote healthy eating habits; and refinements to programme design to link smallholder farmers to schools more effectively.

55. Food fortification is a cost-effective, scalable way to combat the micronutrient deficiencies driving Timor-Leste's high stunting rates. Work under activity 3 on enhancing the nutritional quality of rice will support child growth and cognitive development and complement the HGSF programme.

56. Capacity strengthening and improved market linkages will benefit smallholder farmers (particularly women), enabling them to supply safe, nutritious, locally sourced food to schools through integrated value chains. Efforts will focus on supporting sustainable incomes and community resilience, as well as on increasing the knowledge and skills of local millers on food fortification; augmenting agricultural production potential; reducing food imports; reducing post-harvest losses; and expanding market access.

57. By identifying locally available ingredients in each municipality and utilizing the planet-friendly school meals framework, WFP will integrate resilience into food value chains, ensuring that school meals are sustainably produced and nutritionally diverse. To reinforce healthy eating habits, school-age children will receive tailored SBC interventions that promote improved nutrition practices and dietary diversity. In line with the Government's policy of decentralizing the management of school feeding activities, WFP will provide technical assistance to strengthen local procurement, meal planning and oversight capacity. This approach will foster stronger community ownership, accountability and links to local food systems, thereby contributing to a more resilient, people-centred and nutrition-sensitive model that benefits both children and smallholder farmers.

58. As a mature, long-standing and nationally owned programme, *Merenda Escolar* is funded by an allocation from the national budget. WFP will retain the option to provide in-kind food contributions to the programme in geographic areas where WFP provides programmatic support.

Activity 4: Provide safety net system strengthening, capacity development and programme implementation support for government institutions at the national and subnational levels

59. Under activity 4, WFP will support national and subnational institutions in designing and implementing shock-responsive and nutrition-sensitive safety net programmes targeting the most vulnerable people. To ensure that safety net systems become more effective, people-centred and resilient, government capacity in programme planning, policy development and data-driven decision making will be strengthened.

60. WFP will assist in developing a vulnerability index and a social registry with an integrated management information system; these tools will facilitate data-driven decision making by identifying at-risk populations and ensuring that safety net interventions reach those who need them most. The registry will also incorporate shock-responsive features, allowing for rapid adjustments during crises.

61. To ensure that policies are evidence-based, WFP will provide technical assistance aimed at strengthening the Government's monitoring and evaluation capacities, including through the development of project monitoring tools, operational guidance and frameworks for scaling emergency response. Efforts will include training health facility staff on food distribution, improving the procurement and provision of supplementary nutritious food, and implementing SBC initiatives.

62. WFP will also facilitate policy advocacy and knowledge exchange through national discussions, South–South exchanges and engagement in regional and global platforms, including g7+ and the Global Task Force on Social Protection for Nutrition. By strengthening institutional capacity in monitoring, evaluation and data collection – including data disaggregated by sex and disability, and weather-related analyses – WFP will help to build a more adaptive and responsive safety net system. This will ensure that, in stable times and in crises, vulnerable people receive timely and effective support.

Alignment with national priorities

63. Outcome 2 falls under the "root causes" focus area. It is aligned with the Government's priorities in relation to social capital (as outlined in the SDP), and with strategic priority 1 of the UNSDCF, which focuses on social capital and inclusive services. It also contributes to the priorities of both the SDP and the UNSDCF in terms of economic development, resilience and good governance.

Country strategic plan outcome 3: Communities vulnerable to and affected by crises in Timor-Leste benefit from improved services and the enhanced capacities of the Government and humanitarian and development actors to prepare for and respond to crises by 2030

64. Timor-Leste is highly dependent on imports and faces recurring shocks that have challenged partners' procurement and logistics capabilities in the past. Under CSP outcome 3, building on requests from the Government during the CSP for 2023–2025, WFP will temporarily provide services to assist partners in delivering their programmes.

Activity 5: Provide on-demand services including food and non-food procurement and logistics to the Government and humanitarian and development partners

65. WFP will provide on-demand food procurement, non-food procurement, and supply chain and logistics services to the Government and humanitarian and development partners on a full cost-recovery basis. These services will be temporary and provided at the request of partners, subject to operational capacity, in order to facilitate the implementation of partners' programmes and plans.

Alignment with national priorities

66. Outcome 3 falls under the "crisis response" focus area. It contributes to the Government's priority in relation to social capital as outlined in the SDP and to strategic priority 1 of the UNSDCF.

5. Prioritization and sustainability

Prioritization approach

67. The CSP for 2023–2025 experienced a positive resourcing trend, attracting funding from traditional and non-traditional donors as well as the Government; at the time of writing the CSP is 50 percent funded, with additional funding anticipated in 2025. The level of ambition of the CSP 2026–2030 builds on this trend, projecting a modest level of growth over its duration, supported by a partnerships and resourcing strategy.

68. Most funding is expected to be earmarked to specific CSP outcomes and activities. Key considerations for prioritization include funding availability, the urgency of needs, the capacity of existing partnerships, and alignment with government priorities.[27]

69. Focusing on crisis response, work under CSP outcome 1 will rely primarily on a traditional donor base. If crises do not require intervention from WFP or if funding is limited, outcome 1 will see limited direct response activities; however, capacity-strengthening efforts with the Government and partners will continue where possible. Prioritization will be based on established partnerships for capacity strengthening and on targeting criteria agreed with the Government, as well as donor guidelines.

70. Focusing on strengthening national safety nets, work under CSP outcome 2 will rely on a mixture of traditional and non-traditional partners. The successful piloting of improved programming and the sustainability of results require a diverse, strong funding base throughout the implementation of the CSP. Unlike short-term emergency responses, this outcome requires sustained investment to ensure that systemic changes – such as institutional capacity building and policy reforms – are maintained beyond the CSP period. If there is insufficient funding, the long-term impact of these changes could be limited.

71. CSP outcome 3 will deliver services to partners with full cost recovery. Implementation will be driven by partner demand and resources, subject to the delivery capacity of WFP.

Sustainability and transition strategies

72. This CSP focuses on strengthening national systems to sustain food security and nutrition outcomes beyond the duration of the plan. A phased transition to government implementation is central to this approach. Acknowledging Timor-Leste's broader implementation challenges – including limited human resources, institutional and coordination gaps, and weaknesses in policy and delivery systems – WFP will tailor its support to help address these constraints. This includes embedding emergency preparedness and response, safety net mechanisms and food security programmes within

[27] The detailed prioritization plan for this country strategic plan is available on the CSP data portal.

national systems, ensuring that they are shock-responsive, people-centred and locally managed. The development and piloting of scalable models for eventual adoption within government systems will be key to enabling a realistic and sustainable transition and the continuation and expansion of programmes.

73. This CSP aims to expand support to *Merenda Escolar* to integrate HGSF, thereby strengthening local procurement and linking smallholder farmers to supply chains. To ensure long-term sustainability, WFP will work with government ministries to enhance policy frameworks, financial planning and operational capacities. Similarly, the CSP includes a pilot initiative integrating nutrition-sensitive measures into national safety nets, positioning the Government to effectively respond to shocks without reliance on external assistance.

74. For a successful transition, WFP will support the development of national data systems, improving evidence-based decision making for targeting and service delivery. Institutionalizing skills transfer through ongoing training and embedding monitoring and evaluation frameworks into national structures will further reinforce government ownership.

75. In alignment with WFP's 2025 localization policy, this CSP will strengthen partnerships with local organizations, cooperatives and smallholder farmers to ensure that food and nutrition systems remain community-driven. By enhancing private sector engagement and facilitating stronger market linkages along the food value chains, particularly at the community level, WFP will contribute to the sustainability of strengthened capacities throughout food systems, beyond the timeframe of this CSP.

ANNEX I

SUMMARY LINE OF SIGHT OF THE TIMOR-LESTE COUNTRY STRATEGIC PLAN FOR 2026–2030			
Goal	**Ending hunger**	**Ending hunger**	**Partnerships for the goals**
Target	**2.1 Access to food**	**2.2 End malnutrition**	**17.16 Enhance global partnerships**
Focus area	**CRISIS RESPONSE**	**ROOT CAUSES**	**CRISIS RESPONSE**
CSP outcome	**CSP outcome 1:** Communities vulnerable to and affected by crises in Timor-Leste benefit from the improved capacities of government systems and partners to prepare for and deliver assistance before, during and after shocks.	**CSP outcome 2:** School-aged children and people vulnerable to food insecurity, malnutrition and shocks in targeted municipalities in Timor-Leste have improved nutrition, strengthened human capital and more sustainable livelihoods by 2030.	**CSP outcome 3:** Communities vulnerable to and affected by crises in Timor-Leste benefit from improved services and the enhanced capacities of the Government and humanitarian and development actors to prepare for and respond to crises by 2030.
Activities	**Activity 1:** Provide technical assistance in emergency preparedness and response to the Government and partners.	**Activity 3:** Provide capacity strengthening to national and local governments, schools, communities and other actors along the food value chain of the home-grown school feeding programme.	**Activity 5:** Provide on-demand services including food and non-food procurement and logistics to the Government and humanitarian and development partners.
	Activity 2: Provide food and nutrition assistance to vulnerable and shock-affected people.	**Activity 4:** Provide safety net system strengthening, capacity development and programme implementation support for government institutions at the national and subnational levels.	

ANNEX II

Monitoring, evaluation, evidence and risk management

Monitoring, evaluation and evidence generation arrangements

1. In alignment with WFP's normative framework for monitoring, the CSP will be accompanied by a monitoring, review and evaluation plan. The plan will reflect the revised corporate results framework for 2022–2025, minimum monitoring requirements, and monitoring and evaluation standard operating procedures. It will also take into account evaluation coverage norms, the global assurance project, and the UNSDCF for Timor-Leste. Monitoring activities will be outsourced as appropriate to augment the country office's own capacity.

2. The monitoring, review and evaluation plan will define performance and process indicators, including targets and data sources, that will be used to track progress towards the objectives of the CSP. Adhering to rigorous data collection and quality standards, WFP's field staff will conduct process monitoring, and monitoring and evaluation staff will check data quality and perform data analysis. Monitoring findings will be used as part of an adaptive management approach, allowing WFP to make evidence-based adjustments throughout the programme cycle to enhance impact and efficiency.

3. For capacity-strengthening activities, particularly in school feeding and safety nets, WFP will work closely with government partners to develop and implement national monitoring frameworks. These efforts will aim to strengthen national data systems and analytical capacity, including the collection and use of data disaggregated by sex, age and disability.

4. For activities directly implemented by WFP, including emergency response using unconditional resource transfers, WFP will conduct process monitoring. This will include site visits and beneficiary interviews to track delivery, utilization and satisfaction, with third-party monitoring engaged where access or scale make that necessary. Community feedback mechanisms, such as hotlines, will help strengthen accountability to affected people and improve the quality of programme implementation.

5. WFP will leverage a mid-term review to adjust the implementation of this CSP. A planned decentralized evaluation will focus on the school feeding portfolio. A CSP evaluation in the penultimate year of the plan will assess the results of WFP's work in the country and build on the findings of the preceding CSP evaluation.

6. WFP will explore opportunities for joint monitoring and evaluation – particularly for joint projects with United Nations partners – through its participation in UNSDCF results groups and other working groups, and in the evaluation of the UNSDCF.

7. To ensure accountability to affected people, WFP will incorporate community feedback mechanisms, such as a hotline for beneficiary concerns and participatory approaches to monitoring.

Risk management and mitigation measures

8. WFP takes a systematic approach to risk management, identifying, addressing and monitoring risks that may affect operations in Timor-Leste. A risk register is maintained to track and mitigate potential threats, ensuring timely interventions and adaptive programming. The key risks and mitigation measures are outlined below.

Strategic risks

9. *Funding challenges and misalignment with donor priorities*. Shifts in donor priorities may affect the availability of funding (particularly for long-term, integrated programmes), potentially leading to gaps in implementation or reduced capacity to sustain interventions. WFP will strengthen donor engagement through regular consultations; align CSP activities with donor priorities where possible; and advocate for multi-year funding to ensure programme sustainability. WFP will also engage with other United Nations partners to ensure that a harmonized and complementary approach is taken without duplication of efforts.

Operational risks

10. *Natural shocks*. Extreme weather events – such as droughts, floods and cyclones – could exceed planned response capacities, disrupting agricultural production, food supply chains and school feeding operations, thereby leading to increased food insecurity and malnutrition. To mitigate this, WFP will enhance flexibility in response planning by helping the Government to prepare for adequate prepositioning of food stocks, and by strengthening coordination with the Government and partners to adjust activities as needed.

11. *Limited institutional capacity to implement adaptive safety nets*. The ability of government institutions to respond to shocks and integrate adaptive safety nets remains constrained due to capacity gaps in programme management, monitoring, and data utilization. WFP will provide technical assistance, capacity strengthening, and policy support to improve targeting, programme implementation, and monitoring systems, thereby ensuring that safety net systems are more adaptive and responsive to crises.

Financial risks

12. *Price volatility*. Fluctuations in food prices – especially for fortified foods and key commodities – could strain procurement budgets and reduce the availability of essential inputs for school feeding and nutrition programmes. WFP will monitor market trends, diversify procurement sources, and prioritize local sourcing where feasible to stabilize supply chains and reduce dependence on volatile international markets.

Fiduciary risks

13. *Ethical procurement and contract management.* WFP will ensure robust, ethical contract management by clearly defining deliverables, timelines, and performance standards agreed with vendors and partners. Regular monitoring visits and reviews will assess compliance with contract terms and identify potential risks or non-compliance early.

14. *Security risks and governance challenges*. While Timor-Leste remains politically stable, localized conflicts, governance inefficiencies or corruption risks could affect programme implementation, particularly in procurement and resource allocation. WFP will ensure compliance with corporate and United Nations security protocols, and maintain strong oversight mechanisms.

15. *Health and safety risks*. Public health challenges or emergencies could disrupt programme activities, limit mobility or pose risks to WFP staff and beneficiaries. WFP will maintain strict health and safety measures, support government-led public health responses and develop contingency plans to minimize disruptions to food assistance and nutrition services.

Social and environmental safeguards

16. WFP recognizes the potential negative impacts of its activities on the environment and affected populations. In accordance with the WFP environmental and social sustainability framework, WFP will screen activities for social and environmental risks. These risks may include:

- *Social impacts on populations at risk of vulnerability, including women and persons with disabilities*. WFP will adopt a people-centred approach across its technical assistance and strengthen national programmes to improve food and nutrition security for women, persons with disabilities, and other groups at risk of vulnerability. Partnerships with civil society organizations will ensure that programming reflects the needs of the most marginalized.
- *Risks to accountability and protection*. WFP will uphold the centrality of protection in its operations. WFP's activities will align with its policies on protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) to ensure that protection risks, including SEA, are assessed and that all activities are implemented and adapted accordingly. WFP will mitigate SEA risks through sensitization of WFP staff, partners and affected communities. WFP will also strengthen community feedback mechanisms so that affected populations – regardless of age, sex, disability or other status – are meaningfully engaged throughout CSP implementation.
- *Environmental impacts*. Where environmental risks are identified, WFP will implement measures to ensure sustainability, such as reducing food waste in school feeding programmes and incorporating sustainable packaging for fortified rice and other commodities.

ANNEX III

Country portfolio needs budget and cost breakdown by CSP outcome

TABLE 1: COUNTRY PORTFOLIO NEEDS BUDGET *(USD)*							
CSP outcome	**Activity**	**2026**	**2027**	**2028**	**2029**	**2030**	**Total**
1	1	572 500	820 704	666 107	668 018	547 248	**3 274 578**
	2	1 339 429	1 425 680	1 395 946	1 485 121	1 432 950	**7 079 126**
2	3	3 472 135	3 185 250	2 678 887	2 570 808	1 721 353	**13 628 433**
	4	2 369 807	2 119 724	3 466 041	3 728 773	3 714 207	**15 398 552**
3	5	366 793	382 125	362 182	387 414	376 100	**1 874 614**
Total		**8 120 665**	**7 933 482**	**8 569 164**	**8 840 134**	**7 791 859**	**41 255 303**

TABLE 2: INDICATIVE COST BREAKDOWN BY COUNTRY STRATEGIC PLAN OUTCOME (*USD*)				
	WFP strategic outcome 1	**WFP strategic outcome 2**	**WFP strategic outcome 5**	**Total**
	CSP outcome 1	**CSP outcome 2**	**CSP outcome 3**	
Focus area	**Crisis response**	**Root causes**	**Crisis response**	
Transfers	6 605 657	17 476 567	1 391 297	**25 473 522**
Implementation	932 110	3 680 647	62 608	**4 675 365**
Direct support costs	2 184 021	6 098 171	420 709	**8 702 900**
Subtotal	**9 721 788**	**27 255 385**	**1 874 614**	**38 851 787**
Indirect support costs	631 916	1 771 600	-	**2 403 516**
Total	**10 353 704**	**29 026 985**	**1 874 614**	**41 255 303**

ANNEX IV

TABLE 3: BENEFICIARIES BY YEAR						
	2026	**2027**	**2028**	**2029**	**2030**	**Total**
Total beneficiaries (without overlap)	169 636	142 683	114 721	106 855	101 337	173 088

Note: Estimated total of tier 3 beneficiaries: 479,158.

ANNEX V

FOOD RATION (*g/person/day*) AND CASH-BASED TRANSFER VALUE (*USD/person/day*) BY COUNTRY STRATEGIC PLAN OUTCOME AND ACTIVITY							
	CSP outcome 1				CSP outcome 2		
	Activity 2				Activity 3	Activity 4	
Beneficiary type	**General distribution**	**General distribution**	**Pregnant and breastfeeding women and girls**	**Children**	**School-aged children (5–12 years)**	**Pregnant and breastfeeding women and girls**	**Children under 2**
Modality	**CBTs**	**Food**	**Food**	**Food**	**Food**	**Food**	**Food**
Cereals		380			50		
Pulses		120					
Oil		37					
Salt (iodized)		3					
High-energy biscuits			100	100			
Super Cereal			200			200	
Super Cereal Plus							200
Medium quantity lipid-based nutrient supplements						75	50
Total kcal/day							
% kcal from protein							
CBTs *(USD/person/day)*	0.67						
Number of feeding days per year	60	30	30	15	30	360	360

ANNEX VI

Links to technical and related resources

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

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

a) the transfer modality for each CSP outcome and activity;

b) an overview of beneficiaries, broken down by age group, sex and residence status, and data on beneficiaries disaggregated by beneficiary group, sex and transfer modality for each CSP outcome and activity;

c) the distribution of food rations or transfers for each CSP outcome and activity;

d) a breakdown of transfers by modality;

e) quantitative information in US dollar value for each CSP outcome and activity and by tonnage where applicable; and

f) a prioritization plan calibrating implementation plans to reflect the resource outlook.

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

Acronyms

CBT	cash-based transfer
COVID-19	coronavirus disease 2019
CSP	country strategic plan
g7+	Group of Seven Plus
HGSF	home-grown school feeding
IPC	Integrated Food Security Phase Classification
SBC	social and behaviour change
SDP	Strategic Development Plan
SEA	sexual exploitation and abuse
UNSDCF	United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework