

Evaluation

Summary Terms of Reference



Strategic Evaluation of WFP's Capacity to Respond to Emergencies

Strategic evaluations commissioned by the Office of Evaluation (OEV) are forward-looking and focus on strategies, systemic or emerging corporate issues and/or programmes, and initiatives with global or regional coverage.

Subject and Scope of the Evaluation

WFP's capacity to respond to emergencies is at the heart of WFP's contribution to ending hunger and improving nutrition. In 2011, WFP had to deal with only one major emergency: by 2018 there were 14. Of these, seven had lasted more than five years. In the past two years, the number of people experiencing food crises and emergencies has increased significantly, reaching 124 million in 51 countries.

This pattern is reflected in WFP direct expenditures on emergency relief, which increased from US\$ 2.9 billion in 2011 to US\$ 5.1 billion in 2017. WFP resources are increasingly focused on a small number of the 82 countries where it operates. In the period 2014-2017, 50 percent of total direct expenditures were accounted for by six countries and the top 20 country allocations accounted for 86 percent of total direct expenditures.

The evaluation will cover the full WFP response to emergencies (the immediate response and continuation in the case of prolonged emergencies). It will focus on the eight-year period from 2011 to 2018 and include all levels and all types (slow onset natural disasters, rapid onset natural disasters, pandemics and complex emergencies) of emergency.

In addition to the direct response to emergencies, the scope will also include, WFP support to the United Nations emergency response system including its key role in cluster management and management of UNHAS and the UNHRDs.

Finally, it covers all levels of WFP capacity, covering the strategic and policy level (enabling environment), the organizational capacity level (processes, systems, leaderships, roles, etc) and capacity of individuals.

Objectives and Rationale

The evaluation will serve the dual objectives of accountability and learning. Specifically, it will:

- Assess and report on the evolving capacity of WFP to meet changing needs in responding to emergencies (accountability).
- Understand how and why WFP capacity has been able to meet emergency response needs of different categories of affected people (learning).

Emergency response is the most significant component of WFP's work and, as a result, the organization's reputation depends on its ability to respond to the growing demand for emergency response.

The subject is also important in light of the shift in corporate focus to alignment with the SDGs and concerns about how this may have affected the level of attention given to emergency response.

Evaluations, audits and lesson learning exercises have consistently raised a variety of factors related to emergency response capacity. In taking a holistic approach, this evaluation provides an opportunity to bring together learning from a variety of sources to look at major strategic issues.

Key Stakeholders and Users

National governments and implementing partners in the countries where WFP works are important potential users of the evaluation. It is expected that the evaluation will be used by members of the Executive Board to inform decisions.

Key internal stakeholders at Headquarters level will be important users. At the decentralized level, key users will include WFP regional bureaux, country

office staff and implementing partners working on emergency preparation and response.

Potential global stakeholders and users of the evaluation will include humanitarian actors, academics, consortia and networks working on areas related to WFP’s mandate.

Key Evaluation Questions

The evaluation will address five key questions:

Question 1: To what extent did WFP provide a high-quality response to emergencies between 2011 and 2018?

Question 2: To what extent did WFP establish an appropriate enabling environment for ensuring a high-quality response to emergencies?

Question 3: To what extent did WFP put in place the appropriate organizational framework for a high-quality response to emergencies?

Question 4: To what extent did WFP employees have the right skills, knowledge, experiences and incentives to ensure a high-quality response to emergencies?

Question 5: To what extent did WFP undertake appropriate actions to ensure adequate capacity to respond to emergencies?

Approach and Methodology

The evaluation will systematically address all questions in a way that meets the dual purposes of accountability and learning. It will adopt a mixed method approach, which includes the collection and triangulation of both qualitative and quantitative data.

The large body of evidence from WFP evaluations, audits and lessons learning exercises means that the main data collection method will be a systematic review of these key documents. A background paper mapping the evolution of the WFP emergency response over the long-term (1998-2018) and the relevant context will also be undertaken.

Key informant interviews will take place in WFP headquarters and regional bureau. Field missions will take place in at least four countries. Desk reviews and telephone interviews will cover additional countries within the scope of the evaluation.

Roles and Responsibilities

OEV Evaluation Manager: The evaluation will be managed by Michael Reynolds, Senior Evaluation Advisor. The evaluation manager is responsible for the evaluation preparation and design, follow-up and first level quality assurance throughout the process.

Evaluation Team: The evaluation will be conducted by a team of independent, external consultants with strong capacity in global, thematic evaluations. The team will be required to have a strong experience of evaluating organizational change in complex humanitarian response contexts.

Governance

The following mechanisms will be put in place to promote stakeholder engagement:

- An **Internal Reference Group** of WFP staff across the most relevant HQ divisions and all regional bureaux.
- An **External Advisory Group** composed of external members with technical expertise in the areas of WFP’s mandate and in emergency response.

Communications

The Evaluation Manager will ensure consultation with stakeholders at each of the key evaluation phases. Before finalizing the evaluation report, a learning workshop will be organized to discuss evaluation findings and recommendations for interested WFP stakeholders.

The Summary Evaluation Report together with Management Response will be presented to the Executive Board in February 2020. A dissemination event will be organized to engage with WFP staff and external stakeholders on the evaluation and facilitate further utilization of the evaluation findings and conclusions.

Timing and Key Milestones

Inception Phase: January - March 2019

Fieldwork Phase: April - July 2019

Reporting: August – November 2019

WFP Executive Board: February 2020