



## WFP Mali Country Strategic Plan (2020-2024) Proposal to the Government of Belgium

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| Country:                           | <b>Mali</b>   |
| Executing Agency                   | <b>World Food Programme Mali</b>                                    |
| Project Title:                     | <b>Country Strategic Plan (2020-2024); Strategic Outcome 1</b>      |
| Total Budget of Proposal:          | <b>EUR 1,000,000</b>  |
| Project sites:                     | <b>Kayes, Sikasso, Segou, Mopti, Ménaka, Gao, Tombouctou, Kidal</b> |
| Estimated Number of Beneficiaries: | <b>26,211</b>   |
| Project Duration:                  | <b>12 months</b>  |

### 1. Description of context

Mali is currently the epicenter of violence and insecurity, especially in the Central Sahel region, with a mix of non-state armed groups and inter-communal violence increasingly affecting vast swathes of the country. Despite the peace agreement in June 2015, conflict and insecurity have intensified in recent years, with the security situation deteriorating in the densely-populated central regions of Mopti and Segou. The border regions with Burkina Faso, Niger, and Mauritania have also seen an increase in violent attacks and security-related incidents. Moreover, criminality remains an ever-present threat as Mali remains a key route for illicit trade and trafficking within the region. Rising insecurity has stretched the Government's capacity, including the ability to provide security and other basic services, especially in the central regions.

Furthermore, Mali underwent a political crisis culminating in two coups d'état in less than a year. Following the last coup in 2021, ECOWAS suspended Mali and announced on 9 January 2022 a series of sanctions, including closing borders and halting financial flows. Although the sanctions were lifted on 3 July, their impacts on the food security and nutritional situation continue to affect vulnerable households.

The multidimensional crisis, which started in 2012 – coupled with rising prices, the socio-economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, is exacerbating food insecurity, malnutrition, and poverty levels. As of 13 June 2022, 31,125 COVID-19 cases and 735 casualties had been reported. Although this figure seems relatively low, only less than 9 percent of the population is fully vaccinated.

As of 31 May 2022, according to IOM's Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM), 377,519 internally displaced people (IDPs) were registered in Mali. The IDP numbers have more than quadrupled since early 2019, thus depicting a substantial escalation in inter and intra-community conflict, non-state armed group (NSAG) activities and attendant counterinsurgency operations, and criminal activities in the past three years. An estimated 30,000 people are displaced per month according to the Rapid Response Mechanism (RRM), with displacements becoming increasingly protracted. Most IDPs flee to urban communities in the center, the north, and the capital, Bamako, thereby increasing pressure on the already limited resources and livelihoods of host communities. IDPs mainly depend on humanitarian assistance (including food and nutrition assistance) to meet their basic needs. This increase in population displacements and the spreading of insecurity aggravate vulnerabilities and increase tensions.

According to the 2021 SMART survey, more than 50 percent of Malians do not have access to nutritious food. The prevalence of global acute malnutrition (GAM) is estimated at 10 percent at the national level. IDP children are the most affected, presenting acute malnutrition levels characteristic of a first-level humanitarian emergency. This critical situation for displaced and vulnerable children has led to an increase in the number of persons in need of acute malnutrition treatment and prevention by 43 percent (from 557,895 children in 2021 to 982,077 children in 2022).

Mali's nutrition situation is thus worsening rapidly, with GAM levels surpassing the 10 percent "serious" threshold in seven out of 11 regions, including Segou, Kayes, Koulikoro, Mopti, Timbuktu, Gao, and Menaka, which at 17%, surpasses the 15% "critical" threshold established by the World Health Organization (WHO).

In Mali, prices of basic foodstuffs and non-food products have risen considerably. Compared to the same period last year, by May 2022, sorghum had increased by 37 percent, millet by 35 percent, maize by 9 percent, local rice by 7 percent, and wheat by 10 percent. The spike in commodity prices ranges between 10 percent and 35 percent if compared over the five-year average<sup>2</sup>. The Ukrainian crisis is the tipping point of these price hikes as Mali relies heavily on Russia and Ukraine to import staple foods such as wheat, milk, and oil. For instance, in Mopti, the price of milk powder increased by 30 percent between February and March 2022. Other factors such as the poor performance of the agropastoral campaign exacerbate the situation. As of March 2022, the food value of the Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB) increased by 16.5 percent – from XOF 9,122 in 2021 to XOF 10,630 this year. The 2022 MEB value is the highest since 2019. As of 8 June 2022, the country had seen an increase of 22 percent for gasoline and 36 percent for diesel. The gasoline cost rose from CFAF 663 to CFAF 811 and the diesel price from CFAF 593 to CFAF 809.<sup>3</sup> According to the National Office of Petroleum Products (ONAP), this increase is not a consequence of the recent ECOWAS and WAEMU embargo because petroleum products were not affected by, but rather to the Ukrainian crisis which has had repercussions on the prices of petroleum products worldwide.

A significant increase in the prices of main food staples (sorghum, maize, millet) will affect the capacity of vulnerable households to access food on the market. The World Bank has estimated that 900,000 people have moved into poverty due to the pandemic.<sup>4</sup> The Government has announced in several forums that food security remains among its top priorities. However, it faces challenges mobilizing the necessary resources and awaiting to address security challenges first. Out of USD 33 million of the food security budget in the National Response Plan for 2022, the Food Security Commission (Commissariat de Sécurité Alimentaire - CSA) has mobilized only USD 12 million from the African Risk Capacity (ARC) funding. In context, in 2021, the CSA received approximately 89 percent of budget requirements, enabling them to contribute effectively to the 2021 lean season response.

Despite ever increasing needs, it has become more difficult for humanitarian organizations to provide the requisite assistance to vulnerable communities given the precarious security situation in central and northern Mali. Due to insecurity, humanitarian access has deteriorated across the whole regions of Mopti and Menaka, as well as recently in the cercles of Ansongo (Gao), Niono (Segou), and Gourma-Rharous (Timbuktu). Access remains a challenge, particularly for delivery of vital services and assistance to crisis-affected and displaced communities. The deterioration in the security situation has limited secure transportation by road, especially from the center to the north of the country. Nonetheless, WFP, its cooperating partners, and third-party monitoring partners have continued to retain regular access to field locations, by closely working with UN agencies through the civil-military coordination (CIMCORD) framework, WFP continues to implement its access strategy based on community acceptance, communications, and strengthened civil-military cooperation

## 2. Needs analysis

The 2022 Humanitarian Response Plan identified 7.5 million people in need of humanitarian assistance as of January 2022, compared to 5.9 million in early 2021. WFP has observed an increase in humanitarian needs in the Mopti, Segou, Timbuktu, Gao, Menaka, and Kayes regions. The Humanitarian Needs Overview by OCHA estimates that 30 percent of the population will need humanitarian assistance in 2022. In addition, 30 percent of the country's population lives in conflict-affected regions, especially in the central regions (Mopti and Segou).

According to the November 2021 Cadre Harmonisé, 1.8 million people are projected to be food insecure during the 2022 lean season (June-August 2022), and a further 4.4 million are at risk if adequate mitigation actions are not timely implemented to strengthen their resilience.

According to the *Commissariat à la Sécurité Alimentaire* (CSA), at least 500,000 vulnerable people remained unassisted at the end of 2021. The Food Security Cluster (FSC) states that the National Response Plan did not receive

the expected support in 2021, with only 14% or USD 33.1 million of the required budget of USD 232.4 million funded as of September, compared to 30% in the same period last year.

### 3. Description of the Project

#### Proposed Interventions

This contribution will support Activity 1 of the CSP by covering the emergency food needs of an estimated 26,211 persons in areas most affected by food insecurity.

#### **Activity 1 – Emergency Food Assistance**

##### **Activity 1 a) General Food Distribution through cash-based transfer (CBT)<sup>5</sup>**

Through WFP's Crisis Response Strategic Outcome 1, WFP seeks to ensure crisis-affected populations can meet their basic food needs during and after shocks through unconditional cash-based transfers in the form of food vouchers (FV) or cash transfers (CT) adapted to the context. **This contribution will support Activity 1 of the CSP by covering the food needs of 26,211 (including 14,211 vulnerable residents in IPC 3 to 5 and 12,000 IDPs)<sup>6</sup> in Kayes, Sikasso, Segou, Mopti, Ménaka, Gao, Tombouctou, Kidal, . A prioritization exercise will be done on the northern and central regions.**

As per the WFP's operational plan, displaced populations in Mali receive six months of emergency food support with a full ration/transfer value of USD 0.45 per person per day followed by three months of support at a value of USD 0.23 per person per day, equivalent to 50 percent of the full ration or the food component of the MEB (Minimum Expenditure Basket). Lean season affected beneficiaries will receive USD 0.27 per person per day. On average, WFP will distribute USD 0.27 per person per day, equivalent to 60 percent of the full ration. Foods available and usually obtained through vouchers and e-vouchers, respectively, and food basket used to estimate the value of vouchers are rice, millet, beans, peanuts, oil, sugar, salt.

Based on multi-sector studies, WFP selects the appropriate modality and mechanism transfer. For this contribution, two transfer mechanisms are planned, depending on the context and operational feasibility. For example, the central and northern regions are better suited for SCOPE value voucher (through retailers) and those in the south/west regions are more appropriate for mobile money (via Orange Finance Mobile Money).

The SCOPE platform will be used for beneficiary registration, data management, and distribution. Cooperating partners' staff, traders, and field teams have already been trained in SCOPE management. Also, during the early lean season, WFP trained all stakeholders on the targeting process and the use of SCOPE. About 80% of transactions, transfers to beneficiaries, and data reconciliation are already done through SCOPE under Activity 1. That reinforces the existing control on the activity implementation.

### 4. Programme Implementation and Coordination

The project is a delegated cooperation to World Food Programme and is managed and implemented by the WFP Mali Country Office located in Bamako, with the support of WFP Headquarters in Rome and the West Africa Regional Bureau in Dakar. The Country Office is headed by the Country Director, who is ultimately responsible for this project. The Head of Programme, reporting directly to the Country Director, is in charge of coordination of all programmatic activities, including monitoring and evaluation. The WFP Mali office has six sub-offices in Mopti, Gao, Timbuktu, Kayes, Koulikoro,

and Segou headed by experienced professional staff. In view of the deteriorating situation in the Menaka region, WFP is opening an additional antenna office in Menaka.

Under the supervision of the Deputy Country Director, WFP staff in field offices will implement activities in partnership with local and international NGOs who have broad knowledge of the local context. Other support personnel required to implement the project – such as finance procurement, administration, etc. – will be managed from the Country Office in Bamako. Operations will be conducted in line with established WFP rules and policies. The organization has implemented a well-established and clearly defined system of effective financial and budgetary controls, with responsibility allocated to managers across the organization: sub-offices, Country Office, Regional Bureau, and Headquarters.

WFP's Anti-Fraud and Anti-Corruption Policy applies to all WFP personnel and partners (cooperating partners, third-party monitors, government agencies, suppliers, and all other parties with whom WFP has a contractual arrangement). Regarding the communication of WFP's fraud, bribery and corruption policy to suppliers, Field Level Agreements (FLA) include a set of provisions on anti-fraud and anti-corruption, in addition to WFP's own anti-fraud and anti-corruption policy. WFP's policy is shared with all partners who have an obligation to disseminate it to their officers, employees, contractors, subcontractors, and agents and take all reasonable measures to ensure that these persons do not engage in prohibited practices.

WFP applies a system of internal controls across the organization based on a framework designed to identify potential events that may affect the entity, manage risks to be within its risk appetite, to provide reasonable assurance regarding the achievement of objectives, to prevent and detect unwanted vices. Internal controls are designed throughout the organization, including in all Regional Bureaux and Country Offices. The Office of Inspector General, Office of Evaluations, and External Auditor provide independent assurance to determine whether internal controls, including those controls designed to prevent or detect fraud, are in place and operating effectively. Recently, Enterprise Risk Management, Internal Controls & Management Oversight, and a field-focused Risk & Compliance Network were restructured under a new Chief Risk Officer function to identify risks and address these risks through internal controls.

WFP has a zero-tolerance policy for Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, and Harassment (SEAH). WFP ensures that an environment is created that prevents SEAH; undertakes awareness raising of its employees and partners and receives complaints of SEAH and submits reports to the Office of Inspections and Investigations. In Mali, WFP has designated a focal point for protection and SEAH Focal Point to train WFP staff and managers to prevent SEAH and take appropriate action should any incident occur (including with partners). The affected communities must be aware of their rights and the reporting of SEAH encouraged, including through the existing Complaints and Feedback Mechanism.

At the response coordination level, emergency preparedness and response actions are part of the support to the Government's National Response Plan (PNR). WFP will work closely with the Government, OCHA, the Food Security Cluster, the NGO RRM and other humanitarian actors to identify gaps in assistance by zone and coordinate the response in an effective manner, avoiding duplication.

## 5. Monitoring and evaluation

Following its Corporate Results Framework, WFP uses a Results Based Management approach to monitor activities and their efficiency and effectiveness in achieving results. Monitoring activities include quantitative data on markets and food consumption at the household level and monthly reports from cooperating partners.

Program monitoring is based on corporate minimum standards, ensuring a minimum of sites or villages and households are monitored throughout the year. WFP monitoring activities are based on a monitoring plan designed for all its activities. More particularly for unconditional food assistance, WFP or Third-Party Monitoring (TPM) partners monitor context, procedure, and experiences of all parties, including beneficiaries, implementing partners, traders, local committees, and key actors at every distribution (On-site Distribution and Food Basket Monitoring Surveys). A sample of households in these communities are also monitored 2-3 weeks after cash/voucher and/or ration distribution with direct observations and interviews (PDM Process Surveys). In addition, there are specific

questionnaires for traders who are/aren't participating in the voucher program, focused on their level of satisfaction, how the voucher system is working or impacting their business, and their recommendations to improve the program. Results are collected and shared automatically to our digital server for analysis by Field Offices and Country Office monitoring teams. Both implementing partners and WFP/TPM partners submit weekly situational reports and monthly performance reviews that are triangulated with this data. WFP provides technical training to TPM partners, supervises workplans, and reviews reports. WFP strengthened the geographical coverage by increasing the number of TPM partners (from three to four) and continues to enhance the quality of the reports submitted and set an information triangulation mechanism through complementary remote data collection.

Post-Distribution Monitoring (PDM) outcome surveys, based on several different food security and nutrition indicators, occur at least twice a year. Normally, these are carried out during the pastoral lean season and at the end of the lean season. Depending on resources and the evolution of COVID-19, WFP plans to increase PDM or mobile PDM outcome surveys' frequency in order to adjust to evolving humanitarian needs and the corresponding appropriate response. In addition to rigorous activity, outcome and output monitoring, markets prices are collected nationally on a bi-weekly schedule via WFP and TPM partners as well as the *Observatoire du Marché Agricole (OMA)* to provide analyses on current and future food needs as well as monitoring the use and influence of cash. WFP plans twice a year to conduct qualitative surveys, focusing on gender, protection, targeting or other key themes, using complementary methodologies such as mobile Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping (mVAM) or focus group discussions in the field. Monitoring arrangements will continue to be adapted to make them gender and protection sensitive and to accommodate capacity and access constraints.

WFP will expand the use of technologies such as mVAM, which uses telephone calls and internet apps to gather real-time information and can be used where direct physical access is limited. WFP is developing alternative strategies for expanding direct access to key areas for monitoring purposes, consistent with the program criticality of the underlying activities. WFP is also expanding its use of satellite imagery as a tool for early warning of emerging food insecurity. WFP's SCOPE beneficiary management system has been launched to cover eventually the full range of assistance. It will be used for beneficiary and activity tracking, distribution management and reconciliations, allowing for interoperability with Government information management systems, while ensuring beneficiary data protection in line with UN and WFP policies.

Monitoring and evaluation will be done in collaboration with partners and will include indicators associated with joint objectives and outputs. To ensure a close oversight of local partners, WFP puts in place a system to assess partners capacities before signing a contract and carries out monthly performance reviews as well as annual performance evaluations to improve program quality. Partners submit to WFP monthly distribution reports, final narrative report and ad-hoc reports as needed. WFP monitors the implementation and checks the quality of these activities through direct monitoring by its field agents who make ad hoc visits to certain sites, as well as through regular monitoring via the TPMs and direct calls to beneficiaries via mVAM. The TPMs will perform on representative samples, monthly monitoring of on-site distributions, and PDM process surveys to assess the use of the assistance and the effect on food security and nutrition.

## 6. Reporting and visibility

**Reporting:** WFP publishes the Annual Country Report (ACR) by the end of the first quarter every year for each of its operations. As such, this contribution will be officially reported in the 2023 ACR, expected to be published in March 2023. The ACR is the principle means through which WFP informs donors of how resources for given projects were obtained, utilised and accounted for during the preceding year. The report will be available at the following address: <https://www.wfp.org/operations>.

WFP also disseminates monthly country briefs, external situation reports, and external dashboards that showcase current achievements, challenges and needs pertaining to WFP’s assistance to its beneficiaries in Mali. Regular updates are also available on <https://www.wfp.org/countries/mali>.

Representatives from the Government of Belgium may also be kept informed of the evolution of WFP operations in Mali through exchanges or bilateral meetings with WFP at the country level as well as the facilitation of a field visit upon request. .

**Visibility:** WFP is committed to pursuing its donor visibility strategy to acknowledge the contribution and thank the people of Belgium for their generosity. WFP will aim to ensure visibility for the Belgian Government’s funding, and demonstrate its impact, through various media platforms, regular local donor bulletins and annual reports. The logo of the Government of Belgium will be placed on WFP reports and all visibility materials, as appropriate, along with other donors. Banners and posters with donor logos will be displayed on WFP leaflets to ensure that beneficiaries are aware of the assistance provided by the Government of Belgium.

- **Social media posts:** posts will tag Belgium’s official accounts on social media and will range from photos, to infographics to videos. The aim of the posts will be to convey Belgium’s contributions through a human-centric way, bringing forward stories that do not necessarily always mention assistance directly but instead focus on humanising communities by amplifying their voices and featuring ‘relatable’ narratives. Posts on announcing and acknowledging the contribution will also be made.
- **Field visit:** organizing one joint visit in Mali. However, the sensitivity of the situation (e.g. COVID-19, economic crisis, security concerns, etc.) must be taken into consideration before moving forward.
- **Media mentions:** Belgium’s contributions will be mentioned when conducting media interviews (if and when possible).
- **On-site visibility:** The Government of Belgium’s logo will be placed on visibility materials as appropriate, including on food parcels along with other donors.

Support from the Government of Belgium will also be highlighted in abovementioned communication channels, when appropriate. WFP will also provide visibility photographs and beneficiary stories to the Embassy of Belgium.

## 7. Budget

| Cost Category                       | Amount (USD)     | Amount EURO:     |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Transfer Costs                      | 861,551          | 817,612          |
| Implementation Costs                | 52,555           | 49,874           |
| Direct Operating Costs (DOC)        | 914,106          | 867,486          |
| Direct Support Costs (DSC)          | 75,322           | 71,481           |
| <b>Total Direct Costs</b>           | <b>989,428</b>   | <b>938,967</b>   |
| Indirect Support Cost (ISC)         | 64,313           | 61,033           |
| <b>Grant Total Activities Costs</b> | <b>1,053,741</b> | <b>1,000,000</b> |

