

SAVING
LIVES
CHANGING
LIVES



WFP Impact Evaluation Strategy (2019-2026)

WFP's Office of Evaluation (OEV) has developed an Impact Evaluation Strategy (2019-2026), signalling the organization's renewed commitment to generating operationally relevant evidence of global significance.

Responding to growing demand from countries, donors and policymakers for high-quality evidence, the strategy aims to build a platform of support that bridges current gaps in capacity and resources to deliver impact evaluations.

The strategy calls for a two-year pilot phase to allow WFP to build capacity, fine-tune the delivery model and establish an effective management system. This pilot phase, which is aligned with the period remaining of WFP's Corporate Evaluation Policy (2016-2021), will test delivery models and resource requirements for WFP impact evaluations.

Under the Impact Evaluation Strategy, OEV aims to support the creation and use of rigorous impact evaluation evidence in WFP to optimise interventions, inform policy and provide thought leadership in global efforts to end hunger.

Impact evaluations are valuable tools for generating rigorous evidence on what works, how and for whom. WFP defines impact evaluation as *evaluations measuring the changes in development outcomes of interest for a target population that can be attributed to a specific programme or a policy through a credible counterfactual.*

OBJECTIVES

1 Deliver operationally relevant and useful impact evaluations

3 Maximise the responsiveness of impact evaluations to rapidly evolving contexts

2 Contribute to the evidence base in priority areas for achieving global goals

4 Harness the best tools and technologies for impact evaluation

OVERVIEW

Impact evaluations already play an important role in how WFP learns. However, the fragile and rapidly evolving contexts where WFP works have often proved challenging for delivering impact evaluations. While new technologies and data sources present opportunities for future impact evaluations in these difficult contexts, they are yet to be fully harnessed. Taking a leadership role in this area calls for a more systematic approach and investment in WFP capacities, requiring a degree of OEV support to impact evaluations conducted by country offices above the standard for decentralized evaluations.

The strategy highlights a dual ambition: to produce impact evaluations that are both operationally relevant and globally recognised for the value of evidence produced. To implement the strategy, related activities are grouped into four complementary objectives (listed above) that build on WFP experience, directing future efforts towards achieving this ambition.

Where there are defined evidence priorities, OEV will establish impact evaluation windows to provide centrally managed support and co-funding to deliver impact evaluation evidence in priority areas:

- Cash-based transfer modalities
- Gender equality and women's empowerment interventions
- Climate change and resilience
- Nutrition
- School feeding

This approach builds on experiences from the previous central impact evaluation series. It responds to requests to increase the volume of evaluations in priority areas but delivered through a more demand-led, co-funded approach. The first two impact evaluation windows focus on i) cash-based transfers and gender, and ii) climate

change and resilience. Other windows will be launched subject to the level of interest and available resources. WFP impact evaluations outside these windows will receive OEV management and quality assurance support, but will not be co-funded.

OEV will adopt a managed approach, seeking to stimulate awareness and steer demand for impact evaluation in areas that have been identified as corporate priorities for WFP. The pilot phase will explore a hybrid delivery model that uses both in-house and external capacity, enabling WFP to incrementally build its own capacity in line with evolving demand for impact evaluation and related evidence needs. In 2021, OEV will assess whether the level of demand and usefulness of impact evaluations warrant greater investment in in-house capacity.

OEV will need effective partners that can augment WFP's capacity while the strategy is being phased in. OEV has already established a partnership with the World Bank's Development Impact Evaluation (DIME) unit, which has successfully implemented an impact evaluation system.

Realising the benefits of impact evaluations will require new sources of finance. To date, centralized evaluations are funded through the Programme Support and Administrative (PSA) budget allocated to OEV, while decentralized evaluations are funded by programme monitoring and evaluation (M&E) budgets or bilateral donor contributions. The strategy proposes a more sustainable and collaborative approach to funding, drawing upon all three sources (country office programme, OEV PSA and donor funding). Combining these resources towards corporately agreed priorities has the benefit of increasing coverage in under-represented areas without restricting impact evaluations in areas where donor interest is high. It enables WFP to ensure that resources going into individual impact evaluations are more likely to benefit the whole organization.