

Decision

The Board approved by correspondence the revision of the Sierra Leone transitional interim country strategic plan and corresponding budget increase of USD 3,030,178 outlined in the present document.

23 October 2018

Rationale

1. Following a challenging presidential election period in Sierra Leone in March 2018, Mr Julius Maada Bio of the Sierra Leone People's Party was elected President and assumed office on 4 April 2018. The country office is currently engaging with the new Government, including on the ongoing zero hunger strategic review (ZHSR), which suffered delays as a consequence of the protracted campaign period. In his speech during the opening session of Parliament, the newly elected President specifically highlighted the Government's willingness to work with WFP to support school enrolment and improve learning in primary schools through school meals. To that effect, the Office of the President has submitted a letter officially requesting WFP's support for the implementation of school meals.
2. In the light of this and in consultation with the Regional Bureau and the Policy and Programme Division, it was agreed that presentation of the country strategic plan (CSP) to the Executive Board should be postponed to the Board's 2019 annual session to allow time for the new Government to be thoroughly briefed and engaged on the ZHSR/CSP process. This would also enable WFP to develop a robust and consultative five-year CSP. Following consultations with the new Government, the country office wishes to add a new activity to its transitional interim CSP (T-ICSP) to respond to the Government's request for WFP assistance in implementing school meals.
3. It is therefore proposed that the T-ICSP for Sierra Leone be extended to bridge the six-month period between the planned end of the current T-ICSP (31 December 2018) and the new planned start date for the CSP (1 July 2019). It is also proposed that a new activity (under strategic outcome 2) with a focus on the provision of school meals be added to the T-ICSP. Since the Government intends to roll out school feeding beginning with the next school year, the plan is to start this activity in September 2018.

Changes

Strategic orientation

4. The proposed revision does not represent a major strategic shift from the current T-ICSP, but rather a six-month extension in time and the addition of a new activity to provide school meals at the request of the Government.

Strategic outcomes

5. As indicated above, the proposed revision would add a new activity 10 (provide integrated school meals to primary schoolchildren in targeted chiefdoms) under strategic outcome 2 (provide food/cash-based transfers to chronically food-insecure populations) to complement the institutional support planned for the Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education in relation to the national school feeding programme.

6. The proposed revision also takes into consideration a recommendation from the 2017 decentralized evaluation of protracted relief and recovery operation (PPRO) 200938 to the effect that annual short-term safety net distributions, which have been implemented to date through the lean season safety net, should not continue because their impact is limited. In this context, the proposed revision would suspend the seasonal lean season safety net activity (activity 2) under strategic outcome 2 to focus on livelihood activities such as food assistance for assets to improve the food security of food-insecure households throughout the year.
7. In addition, the proposed six-month extension would result in a scale-up of interventions under activity 3, with the introduction of stunting prevention in an additional district, and an increase in the number of beneficiaries under activities 1, 5 and 6.
8. Overall, the total number of beneficiaries would increase from 261,848 to 412,832 (excluding overlaps), 70 percent of whom would be women and girls.
9. To improve gender equality and women's empowerment, resilience-building activities would promote equal representation of women and men in the creation of productive community assets and control of food assistance, as well as in decision-making.

Beneficiary analysis

10. The projections for January to June 2019 for strategic outcomes 1, 3 and 4 are based on the existing planning modalities, with the scale-up to a second district for activity 3, "Deliver social and behaviour change communication (SBCC) in combination with the provision of nutritious food to targeted pregnant and lactating women and girls (PLWG) and children aged 6–23 months and strengthen public-private partnerships, in order to prevent stunting".
11. For new activity 10, the projections are based on the estimated number of children enrolled in government-owned or assisted primary schools in targeted chiefdoms.

TABLE 1: FOOD AND CASH TRANSFER BENEFICIARIES BY STRATEGIC OUTCOME AND ACTIVITY										
Strategic outcome	Activity	Current			Increase/decrease			Revised		
		Boys/ men	Girls/ women	Total	Boys/ men	Girls/ women	Total	Boys/ men	Girls/ women	Total
1	1. Provide food assistance to vulnerable households affected by disasters or sudden onset emergencies.	8 600	9 300	17 900	2 600	2 400	5 000	11 200	11 700	22 900
2	2. Provide food/cash-based transfers to chronically food-insecure populations.	28 800	31 200	60 000	-28 800	-30 842	-59 642	0	358	358
	10. Provide integrated school meals to primary schoolchildren in targeted chiefdoms.				17 150	17 850	35 000	17 150	17 850	35 000
3	3. Deliver SBCC in combination with the provision of nutritious food to targeted PLWG and children aged 6–23 months, and strengthen public-private partnerships, in order to prevent stunting.	16 687	35 600	52 287	10 307	96 196	106 503	26 994	131 796	158 790*
	4. Provide MAM treatment, through targeted supplementary feeding and SBCC for children 6–59 months and for PLWG.	25 800	54 720	80 520	-8 016	32 106	24 090	17 784	86 826	104 610**
	5. Provide Food by Prescription (FbP), complemented with nutrition counselling and other services for malnourished people living with HIV/TB (PLHIV/TB).	10 150	10 991	21 141	6 734	7 299	14 033	16 884	18 290	35 174***
4	6. Provide food assistance for assets (in-kind or cash transfer), including land rehabilitation and small community infrastructure to smallholder farmers and productive farming cooperatives.	14 400	15 600	30 000	16 508	9 492	26 000	30 908	25 092	56 000
Total		104 437	157 411	261 848	16 483	134 501	150 984	120 920	291 912	412 832

Abbreviations: MAM = moderate acute malnutrition; TB = tuberculosis

* Includes an overlap of 52,287 beneficiaries from 2018.

** Includes an overlap of approximately 31,380 beneficiaries.

*** Includes an overlap of approximately 8,790 beneficiaries.

Transfers

12. Under strategic outcome 2, the new school meals pilot programme will provide 27 percent of the recommended nutrient intake for primary schoolchildren. The transfer modality will be food, including fortified commodities. Thus, the T-ICSP food transfers will increase from 5,742 to 9,823 metric tons. The transfers for the other components will remain the same.

	Strategic outcome 2
	Activity 10 - Provide integrated school meals to primary schoolchildren in targeted chiefdoms.
Beneficiary type	Primary schoolchildren
Modality	Food
Cereals	70
Pulses	30
Oil	10
Salt	5
Total kcal/day	443
% kcal from protein	10.8
Number of feeding days per year	180

Food type/ cash-based transfers	Current budget		Increase		Revised budget	
	Total (mt)	Total (USD)	Total (mt)	Total (USD)	Total (mt)	Total (USD)
Cereals	1 160	539 612	1 192	1 017 340	2 352	1 556 952
Pulses	195	83 074	313	450 520	508	533 594
Oil and fats	261	224 276	177	347 329	438	571 603
Mixed and blended foods	4 112	2 834 499	2 358	1 695 495	6 470	4 529 994
Other	14	1 446	41	15 442	55	16 888
Total (food)	5 742	3 682 906	4 081	3 526 125	9 823	7 209 031
Cash-based transfers	-	1 705 217		-967 749		737 469
Total (food and CBT value)	5 742	5 388 123	4 081	2 558 376	9 823	7 946 499

Supply chain

13. The introduction of school meals will significantly increase the number of distribution sites. Given the poor storage facilities at distribution sites, WFP will need to maintain its strategic fleet and enhance training for partners in food storage management.

14. In the past year, market competition has limited WFP's capacity to meet its targets for local purchases. WFP will streamline its procurement modalities to compete with other buyers by matching market prices.

Other considerations

15. The Ebola recovery operation and T-ICSP have represented a programmatic shift in key functional areas, and the skills required are currently insufficient or missing altogether. These skills must be acquired to ensure efficient delivery.
16. Strategic partnerships with the United Nations Children's Fund and the other Rome-based agencies, which ensure complementarity in the area of stunting prevention, school meals and scale-up of Purchase for Progress and agriculture productivity, will be enhanced to ensure sustainable impact and programme effectiveness.
17. In line with the recommendations of the recently concluded PRRO evaluation, the country office will work to improve monitoring and reporting and programme quality assurance, ensuring that good monitoring and evaluation processes are understood and practiced, particularly for nutrition activities.
18. Limited national capacity to coordinate and respond to yearly sudden-onset emergencies such as floods means that up to 2019 WFP will maintain a focus on building government emergency preparedness and response capacity and improving response coordination with partners. A competitive global donor landscape could lead to resource mobilization challenges that would have a negative impact on the funding of programmes and the ability to fully implement them.

Cost breakdown

19. The proposed revision provides for a budget increase triggered by the six-month time extension and the addition of a new activity to provide school meals in primary schools. The budget increase is USD 3,030,178, of which 61.7 percent is transfer value, 20.6 percent is implementation costs, 11.5 percent is direct support costs and 6.5 percent is indirect support cost.
20. The cost changes mainly reflect increases in:
 - the number of beneficiaries for strategic outcomes 1–4, from 261,848 to 412,832; and
 - total transfer value and implementation costs, from USD 15,763,670 to USD 18,658,445.

Resourcing prospects

21. The installation of the new Government in Sierra Leone has given rise to renewed donor interest in key areas such as education, health and agriculture. Based on resourcing trends and consultations with the new Government and in-country donors, WFP expects additional contributions of USD 13.5 million from various sources, including the Government of Sierra Leone, which will contribute USD 2 million for school meals activities and USD 2.5 million to support livelihoods and nutrition activities, and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, which will contribute USD 1.5 million for nutrition. The Governments of China, Japan and the United Arab Emirates have also expressed interest in school feeding, and WFP will continue to explore funding opportunities for disaster risk management, nutrition and food security with the World Bank and Canada.

TABLE 4: COST BREAKDOWN OF THE REVISION ONLY (USD)						
	Strategic Result 1/ SDG Target 2.1	Strategic Result 1/ SDG Target 2.1	Strategic Result 2/ SDG Target 2.2	Strategic Result 3/ SDG Target 2.3	Strategic Result 5/ SDG Target 17.9	Total
	Strategic outcome 1	Strategic outcome 2	Strategic outcome 3	Strategic outcome 4	Strategic outcome 5	
Focus area	Crisis response	Resilience-building	Root causes	Resilience-building	Resilience-building	
Transfer	-218 473	585 853	1 919 078	211 303	-161 295	2 336 467
Implementation	35 383	449 337	492 289	-629 760	211 058	558 308
Adjusted direct support costs						-49 538
Subtotal						2 845 237
Indirect support costs (6.5%)						184 940
Total						3 030 178

TABLE 5: COST BREAKDOWN OF THE FULL T-ICSP FOLLOWING THE REVISION (USD)						
	Strategic Result 1/ SDG Target 2.1	Strategic Result 1/ SDG Target 2.1	Strategic Result 2/ SDG Target 2.2	Strategic Result 3/ SDG Target 2.3	Strategic Result 5/ SDG Target 17.9	Total
	Strategic outcome 1	Strategic outcome 2	Strategic outcome 3	Strategic outcome 4	Strategic outcome 5	
Focus area	Crisis response	Resilience-building	Root causes	Resilience-building	Resilience-building	
Transfer	367 826	1 938 339	8 487 397	2 176 061	967 212	13 981 834
Implementation	154 703	633 135	2 275 963	1 263 067	349 742	4 676 611
Adjusted direct support costs	70 473	322 726	1 409 046	447 807	175 545	2 425 598
Subtotal	593 002	2 894 200	12 172 407	3 886 935	1 492 500	21 084 043
Indirect support costs (6.5%)	38 545	191 048	791 206	252 651	97 017	1 370 463
Total	631 547	3 130 248	12 963 613	4 139 585	1 589 512	22 454 506

Acronyms used in the document

CBT	cash-based transfer
CSP	country strategic plan
PLWG	pregnant and lactating women and girls
PRRO	protracted relief and recovery operation
SBCC	social and behaviour change communication
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
T-ICSP	transitional interim country strategic plan
TB	tuberculosis