

Republic of Congo PRRO 200147
B/R No.: 2

PROJECT REVISION FOR THE APPROVAL OF:

➤ Deputy Executive Director and Chief Operating Officer

	<u>Initials</u>	<u>In Date</u>	<u>Out Date</u>	<u>Reason For Delay</u>
<u>ORIGINATOR</u>				
Country Office or Regional Bureau on behalf of Country Office
<u>CLEARANCE</u>				
Regional Director,
Project Budget and Programming Officer, RMBP
Chief, RMBP
Chief, ODLT (change in LTSH and/or External Transport)
Director and Deputy CFO, RMB
Director, ODX
<u>APPROVAL</u>				
Deputy Executive Director and COO

PROJECT
Start date: 01/03/2011 **End date:** 31/12/2012 **Extension/Reduction period:** 12 months **New end date:** 31/12/2013

	Previous Budget (US\$)	Revision (US\$)	New Budget (US\$)
Food cost ¹	US\$11,016,892	US\$2,842,869	US\$13,859,761
External transport ²	US\$3,122,467	-	US\$3,122,467
LTSH ³	US\$13,350,677	US\$3,922,722	US\$17,273,399
ODOC ⁴	US\$1,410,970	US\$578,870	US\$1,989,840
DSC ⁵	US\$2,713,891	US\$980,795	US\$3,694,686
ISC (7%) ⁶	US\$2,213,043	US\$582,768	US\$2,795,811
Total WFP cost (US\$)	US\$33,827,940	US\$8,908,024	US\$42,735,964

TYPE OF REVISION

Additional commodity
 Additional DSC
 Additional ODOC
 Additional LTSH
 Additional external transport
 Other
 Re-orientation
 Extension or Reduction in time

DISTRIBUTION:

DED and COO	Regional Director	
Chief, ODLT	Chief, ODXP, RMBP, ODXR, ODXC	RB Programme Advisor
Country Director	Programme Officer, RMBP	RB Programme Assistant
OD Registry	Programming Assistant, RMBP	RB Chrono
ERD	RMB	Liaison Officer, ODN

¹ Food cost can comprise both commodities and cash/voucher transfers.

² The first leg of transport for commodities: from the donor country to the recipient country port, or in cases of regional commodity purchases, from the place of purchase to the recipient country.

³ Landside Transport, Storage and Handling - LTSH comprises the actions required to (a) care for and (b) physically deliver the commodities from the completion of external transport through to final distribution.

⁴ Other Direct Operational Costs - ODOC include deliverable goods (non-food items), services and training to beneficiaries and/or to implementing partners.

⁵ Direct Support Costs - DSC are those costs which are incurred directly in support of projects by a WFP country office.

⁶ Indirect Support Costs - ISC is a fixed rate resourced from all donor contributions, which is used to cover (non-project) corporate overhead costs, i.e. PSA.

NATURE OF THE INCREASE

1. This budget revision to the Republic of Congo protracted relief and recovery operation (PRRO) 200147 “Assistance to Congolese Refugees from the Democratic Republic of the Congo in the Likouala Province of the Republic of the Congo” seeks to extend the project in time until 31 December 2013 to provide continued support to over 70,000 refugees in 2013.
2. More specifically, this budget revision will:
 - provide an additional 6,957 mt of food valued at US\$2.8 million;
 - provide an additional US\$5.5 million in associated costs consisting of landside transport, storage and handling (LTSH), other direct operating costs (ODOC) and direct support costs (DSC);
 - provide additional indirect support costs of US\$582,768; and
 - revise the LTSH rate from US\$519.52 to US\$563.89 per mt.

JUSTIFICATION FOR EXTENSION-IN-TIME AND BUDGET INCREASE

Summary of existing project activities

3. The outbreak of tribal fighting in the Equateur province of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) in 2009 resulted in an influx of refugees to the Republic of Congo. These clashes originated from inter-communal disputes over farming and fishing rights, but later widened to other parts of the province. The intervention of the DRC police and armed forces led to an escalation of the violence. As a result, tens of thousands of persons fled to other parts of the Equateur province, while others crossed the Oubangui River and settled in the Likouala region of the Republic of Congo. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the Government of the Republic of Congo estimated the number of refugees at 115,100 at the beginning of the crisis. WFP started assisting these refugees in October 2009 through an emergency operation (200095). In early 2011, WFP launched this PRRO to provide continued food assistance.
4. This operation addresses WFP Strategic Objective 1⁷ and Millennium Development Goal 1.⁸ Through the provision of a monthly general food ration, WFP aims to protect the food security of Congolese refugees and limit the use of negative coping strategies (such as prostitution, theft, exchange of personal items for food) until refugees are able to return to their country. The 2010 WFP/UNHCR joint assessment mission (JAM) recommended the provision of a food ration at 75 percent of a standard daily ration, as refugees cross the river during the day to work their farms and thus rely partially on their own crops. WFP therefore designed a daily food ration consisting of 300g cereal, 100g pulses, 20g vegetable oil and 5g iodized salt. However, due to funding limitations, WFP was forced to reduce the ration size to 50 percent of the standard ration size.
5. Since the repatriation exercise began in May 2012, WFP has been providing a one-day food ration to the returnees, as refugees do not stay in the transit centers for more than one day. Upon arrival in DRC, the returnees receive resettlement packages which include food rations distributed by WFP- Democratic Republic of Congo.

⁷ Strategic Objective 1: Save lives and protect livelihoods in emergencies.

⁸ MDG 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger.

Conclusion and recommendation of the re-assessment

6. In June 2010, a tripartite agreement was signed between UNHCR and the governments of the Republic of Congo and the Democratic Republic of Congo, which provided an opportunity for gradual and voluntary repatriation. Although the majority of the refugees expressed their desire to return home, the start of the repatriation process, initially envisaged for April 2011, was delayed until May 2012 by political and security uncertainties in DRC ahead of the elections of November 2011 and by the fact that the refugees' homes were occupied by soldiers posted to Equateur province. When the military troops in Equateur were recalled to the east, most homes in the Equateur region were vacated, encouraging the refugees to return. The repatriation process finally started, although at a slower pace than expected. From May to end of December 2012, a total of 45,000 refugees repatriated to DRC.
7. An estimated 70,100 refugees will continue to require assistance in the Republic of Congo as of January 2013. According to UNHCR plans, a further 42,000 refugees will be repatriated between January and December 2013. The remaining 28,100 refugees constitute those who did not express their intention to return home through the repatriation process. With the accelerated pace of returns, UNHCR plans to conclude the repatriation process and eventually close the camps by the end of 2013. UNHCR has requested WFP to continue providing food assistance to the refugees until the end of the repatriation process.
8. The last JAM was conducted in 2010 and reported that 61 percent of refugee households' food consumption was derived from their own production or the market. Food assistance contributes for less than a quarter of refugee households' food needs. A follow-up JAM was planned for April 2012, but was postponed due to the lack of funding. WFP and UNHCR are planning to carry out a JAM during the second quarter of 2013 in order to re-assess the refugees' food security status and inform further decisions on the operation. With the support of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), trends of selected nutritional indicators will also be assessed during the JAM. *Médecins sans frontières* (MSF) reported an increase of malnutrition cases in the refugee health centre but was unable to verify whether these cases concern the refugee population alone or also include people living in the Democratic Republic of Congo who cross the river every day to benefit from the services offered by the health facilities in the refugee sites.
9. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), Likouala is a structurally food-deficit region and the poorest and most food-insecure province in Congo. The sharp increase in population caused by the influx of refugees has put pressure on natural resources, the major source of livelihood for the local population. Trading routes between the Democratic Republic of Congo and the Republic of Congo, which were disrupted during the crisis, are still recovering, further affecting food availability. Hence, cash and voucher-based interventions are not considered feasible in the context of Likouala province, which lacks adequate financial and market infrastructure.

Purpose of extension and budget increase

10. The extension-in-time is requested to allow WFP to continue assisting Congolese refugees in Likouala province and supporting the ongoing repatriation process, which is expected to end on 31 December 2013. WFP's support is crucial to the repatriation exercise and to the well-being of the refugees while they are hosted in the Republic of Congo. As requested by UNHCR, WFP plans to continue providing monthly GFDs to over 70,100 refugees currently hosted in Likouala province. This number will gradually reduce during the course of the year as refugees return to their home country. WFP will also provide a one-day food ration to 42,000 refugees in transit camps prior to their repatriation.

11. While the implementation strategy will remain the same during the extension period, the number of targeted beneficiaries will reduce over the course of 2013 from 70,100 to 28,100 refugees as a result of the repatriation exercise.

TABLE 1: BENEFICIARIES BY ACTIVITY TYPE						
Beneficiaries	2012			2013		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
General food distribution	35,000	80,100	115,100	21,316	48,784	70,100
Repatriating refugees	14,400	30,600	45,000	12,771	29,229	42,000
Adjusted total*	35,000	80,100	115,100	21,316	48,784	70,100

* The total number of beneficiaries has been adjusted to avoid double-counting.

12. Monitoring and evaluation will be reinforced with refresher training of WFP food aid monitors on post-distribution monitoring and increased frequency of monitoring visits. The upcoming country programme evaluation will also be an opportunity to assess the project and recommend actions to strengthen its monitoring and evaluation plan.
13. *Associated costs:* The budget revision will also adjust the LTSH rate from US\$519.52 to US\$563.89 per mt in line with the actual logistics costs. Given the funding constraints and the significant pace of returns, WFP has gradually been reducing its operating costs. WFP sub-office in Impfondo has been closed, leaving a small logistics unit of two staff. Furthermore, the number of staff in the Betou sub-office has been reduced to five; overall, the number of WFP staff for the two sub-offices has been reduced from 17 to 7 people.
14. *Risk management:* In view of limited funding prospects, WFP may have to reduce food rations further to one-third or one-quarter of the recommended 75 percent food ration. This would significantly affect the refugees' food security as well as their nutrition status, and result in an increased use of negative coping mechanisms by refugees, putting women and children especially at risk.

FOOD REQUIREMENTS

15. The revised food requirements are outlined in Table 2 below:

TABLE 2: FOOD REQUIREMENTS BY ACTIVITY TYPE			
Activity	Food requirements (mt)		
	Current	Increase	Revised
General food distribution	25,401	6,939	32,340
Repatriating refugees	297	18	315
Total	25,698	6,957	32,655

ACRONYMS USED IN THE DOCUMENT

DSC	direct support costs
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GFD	general food distribution
JAM	joint assessment mission
LTSH	landside transport, storage and handling
ODOC	other direct operational costs
PRRO	Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund