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## Update on WFP's role in the collective humanitarian response

### Executive summary

In 2018, ongoing and protracted crises continued to be a major driver of food insecurity. WFP and its partners worked together to address food security deficits through emergency response and resilience programming and by strengthening the preparedness and early response capacities of governments and local partners. Through participation in the Inter-Agency Standing Committee and its responsibilities as lead or co-lead of the food security, emergency telecommunications and logistics global clusters, WFP facilitated coordinated responses, supporting joint needs assessments and the planning and implementation of collective strategies. One notable achievement was the signing of a joint commitment among WFP, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the United Nations Children's Fund and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs on the development of common and inclusive cash systems.

In 2018, United Nations-coordinated appeals and refugee response plans required USD 24.93 billion for assisting 97.9 million people. This represented a continuation of the trend seen in humanitarian appeals over the past decade, with both funding requirements and the number of appeals rising steadily. In 2018, WFP operations accounted for 30 percent of global appeals, which raised USD 14.58 billion, or 60 percent of required funding. There has been a 40 percent funding gap for the past five years.

In May, the United Nations Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 2417 condemning the use of starvation as a weapon of war. In December, the United Nations General Assembly affirmed the Global Compact on Refugees and the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration.

The system for collective humanitarian response continued to evolve in 2018. The Inter-Agency Standing Committee launched a review of its structures with a view to optimizing global support for field operations. Its principals endorsed five strategic priorities for 2019–2020: operational response, inclusion and accountability, collective advocacy, humanitarian–development

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collaboration, and humanitarian financing. In November, the principals endorsed the “Scale-Up” activation protocol, which replaces the protocol for activating system-wide Level 3 responses.

Throughout the year, Inter-Agency Standing Committee principals devoted concerted attention to enhancing protection from sexual exploitation and abuse and the sexual harassment and abuse of aid workers, increasing through shared leadership and collective responsibility, especially at the country level.

WFP also deepened its collaboration with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees through the signing of an addendum on data sharing to the 2011 global memorandum of understanding between the two agencies. The change complements the addendum on collaboration on cash-based transfers and the development of joint targeting principles and a joint strategy for fostering self-reliance and resilience in refugee and host populations.

## **Draft decision\***

The Board takes note of the update on WFP’s role in the collective humanitarian response set out in document WFP/EB.A/2019/5-D/Rev.1.

### **I. Global context**

1. Conflict, insecurity, climate variability and extreme weather conditions and economic turmoil were the major drivers of food insecurity in 2018. Acute hunger affected more than 113 million people and an additional 143 million risked slipping into crisis conditions or worse – Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC)/*Cadre harmonisé phase 3* or above – if faced with a stressor or shock.<sup>1</sup>
2. Prolonged conflict and insecurity affected the daily lives of millions of people, limiting their access to essential food and other humanitarian assistance. This was particularly the case in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, northeastern Nigeria, South Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen.
3. At the start of 2018, WFP was simultaneously managing six internal Level 3 and six Level 2 emergency responses, most of which were the result of protracted conflicts. These crises created unprecedented levels of hunger. In Yemen, as many as 20 million people faced food insecurity in what was by far the largest food crisis of the year. As the Syrian conflict entered its eighth year, WFP continued to support 3.5 million Syrians inside the country and 1.5 million vulnerable refugees in surrounding countries. In South Sudan, the severity and spread of hunger was alarming as prolonged conflict and economic collapse left more than half the population in need of urgent food and livelihood assistance.
4. Forced displacement was another driver of hunger. The Rohingya crisis in Myanmar was the fastest growing refugee crisis in the world, with an estimated 738,000 people arriving in Cox’s Bazar in Bangladesh between August 2017 and December 2018. Almost the entire displaced population received food assistance. The situation in Venezuela led to the creation of a regional inter-agency coordination platform to ensure a coherent and coordinated response to the needs of the more than 3 million refugees and migrants who had left the country by the end of 2018.

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\* 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.

<sup>1</sup> 2019 Global Report on Food Crises (carried out in 2018), <https://docs.wfp.org/api/documents/WFP-0000104035/download/>

5. Climate and natural disasters forced 29 million people into acute food insecurity in 2018, primarily affecting people in Africa. Drought in Central America had a significant impact on the food security of communities living in the Dry Corridor.
6. In some cases, conflict and climate variability converged, such as in Afghanistan, where conflict-related displacement and severe drought affected almost 10.5 million people in rural areas. Meanwhile, the Sahel faced its worst lean season in four years; coupled with conflict and insecurity, this increased the level of food insecurity across the region.
7. In 2018, humanitarian response plans targeted 97.9 million people and by the end of the year, funding requirements had reached USD 24.93 billion. Appeals were funded at USD 14.58 billion. Despite this record amount of funding, however, the funding gap remained at 40 percent, consistent with the past five years.

## **II. Global processes**

### **Security Council resolution 2417**

8. In May 2018, the United Nations Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 2417 condemning the use of starvation as a weapon of war. The resolution makes a connection between conflict and hunger and places the most vulnerable conflict-affected people on the Security Council agenda. It calls for early warning of food insecurity resulting from armed conflict. The resolution also calls for unimpeded humanitarian access and provides the Security Council with a toolkit for actions that respond to situations such as the unlawful denial of access.
9. The resolution describes three ways of alerting the Security Council of situations where hunger is being exacerbated by conflict. It calls on the Secretary-General to “report swiftly” when the “risk of conflict-induced famine and widespread food insecurity in armed conflict contexts occurs”. The other two channels are regular reports from the Secretary-General on countries with armed conflict when there is a risk of conflict-induced famine and widespread food insecurity, and the annual briefing on the protection of civilians, which should include an update on instances related to conflict and hunger. The resolution has already been used to draw attention to the impact on humans of conflict in South Sudan (in July 2018) and Yemen (in November 2018).
10. Together with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), WFP is promoting several initiatives aimed at raising awareness of resolution 2417 in Rome, Geneva and New York. This work includes holding formal and informal meetings with partner agencies, experts and member states in Geneva and New York in order to explore ways in which the international community can support implementation of the resolution.

### **Reducing displacement**

11. Efforts to deliver on the 2016 New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants came to fruition in December 2018 when the General Assembly adopted the Global Compact on Refugees and the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM). Although the compacts are non-binding, both are considered landmarks as they acknowledge the imperative for states to work collectively to address displacement and uphold the rights of refugees and migrants.

***Global compact on refugees***

12. WFP, FAO and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) worked together to ensure that food security and nutrition were included as a specific area of the Programme of Action of the Global Compact on Refugees. The programme sets out voluntary measures for more effective sharing of responsibilities and cooperation among states and other stakeholders in the response to large-scale refugee movements and protracted refugee situations. The Global Refugee Forum will develop, review and follow up on indicators for measuring progress towards the objectives of the compact and will be convened for the first time in December 2019. Subsequent meetings of the forum will be held every four years.

***Global compact for migration***

13. The GCM seeks to improve governance and international understanding of migration, address the challenges associated with migration today and strengthen the contribution of migrants and migration to sustainable development. WFP followed the intergovernmental negotiations leading up to adoption of the compact, working with FAO and IFAD on advocacy related to raising awareness of the impact of food security, agriculture and rural development on migration. To support implementation of the GCM, the Secretary-General established the United Nations Network on Migration. The network is hosted and coordinated by the International Organization on Migration and consists of a series of thematic, regional and functional working groups, leveraging the United Nations' expertise and capacity. WFP is a member of the network and provides support based on its operational capacity and knowledge.

***ECOSOC Humanitarian Affairs Segment***

14. The Humanitarian Affairs Segment of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), held in June 2018, provided a platform for the discussion of emerging issues and activities and focused on the risks and opportunities affecting humanitarian response. As the number and magnitude of humanitarian crises continues to rise, Member States, United Nations organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and civil society called for political action and solutions, collective analyses and coordinated response. Three broad themes emerged during the segment: the need for better information to support financing, given the growing gap between needs and funding; the commitment reiterated by United Nations leaders to taking decisive action to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse and the sexual harassment and abuse of aid workers; and, in the spirit of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the pledge to leave no one behind, with particular attention to gender, youth and disability.

**III. Collective response****Inter-Agency Standing Committee**

15. In 2018, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) launched a review of its structures and working methods in order to ensure that they were fit for purpose and optimal in providing support field operations. During this period, the work of the thematic task teams was extended to ensure continued inter-agency support in the areas of humanitarian financing, accountability to affected populations, protection, the strengthening of humanitarian and development collaboration, and advocacy.
16. The IASC principals met in person twice during the year to discuss countries of concern and efforts to strengthen the collective humanitarian response. WFP's Executive Director led the call for increasing joint advocacy efforts for the most complex humanitarian crises.
17. WFP contributed to setting the five IASC strategic priorities for 2019–2020: operational response; inclusion and accountability; collective advocacy; humanitarian–development

collaboration; and humanitarian financing. These priorities were endorsed by the principals and will guide the work of IASC subsidiary bodies.

18. High on the principals' agenda were measures for addressing sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment and abuse of aid workers. In June, the Emergency Relief Coordinator issued a statement reflecting the IASC principals' commitment to taking a sector-wide, coordinated approach to protection from sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment and abuse, setting out the main proposals for the way forward. The principals recognized the need for a major change in culture within agencies, driven by organizational leadership and empowering staff to raise concerns. They committed resources for enhancing collective systems, processes and capacities. They agreed to carry out an update of the compendium of good practices, sharing good practices, preventing perpetrators from moving to other agencies in the sector, strengthening the investigative capacity of agencies through increased collaboration among investigators and establishing a USD 1 million fund managed by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) to provide rapid grants for investigations. To drive system-wide efforts, increase shared leadership and collective responsibility and ensure that IASC members take collective and coordinated action, especially at the country level, the Executive Director of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) was designated IASC Champion on Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and Sexual Harassment for one year, to be followed by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.
19. In November, the principals endorsed the "Scale-Up" activation protocol, which replaces the 2012 IASC Humanitarian System-Wide Emergency Activation (known as the "Level 3 response") system.<sup>2</sup> The protocol applies to sudden-onset crises and rapidly deteriorating situations; its activation period is limited to six months, with a possibility for a single extension of three months. A Scale-Up activation is issued by the Emergency Relief Coordinator in consultation with the relevant Resident or Humanitarian Coordinator and the IASC principals, based on five criteria: scale, complexity, urgency, capacity and the risk of failure to deliver effectively at scale to affected populations. Development of a second complementary protocol referred to as the "sustain/severe" protocol is still under consideration. This would be a way of flagging the need for enhanced advocacy and the provision of resources in protracted crises, including those that remain a concern following deactivation of the scale-up protocol.
20. With an increased focus on providing support to the field, the IASC Working Group and Emergency Directors Group held a joint meeting in which they discussed priorities for 2018–2019, reviewed a proposal for revising the system-wide Level 3 response protocol prior to its endorsement by the principals (see previous paragraph) and reflected on the situation of internally displaced persons, area-based planning and response and long-term approaches. The IASC Working Group and Emergency Directors Group also called for a mapping of initiatives for assisting internally displaced persons and requested that the Global Alliance for Urban Crises develop a protocol for engagement with local authorities in urban settings.
21. The IASC task team on strengthening the humanitarian–development nexus in protracted crises worked on fostering learning among operational actors. Within the task team, WFP managed a community of practice on advancing collaboration between humanitarian and development actors. This included the co-facilitation of a peer-to-peer workshop in Dakar, Senegal, in June 2018. The task team also convened a workshop led by WFP and aimed at developing a common understanding among IASC members of the elements that are essential to collective outcomes, with the participation of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the World Bank Group and members of the

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<sup>2</sup> <https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/iasc-transformative-agenda>.

Good Humanitarian Donorship Group. Workshop participants concluded that while not a new concept, a focus on the nexus could provide fresh impetus for building resilience and working towards the SDGs; Burkina Faso and Mauritania were considered good examples of countries piloting nexus approaches. Based on these discussions, guidance was developed and will be submitted to IASC for endorsement.

22. In 2018, WFP and the United Nations Population Fund co-chaired the IASC Gender Capacity (GenCap) Steering Committee, leading discussions and the formulation of new governance bodies that replace the steering committee with a more strategic advisory group. The new governance architecture is expected to foster efficiency and increase synergies between GenCap and Protection Capacity (ProCap) initiatives. The advisory group agreed to work towards diversifying the language skills of gender advisers on the GenCap roster.
23. The updated *IASC Gender Handbook for Humanitarian Action* was issued in 2018; WFP contributed to training in the field in support of the adoption of guidance included in the handbook. An accountability framework is being used to monitor the collective performance of IASC members .
24. WFP contributed to the finalization and launch of the IASC gender and age marker; it was the first United Nations entity to adapt the marker to its operations, supported by an automated online platform. The WFP gender and age marker is a corporate tool with a scale from 0 to 4 that shows the extent to which gender and age dimensions are integrated into the design and monitoring of WFP programmes, primarily country strategic plans. The country strategic plans for Mauritania, Nicaragua and Yemen have already met the criteria for a gender and age marker code of 4 by fully integrating gender and age issues into their design.

#### ***Global clusters and shared humanitarian services***

25. In 2018, through the clusters and services it leads, WFP continued to leverage its deep field presence and supply chain expertise, enabling a fast and comprehensive humanitarian response.
26. The global food security cluster, co-led by FAO and WFP, supported 30 countries in emergency situations and deployed more than 100 staff members worldwide to collect and analyse data provided by partners. The cluster coordinated the work of more than 1,000 partners at the country level, more than half of which were national entities. In 2018, the global food security cluster represented 34 percent of the total funding requirements of all humanitarian response plans (including regional refugee and resilience plans and other appeals).
27. The emergency telecommunications cluster responded to emergencies in nine countries – Bangladesh, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Dominica, Iraq, Libya, Nigeria, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen – providing vital information and communications technology services and connectivity to humanitarians and supporting access to information for affected communities. The cluster marked two years of strengthening preparedness in the Pacific region, supporting governments in strengthening their information technology infrastructure and helping local and regional disaster management stakeholders coordinate major initiatives.
28. The global logistics cluster was engaged in 13 different operations in 2018 and supported 606 partners, 47 percent of which were national NGOs.
29. Through its network of six hubs, the United Nations Humanitarian Response Depot sent emergency relief items and equipment to 93 countries in support of 35 partner organizations. Rapid response teams were deployed to Benin, Chad, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kenya and Uganda to install equipment, provide technical assistance and train local staff in equipment maintenance, spending a combined

total of 395 days on the ground. The depot's research and development unit, UNHRD LAB, sought to improve logistics equipment and packaging solutions through greener technologies and reducing the waste from the packaging of relief items.

30. The United Nations Humanitarian Air Service provided vital air capacity in remote locations for 16 country operations, including support during the Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, access in northeastern Nigeria and fleet augmentation in Yemen, facilitating the timely and efficient delivery of assistance. A new air operation was established in Libya. Overall, the service transported more than 350,000 passengers from 700 organizations and evacuated 1,362 people.

### ***Humanitarian leadership***

31. In 2018, WFP continued to contribute to the United Nations pools for humanitarian coordinators and resident coordinators. Eighteen WFP staff members qualified for the humanitarian coordinator pool, an increase from 13 in 2017. Nineteen qualified for the resident coordinator pool, with selected staff serving in Armenia, Bhutan, Cuba, Nigeria, Serbia and Zimbabwe. WFP improved its communications to senior staff regarding opportunities at the level of United Nations director and above, including through a dedicated internal inter-agency opportunities website where WFP promotes inter-agency career moves, thus strengthening its contribution to humanitarian leadership.

## **IV. Focus areas**

### **The humanitarian, development and peace nexus**

32. WFP's approach to the humanitarian, development and peace nexus is grounded in the understanding that an integrative approach among all actors that promotes efficacy and efficiency and leverages their comparative advantages is crucial in tackling the root causes of food insecurity and ending the need for humanitarian assistance.
33. WFP participates in the Joint Steering Committee to Advance Humanitarian and Development Collaboration (JSC). Established by the United Nations Secretary-General as part of the United Nations reform, the JSC seeks to promote greater coherence between humanitarian and development action with the aim of reducing needs, risks and vulnerability, particularly during protracted crises and the transition to sustainable development. Chaired by the Deputy Secretary-General, the JSC identifies and disseminates good practices in support of this new way of working and the identification of collective outcomes. The JSC has chosen seven countries – Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Ethiopia, the Niger, Nigeria and Somalia – for showcasing progress in joint analysis, planning and the definition of collective outcomes. WFP participates in the technical discussions of the JSC, focusing on coherence and the streamlining of programmatic support through existing structures, and provides support to the country offices taking part in the pilot.
34. WFP worked with the Secretariat of the International Network on Conflict and Fragility, which is an initiative of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. WFP contributed to the formulation of a recommendation framing a common understanding and operationalization of the humanitarian–development–peace nexus through enhanced collaborative and complementary action. The recommendation aims to promote more coherent action among the world's leading donors to humanitarian, development and peace programmes in fragile and conflict contexts.

### ***Humanitarian programme cycle***

35. WFP continued to engage in the humanitarian programme cycle (HPC) planning group led by OCHA, which is tasked with reviewing the HPC and its associated processes, guidance and products in order to improve the quality of collective humanitarian response. The group worked on the development of new templates and step-by-step practical guidance for humanitarian needs overviews and humanitarian response plans; it also surveyed clusters/sectors and partners with a view to identifying gaps and improving capacity to participate in the HPC process. WFP has developed internal guidance to the HPC for country offices to be published in 2019, which explains the HPC, humanitarian coordination structures, WFP's responsibilities, the tools available and guiding principles on engaging in the HPC process.

### ***Humanitarian financing***

36. WFP continued to highlight the importance of unearmarked funding, which enables it to deploy a flexible, predictable and rapid response where it is most needed. WFP also pursued multi-year funding, which enhances programme sustainability, helps avert pipeline breaks and reduces price volatility, ensuring that beneficiaries have continued access to food assistance.
37. In 2018, multi-year income accounted for 14 percent of all contributions to WFP and totalled USD 1.02 billion. Multi-year contributions for WFP's programme of work in 2019–2023 amounted to USD 1.3 billion. WFP's flexible funding trend has remained stable, averaging USD 415 million per year, but it has not kept pace with the overall growth in WFP's contribution income, steadily decreasing from 12 percent in 2011 to only 6 percent in 2018.
38. The United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund remained a top funding source for WFP operations, channelling USD 139 million or 28 percent of its contributions to WFP. This allowed WFP to avoid pipeline breaks and preserve common humanitarian services, such as the United Nations Humanitarian Air Service. WFP, supported by UNHCR, used funding from the Central Emergency Response Fund for refugee operations in 13 countries in 2018.
39. Country-based pooled funds (CBPFs) are becoming an increasingly important funding stream for humanitarian responses for United Nations agencies and NGOs. In 2018, CBPF contributions to WFP were at record-high levels, with WFP receiving USD 64.4 million from 11 of the 17 active CBPFs. While this accounts for 25 percent of all allocations to United Nations agencies, it represents only a small portion of the total USD 836 million allocated through CBPFs in 2018.

### ***Anticipatory financing***

40. In response to the growing challenges posed by the effects of extreme weather events, WFP is focusing on innovation and the scale up of programmes that help reduce and transfer the risks posed by an increasingly uncertain and adverse climate. In 2018, through the R4 Rural Resilience Initiative, WFP provided 93,000 smallholder households in six countries with drought insurance protection and 5,000 pastoralist households in Ethiopia with an innovative livestock insurance scheme, which WFP was using for the first time. In parallel, WFP worked with 11 governments on establishing triggers and standard operating procedures for forecast-based early action to mitigate climate-related losses and damage from natural hazards and thereby reduce the scale of humanitarian needs before fully fledged emergencies materialize. WFP has also become an increasingly important partner for governments in the mobilization of financing for climate and disaster risk reduction from new and innovative sources.



41. In 2018, WFP signed an accreditation master agreement with the Green Climate Fund. Thirteen WFP country offices worked with their host governments on project concepts and submissions to the Green Climate Fund and the Adaptation Fund. The governments of Kyrgyzstan, Senegal and Tajikistan mobilized USD 28 million from the Green Climate Fund; Zambia also had a project approved but it has not yet been implemented. WFP facilitated the approval by the Adaptation Fund of three project concepts (one regional and two country-specific) with a value of USD 34 million to enable the governments of El Salvador/Honduras (regional), Lesotho and Malawi to adapt their food systems to the effects of climate change.
42. The World Bank Group, the United Nations, the International Committee of the Red Cross and other global partners launched the Famine Action Mechanism, a global mechanism designed to support upstream interventions in famine prevention, preparedness and early action. Its aim is to increase long-term investments in famine prevention and preparedness and to formalize links among early warning, early financing and implementation arrangements.

### **Cash coordination**

43. In December 2018, the principals of WFP, OCHA, UNHCR and UNICEF issued a joint statement on cash assistance in which they committed to working on the development of inclusive common cash systems.
44. The statement outlines the need for a coordinated programmatic approach through joint feasibility assessments on cash-based assistance, coordinated targeting, joint post-distribution monitoring and joint feedback and grievance mechanisms. It calls for a common data management and tracking system, complementing agency-specific systems and strengthening the interoperability of agencies' data systems. It also envisions a joint transfer mechanism achieved through a gradual shift towards the joint procurement of financial services.
45. The common cash system must recognize the importance of engaging with national and international actors in the design and delivery of cash-based assistance. The statement is also viewed as a commitment to wider collaboration and is open to other partners. The ambitious objective of improving the efficiency and effectiveness of cash-based responses has been translated into a work plan that will be carried out by a joint technical team in 2019. Six country offices have been identified to test some or all of the measures covered in the statement, and in 2019 partners will jointly identify and implement activities, including joint assessments and complaints and feedback mechanisms. In parallel, inter-agency working groups have been formed at the headquarters level to examine options for the common procurement of cash delivery services and to enable interoperability of the various beneficiary management systems.

### **Joint needs assessments**

46. In 2018, WFP piloted and produced guidelines on essential needs assessments, introducing a more holistic approach by adopting a household perspective and involving multiple sectors such as water, sanitation and hygiene, shelter, education, health and nutrition.
47. There was greater use of and focus on IPC joint analysis products for specific countries such as South Sudan and Yemen and for the annual global report on food crises and *Monitoring food security in countries with conflict situations*, which is a joint FAO/WFP update provided to the United Nations Security Council under resolution 2417. WFP continued to invest in ensuring that all country offices had the mechanisms and capacities to use the IPC approach in order to conduct food security analyses that are evidence-based, credible and consensus-driven. A new IPC manual was developed with strong technical input from WFP.

48. For the third consecutive year, WFP contributed to the state of food security and nutrition in the world report, produced with FAO, IFAD, UNICEF and WHO, underscoring its commitment to joint assessments and analysis and reflecting the priorities of the 2030 Agenda on ending hunger and all forms of malnutrition.
49. WFP also used technology to increase the coverage, frequency and depth of information for joint analysis, such as web-based data collection and high-resolution satellite imagery.

#### ***Preparedness, early warning and early action***

50. In 2018, there was continued investment in emergency preparedness and response capacities and in early warning activities across the humanitarian and development spectrum.
51. To identify emergency risks, predict their impact and inform early action, WFP strengthened its planning and operations management by consolidating its integrated risk analysis with other tools including the corporate alert system and various geospatial mapping tools such as automated disaster analysis and mapping for earthquakes and tropical storms. An initiative for building global surge capacity was introduced, ensuring on-time and effective staff deployment when an emergency occurs.
52. With UNDP, WFP co-led the IASC reference group on risk, early warning and preparedness, which produces the early warning early action and readiness report. The report is issued twice a year and is based on a collective assessment from 21 partners. It highlights risks that may require a multi-sectoral response and where additional inter-agency preparedness action may be needed.
53. In March 2018, the IASC endorsed inter-agency standard operating procedures for early action to El Niño and La Niña episodes, which will provide a framework for inter-agency early action to help mitigate and prevent impacts from these climate events. In September 2018, an El Niño watch was triggered, following warnings of a possible El Niño event in late 2018 or early 2019.

#### ***Humanitarian access***

54. Through the Centre of Competence on Humanitarian Negotiation (CCHN), its co-founders – Humanitarian Dialogue, the International Committee of the Red Cross, *Médecins Sans Frontières*, UNHCR and WFP – continued to support frontline negotiators around the world in some of the most challenging humanitarian operations. The centre of competence strengthens the critical thinking skills of frontline staff and promotes strategic reflection on humanitarian negotiation. The demand for its support among humanitarian professionals has increased steadily over the past year. More than 100 WFP staff members from complex operations have undergone the centre's negotiation training; the number of trained staff members will grow as the training of facilitators programme is rolled out in the agencies. In 2018 the centre published the *CCHN Field Manual on Frontline Humanitarian Negotiation*, which promotes a methodological approach to humanitarian negotiations aimed at enhancing operational access. There were 250 participants at the annual high-level meeting in December 2018, which focused on the importance of engaging with affected communities in the design of humanitarian responses and of enhancing skills and tools for frontline negotiators.

#### ***Accountability to affected populations***

55. WFP strengthened its corporate reporting system in order to better capture qualitative aspects of accountability to affected populations by updating its corporate performance indicators on the receipt and utilization of feedback from affected people. Globally, 86 percent of WFP country offices had complaints and feedback mechanisms in place in 2018, a 6 percent increase from 2017.

56. A new strategy for engagement with affected populations and vulnerable groups was developed in 2018; it will be implemented over the period 2019–2021. Its core components include the rollout of a comprehensive corporate approach for complaint and feedback mechanisms and outreach to and communication with affected people.
57. In 2018, WFP implemented a pilot project on the standardization of processes and tools for establishing and operating complaint and feedback mechanisms. Lessons learned, and best practices identified during the pilot will inform a broad roll-out plan, which will be drawn up in 2019.

### ***Sexual exploitation and abuse and the sexual harassment and abuse of aid workers***

58. The IASC focuses on protection from sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment and abuse supports the vision of a humanitarian environment in which people caught up in crises feel safe and respected. It also seeks to ensure that affected populations can receive protection and assistance without the fear of exploitation or abuse by any aid worker and that aid workers feel supported, respected and empowered in delivering such assistance in working environments that are free from sexual harassment. WFP has taken part in IASC discussions on this issue, sharing its knowledge and experience.
59. As the organizational focal point for protection from sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment and abuse, the WFP Ethics Office launched a number of initiatives in 2018, including administration of the global network of protection from sexual exploitation and abuse focal points, with a total of 278 focal points and alternates across all country offices and regional bureaux; the development of WFP's first-ever online training for protection from sexual exploitation and abuse focal points; and the establishment of a cross-functional protection from sexual exploitation and abuse advisory group.
60. To improve the efficiency and effectiveness of its response to sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment and abuse, WFP has committed extra financial resources to the Office of the Inspector General, the Human Resources Division, the Office of the Ombudsman, the Ethics Office and the Communications, Advocacy and Marketing Division.
61. Within the framework of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for the Coordination Task Force on Addressing Sexual Harassment, WFP and UNICEF co-led a working group that developed the ClearCheck database. The database ensures that United Nations entities do not hire individuals whose employment at another United Nations entity has been terminated on the grounds of having committed sexual harassment and abuse or sexual exploitation and abuse, or those who separate from organizations before an investigation or disciplinary process is completed.

### ***Humanitarian protection***

62. Following the evaluation of the WFP humanitarian protection policy published in May 2018, WFP developed an ambitious new strategy for protection and accountability to affected populations for its 2019–2021 programme of work. The strategy has four areas for accelerated action: analysis of protection risks and implementation of mitigating measures; strategic partnerships with food security and protection actors; systems and processes for integrating protection; and efforts to ensure that WFP has the right capacities at the country, regional and headquarters levels. The strategy has the aims of strengthening the ability of WFP to analyse and mitigate protection risks and improving the systematic use of mechanisms that facilitate two-way communications with affected people.
63. Corporate indicators on protection have been updated so that they reflect the protection risks faced by WFP beneficiaries more holistically. The new indicators capture WFP performance in the design and management of safe and dignified programmes and the degree to which these are accessible to beneficiaries.

***Inclusion of persons with disabilities***

64. Following its endorsement of the Charter on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action, WFP signed the Charter for Change at the Global Disability Summit in July 2018 in London, taking steps to strengthen the inclusion of persons with disabilities in its programmes. A new output indicator was added to the corporate results framework to capture the numbers of women, men, boys and girls with disabilities receiving assistance; data collection will start in 2019.
65. In 2018 WFP deployed a senior disability adviser to gather lessons learned from country offices on how best to adjust programmes in order to ensure the inclusion of persons with disabilities. Lessons learned from missions to the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Myanmar, South Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic, Turkey, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania will be documented and shared with other country offices with a view to enhancing learning and cross-fertilization among countries and regions. WFP also developed operational guidance for staff on the identification of persons with disabilities, facilitating their inclusion in WFP programmes. Lessons from the missions will be used to improve this guidance.

**V. Partnerships in focus**

66. While many countries have made significant gains in reducing hunger and undernutrition over the last 25 years, progress in most countries affected by conflict has stagnated. In 2018 WFP launched a partnership with the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute with the aim of gathering evidence on the relationship between conflict and hunger. A study is under way to examine how WFP programmes may be contributing to peace, how its operations can better contribute to peace in the future and how these contributions can be measured.
67. In September 2018, the WFP Executive Director and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees signed an Addendum on Data Sharing to the 2011 WFP–UNHCR Global Memorandum of Understanding, the latest in a series of major commitments between WFP and UNHCR. Together the agreements set out an ambitious agenda to move beyond coordination to true partnership, laying the foundations for joint programming and interoperable systems.
68. In 2018, collaboration between WFP and the World Health Organization (WHO) ranged from joint responses to Ebola in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and cholera in Yemen to engagement in the Global Pandemic Supply Chain Network and partnering on global initiatives that include the Global Action Plan for Healthy Lives and Well-Being for All. Cognizant of the need to deepen cooperation and enable faster, more coherent responses to emergencies, in December 2018 the WFP Executive Director and the WHO Director-General agreed to develop a strategic memorandum of understanding.
69. Responding to heightened demand from global health actors, WFP also engaged in health-related projects with partners such as WHO, the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, UNDP and World Vision. This support is a prime example of WFP's commitment to SDG 17 and demonstrates what can be achieved when humanitarian, development and health partners deliver as one. In the Central African Republic, for example, in support of the Global Fund and its partners World Vision and the French Red Cross, WFP has taken on the management of in-country warehousing, logistics and delivery activities. In 2018, WFP transported 160 mt of medicines and health cargo to more than 630 health facilities. In Chad, WFP supported the Global Fund-grantee, UNDP, in storing and distributing 876,300 insecticide-treated mosquito nets that prevent malaria and improve survival rates among children.

70. The WFP-World Bank Group Strategic Partnership Framework signed in 2018 builds on the complementarities of both organizations' mandates, structures and activities for tackling humanitarian and development challenges. WFP removed several systemic obstacles, mainly related to country-level differences between the operating and funding models of the two organizations, which in the past have limited country offices' capacity to engage in or conclude negotiations with the World Bank Group.
71. Recognizing the link between country capacity and the achievement of national development targets, WFP continued to engage in and support the capacity strengthening of a range of stakeholders, embracing a "whole of society" approach to the achievement of zero hunger. In 2018, WFP pursued its joint capacity strengthening cooperation with the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, a flagship initiative on localization, showcasing how collaboration can build robust, sustainable national Red Cross and Red Crescent societies capable of delivering on their mandate and supporting governments in tackling food insecurity. Investments in the national societies have been context-specific and aimed at strengthening organizations holistically rather than on a programme capacity basis. The 2018 experience in the four pilot countries – Burundi, the Dominican Republic, Pakistan and the Sudan yielded many useful lessons, highlighting the need to develop an advocacy and fundraising strategy and to enhance partners' understanding of the capacity-strengthening support that WFP can offer. The initiative will move into a second phase in 2019, expanding to new countries, with an emphasis on longer-term involvement and capacity strengthening and the organizational development of national societies.
72. The Global Network Against Food Crises was founded by the European Union, FAO and WFP with the aim to address the root causes of food and nutrition crises from a humanitarian as well as development perspective through three key pillars: generating evidence through consensus based information and analysis; leveraging strategic investments to prevent and respond to food crises; and fostering political uptake and coordination for integrated solutions to address food insecurity issues at the national, regional and global level. The "Global Report on Food Crises" annual flagship was produced under the first pillar of the Global Network by the Food Security Information Network (FSIN) during 2018.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> 2019 Global Report on Food Crises (launched by the European Commission in Brussels in April 2019), <https://docs.wfp.org/api/documents/WFP-0000104035/download/>

**Acronyms used in the document**

CBPF	country-based pooled funds
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GCM	The Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration
GenCap	IASC Gender Capacity initiative
HPC	humanitarian programme cycle
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IPC	Integrated Food Security Phase Classification
JSC	Joint Steering Committee to Advance Humanitarian and Development Collaboration
NGO	non-governmental organization
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WHO	World Health Organization