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LIVES



# Synthesis of Country Portfolio Evaluations in Africa

Evaluation report



May 2019



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# Executive Summary

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**S**ub-Saharan Africa faces complex challenges including recurring cycles of conflict, political instability and climate change-related shocks. Populations in the region are highly vulnerable to poverty, hunger and displacement.

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This report synthesizes the findings of eight evaluations of WFP country portfolios focused on the Sahel and the Horn of Africa, conducted between 2016 and 2018. It seeks to draw lessons from the evaluations; assess WFP performance and results; and expand the evidence base on WFP's assistance in fragile and conflict-affected settings.

The evaluated portfolios comprised 68 separate operations, with combined requirements of over USD 12.7 billion and targeted almost 100 million beneficiaries. The evidence shows that WFP's specialized capabilities met highly unpredictable needs over the evaluation period. Strengths in rapid adaptation and scale-up; emergency response capacity; high-quality food security and nutrition analysis; and committed relationships with national partners supported large-scale food assistance delivery. WFP played a major role in preventing famines in Ethiopia, Somalia and South Sudan.

Where funding and conditions permitted, WFP activities spanned the humanitarian-development continuum, although the prioritization of life-saving activities sometimes compromised strategic relevance in other areas. Contributions to peacebuilding under the triple nexus were still emerging, and further scope exists for applying a resilience lens when preventing and reducing food and nutrition insecurity. WFP was praised as a neutral and impartial actor in conflict situations, with assistance

largely adhering to international humanitarian principles, albeit with challenges at local level.

Rapid descent into emergency conditions and gaps in leadership continuity compromised effective strategic planning, although the implementation of WFP's 2016 policy on country strategic plans promised future improvement. Performance was enhanced by a high tolerance of risk, willingness to innovate and an agile approach. Risk assessment and mitigation were unsystematic at times, and exit strategies were inconsistently in place. Approaches to gender were limited to including women rather than promoting transformative change, and commitments to accountability to affected populations were not adequately realized.

WFP was a leading and influential partner to host governments, although some opportunities to harness synergies with other United Nations agencies were missed or encountered practical barriers. Communication with donors was sometimes inadequate and/or inconsistent.

WFP faced difficult choices in volatile situations, particularly when balancing life-saving with ongoing development needs. The lessons from this synthesis report suggest that flexible advance planning and preparation, clear rationales for decisions and increased multi-year funding will help WFP strengthen strategic and operational linkages across the triple nexus. To support this shift, the report makes six recommendations. To enhance strategic planning, WFP should improve the availability and use of guidance on country strategic plan design; strengthen its financial and partnership base for development and peacebuilding; and address staffing and management arrangements in fragile contexts and protracted crises. To support operational improvement, WFP should develop regional operational plans for development and peacebuilding actions, applying a gender-transformative lens; systematize adherence to international humanitarian principles at the local level; and improve adherence to accountability to affected populations commitments.

# INTRODUCTION



## 1.1 BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Sub-Saharan Africa faces complex and interconnected challenges including extended cycles of conflict, political instability and climate change-related shocks. Populations in the region are highly vulnerable to poverty, hunger and displacement.

Shaped by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Sustaining Peace Agenda and the Agenda for Humanity, the 'triple nexus' approach to addressing humanitarian, development and peacebuilding needs is gaining international momentum. The WFP Strategic Plan (2017–2021) articulates a shift from 'saving lives' to 'changing lives', focusing on the poorest and most marginalized people.

This report brings together the findings of eight evaluations of WFP country portfolios in Africa, focused on the Sahel and Horn of Africa. It seeks to draw lessons from experience; assess WFP's performance and results; and contribute to the evidence base on WFP's assistance in fragile and conflict-affected settings.

## 1.2 CONTEXT

A country portfolio evaluation assesses the strategic positioning, decision making, performance and results of all WFP work in a particular country. The eight country portfolio evaluations, included in this synthesis report, were conducted between 2016 and 2018 in Burundi, Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Ethiopia, Mali, Mauritania, Somalia and South Sudan (figure 1).

The eight countries are highly vulnerable and volatile (figure 3). They include five Level 2 or 3 country-specific corporate emergencies<sup>4</sup> and two Level 2 or 3 regional corporate emergencies<sup>5</sup>. Region-wide challenges include conflict and climate-related events such as drought.

<sup>1</sup> Stimson Center. 2018. The UN's new "Sustaining Peace" Agenda: A Policy Breakthrough in the Making. <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/un-s-new-sustaining-peace-agenda-policy-breakthrough-making>.

<sup>2</sup> Agenda for Humanity. 2016. Webpage on Agenda for Humanity. <https://www.agendaforhumanity.org/agendaforhumanity>

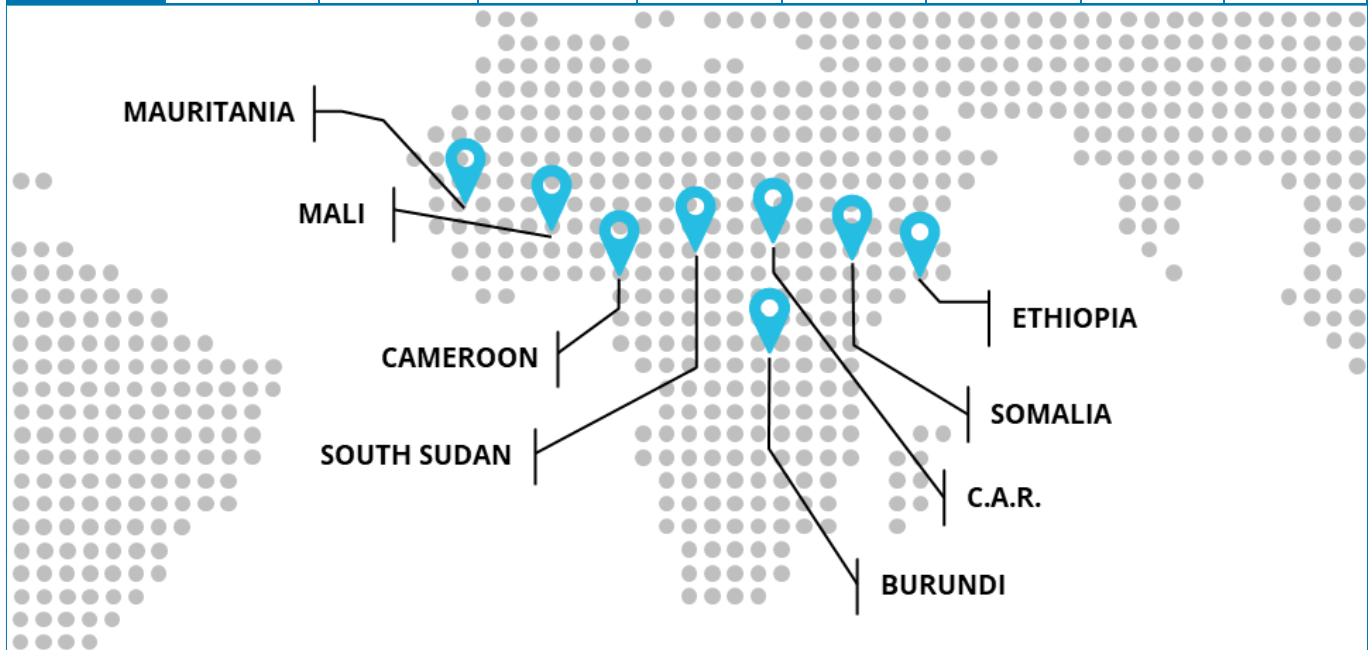
<sup>3</sup> WFP. 2017. WFP Strategic Plan (2017–2021). <https://www.wfp.org/content/wfp-strategic-plan-2017-2021>.

<sup>4</sup> Cameroon, Central African Republic, Mali, Somalia and South Sudan.

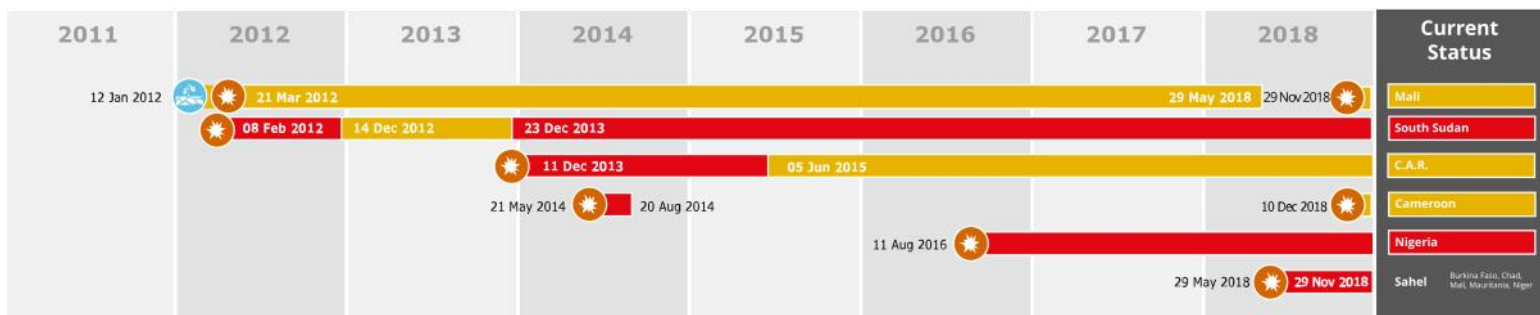
<sup>5</sup> The Sahel region, including Mali and Mauritania, and the Horn of Africa, affecting Ethiopia and Somalia.

**FIGURE 1. COUNTRIES COVERED BY THE EVALUATION**

COUNTRY PORTFOLIO EVALUATIONS	Burundi (2011–2015)	Cameroon (2012–2017)	Central African Republic (2012–2017)	Ethiopia (2012–2017)	Mali (2013–2017)	Mauritania (2011–2015)	Somalia (2012–2017)	South Sudan (2011–2016)
INCOME STATUS	Low income	Lower-middle income	Low income	Low income	Low income	Lower-middle income	Low income	Low income
FOOD INSECURITY	30–35%	20–25%	50%	30–35%	20–25%	30–25%	30–25%	67%
STUNTING	31–58%	31–58%	31–58%	31–58%	5–23%	5–23%	5–23%	31–58%
WASTING	10%	10%	10–16.7%	10%	10–16.7%	10–16.7%	10–16.7%	10–16.7%
GENDER INEQUALITY INDEX RANK (2017 DATA)	114	141	156	121	157	147	n.a.	n.a.



**FIGURE 2. MAJOR EMERGENCY RESPONSES**



WFP Emergency Level  
■ L3 ■ L2

Sudden-onset natural disaster

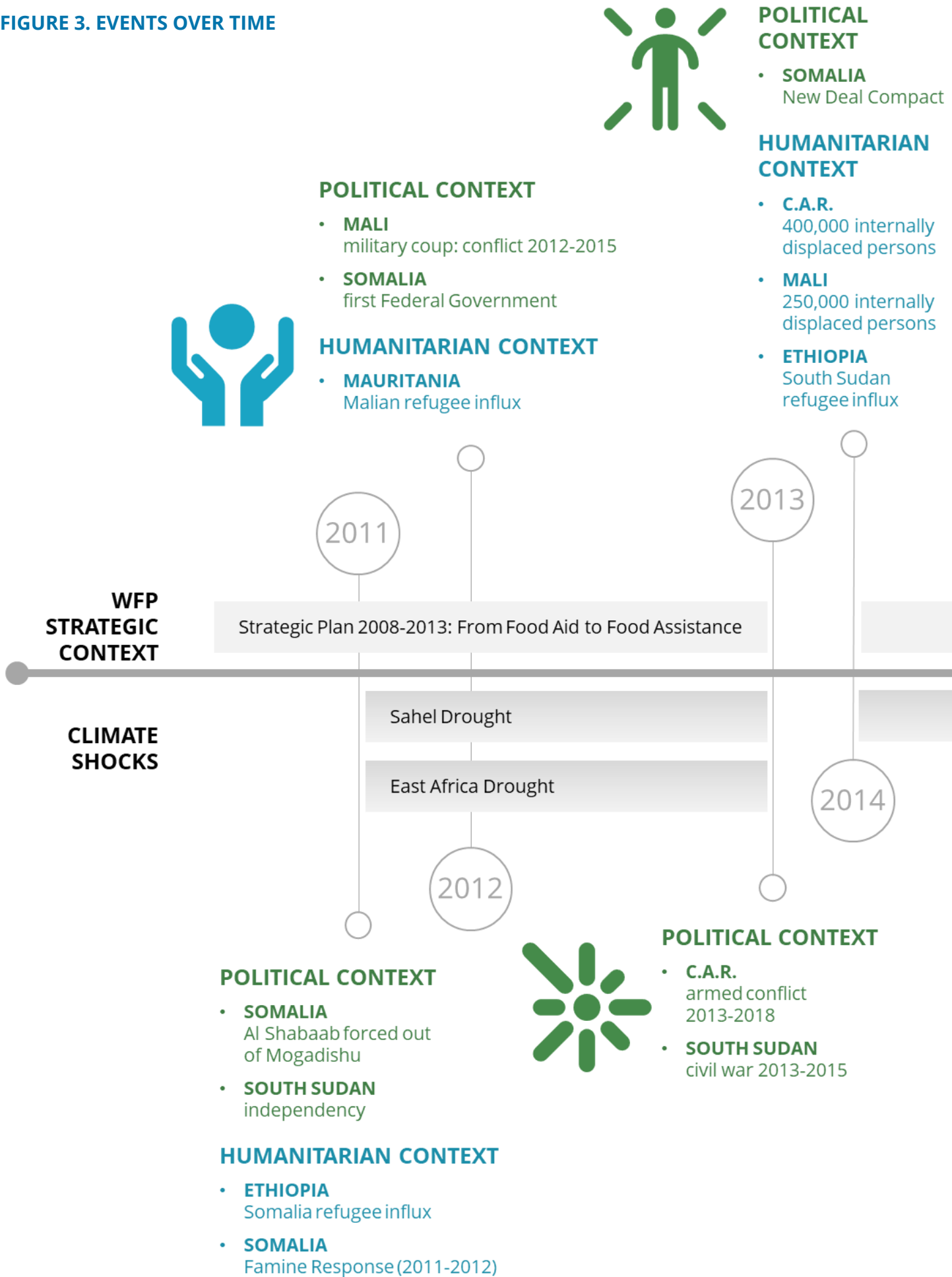
Slow-onset natural disaster

Pandemic

Complex emergency

WFP.OPSCEN@wfp.org

FIGURE 3. EVENTS OVER TIME





## POLITICAL CONTEXT

- **SOUTH SUDAN**  
Clashes in Juba

## HUMANITARIAN CONTEXT

- **SOMALIA**  
Famine response (2016-2017)
- **C.A.R.**  
985,000 internally displaced persons
- **CAMEROON**  
2,4 million food insecure

## POLITICAL CONTEXT

- **BURUNDI**  
political unrest
- **MALI**  
peace agreements
- **SOUTH SUDAN**  
peace agreements

## HUMANITARIAN CONTEXT

- **CAMEROON**  
C.A.R refugee influx

2017



WFP Policy on Country Strategic Plans (Nov. 2016)

Strategic Plan 2014-2016: Zero Hunger

Strategic Plan 2017-2021: Integrated Roadmap

Burundi Floodings

El Niño Drought (Sahel and East Africa)

2016

2015



## POLITICAL CONTEXT










- Launch of **SAHEL** Alliance
- **C.A.R.**  
peace agreements

## HUMANITARIAN CONTEXT

- **SOUTH SUDAN**  
1,9 million internally displaced persons

Figure 4 provides further details on the country contexts.

**FIGURE 4: COUNTRY CONTEXTS**

<b>HIGH POVERTY LEVELS</b>	Six countries are low income; two (Cameroon and Mauritania) are lower-middle income <sup>6</sup> . Four <sup>7</sup> rank in the bottom ten countries of the 2017 Human Development Index; three <sup>8</sup> are in the lowest quartile <sup>9</sup> .	
<b>VULNERABILITY TO CLIMATE-CHANGE</b>	Climatic variations – particularly irregular rainfall, coupled with population growth, migration and land degradation, increase desertification <sup>10</sup> . Recurrent droughts occur across the region.	
<b>FOOD INSECURITY</b>	The prevalence of food insecurity is 20–25 percent of the total populations in Mali, Mauritania and Somalia; 30–35 percent in Burundi, Cameroon and Ethiopia; 50 percent in the Central African Republic; and 67 percent in South Sudan.	
<b>NUTRITION</b>	Stunting reached rates between 31 and 58 percent in some regions in Burundi, Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Ethiopia and South Sudan and between 5 and 23 percent in Mali, Mauritania and Somalia. Wasting rates are equal to or below 10 percent in Burundi, Cameroon and Ethiopia and above (with variations between 10–16.7%) in the Central African Republic, Mali, Mauritania, Somalia and South Sudan <sup>11</sup> .	
<b>CONFLICT AND INSTABILITY</b>	All countries except Mauritania experienced conflict or civil unrest between 2011 and 2017. Burundi, the Central African Republic, Mali, Somalia and South Sudan experienced widespread conflict with massive population displacements and disrupted services. The Somali region of Ethiopia and the Far North of Cameroon saw localized conflicts. The Central African Republic, Mali, Somalia and South Sudan have hosted United Nations and African Union peacekeeping and stabilization forces.	
<b>REFUGEES/IDPS</b>	All countries except Mali hosted refugees fleeing regional conflict; all except Mauritania had IDPs.	
<b>GENDER</b>	Four countries <sup>12</sup> rank in the bottom 20 of the Gender Inequality Index (2018); Burundi and Ethiopia are in the lowest quintile. Gender challenges include legal and cultural barriers for women; early marriage; and gender-based violence.	
<b>PROTECTION</b>	Protection challenges arising from conflict included lack of physical safety; killing and kidnapping of civilians; child labour; torture and other ill-treatment of civilians; and rape as a weapon of war.	
<b>HUMANITARIAN ACCESS</b>	All except Burundi faced major challenges to humanitarian access as well as attacks on and kidnapping of humanitarian workers and theft of humanitarian supplies.	

<sup>6</sup> <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GNP.PCAP.CD?locations=XM-XD-XT-XN>.

<sup>7</sup> Burundi, the Central African Republic, Mali and South Sudan.

<sup>8</sup> Cameroon, Ethiopia and Mauritania.

<sup>9</sup> <http://hdr.undp.org/en/composite/HDI>. No measurement available for Somalia.

<sup>10</sup> Sources : <https://www.un.org/africarenewal/magazine/december-2013/sahel-one-region-many-crises> and CPEs.

<sup>11</sup> Source: CPEs.

<sup>12</sup> Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Mali and Mauritania.

<sup>13</sup> All except Burundi

### 1.3 WFP PORTFOLIOS

The eight evaluated portfolios included 68 separate operations. They had combined requirements of over USD 12.7 billion and targeted almost 100 million beneficiaries. Annex i provides details of their content. The portfolios shared the following features:

- They covered the continuum from emergency response to recovery and development, with emergency operations a major component.
- General food assistance, nutrition activities, school feeding; food assistance for assets (FFA); and food assistance for training (FFT) were implemented in all eight countries; resilience activities were carried out in six countries and disaster risk reduction work in five.
- All portfolios included capacity strengthening and other technical assistance, and all used mixed modalities (cash-based and in-kind transfers).
- Refugees and/or internally displaced persons (IDPs) were targeted in all eight.
- Forty-five special operations provided logistics and telecommunications in seven of the eight countries<sup>13</sup>, including common services for the humanitarian community.

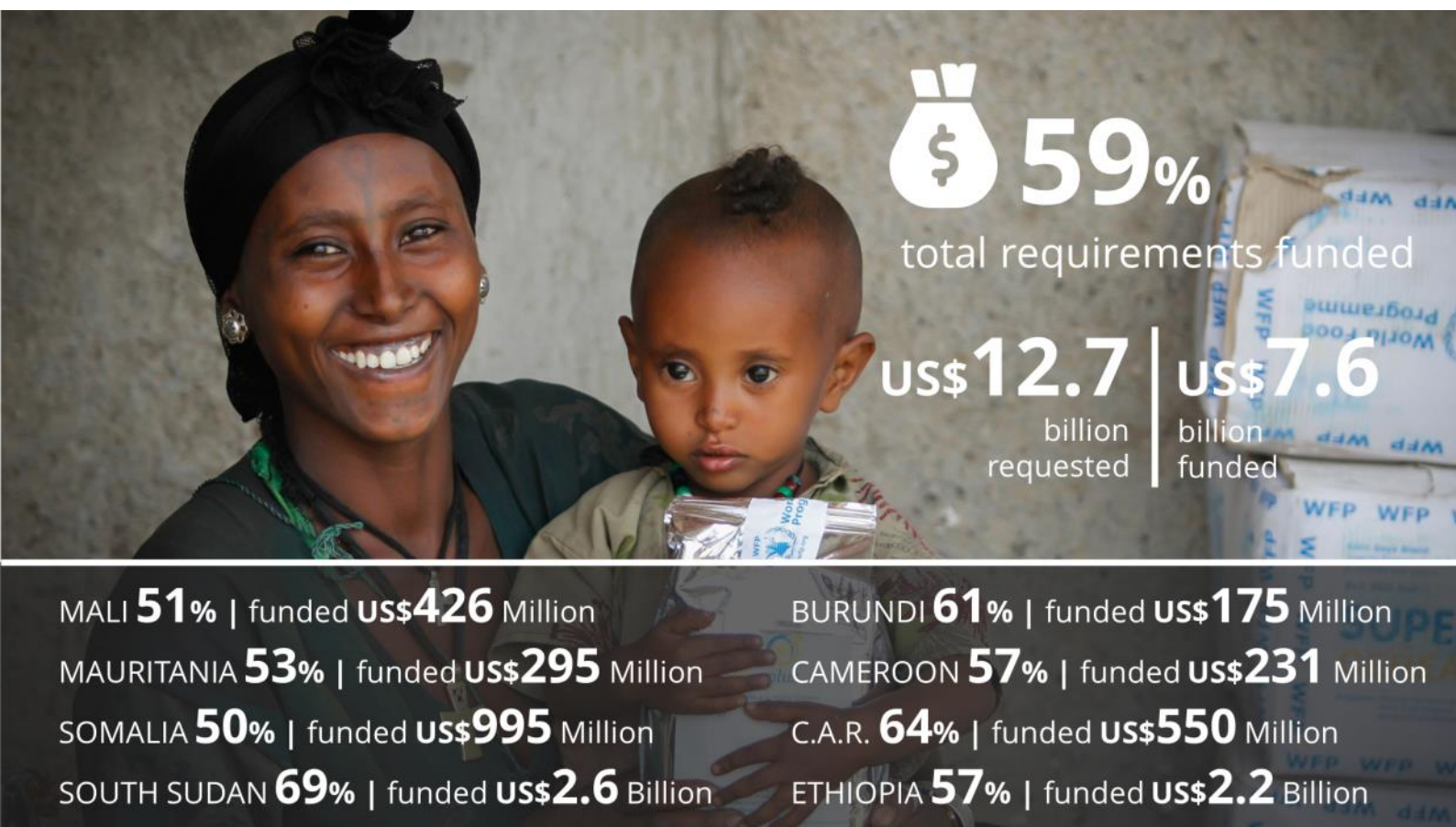
All eight portfolios faced funding shortages (figure 5). On average, WFP secured 59 percent of the required funding. Constraints included donor fatigue; low visibility of crises; and the suspension of funding arising from adverse political situations or institutional instability. In four countries, WFP's funding targets were considered overambitious.

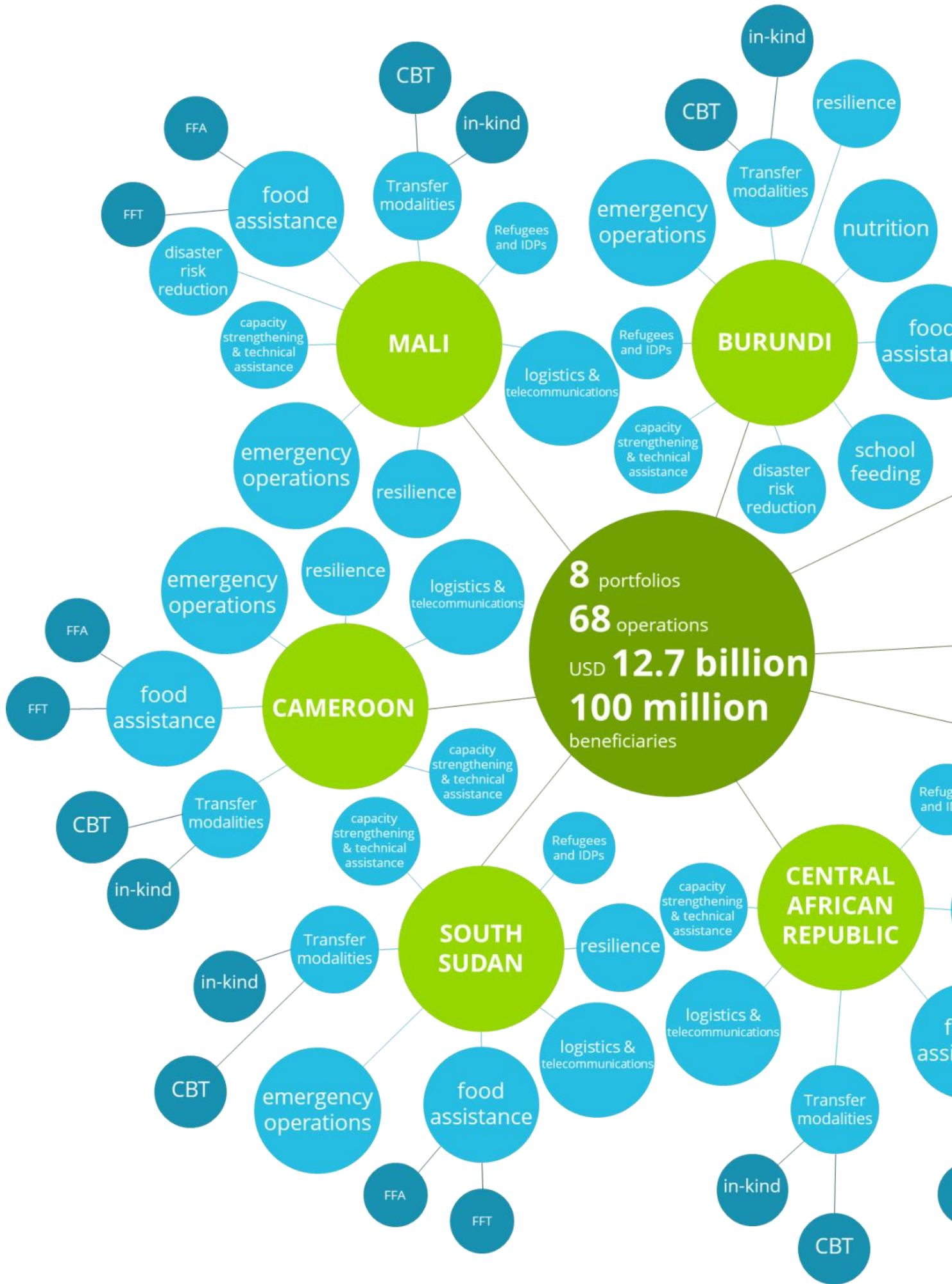
### 1.4 METHODOLOGY

This synthesis extracted data systematically using structured codes through ATLAS.ti software. The data was triangulated through the qualitative analysis of reports and supplemented by interviews with staff of WFP country offices, regional bureaux and headquarters. Findings were validated by an internal reference group comprising programme staff from country offices, regional bureaux and headquarters, including through a workshop in February 2019.

Limitations of the report include its dependence on its component studies for valid and reliable findings, and data gaps, particularly at the outcome level, which hampered aggregation. Results data were generated from WFP internal sources, triangulated with evaluations. The findings of this synthesis reflect the eight portfolios evaluated; they do not represent the full WFP global portfolio.

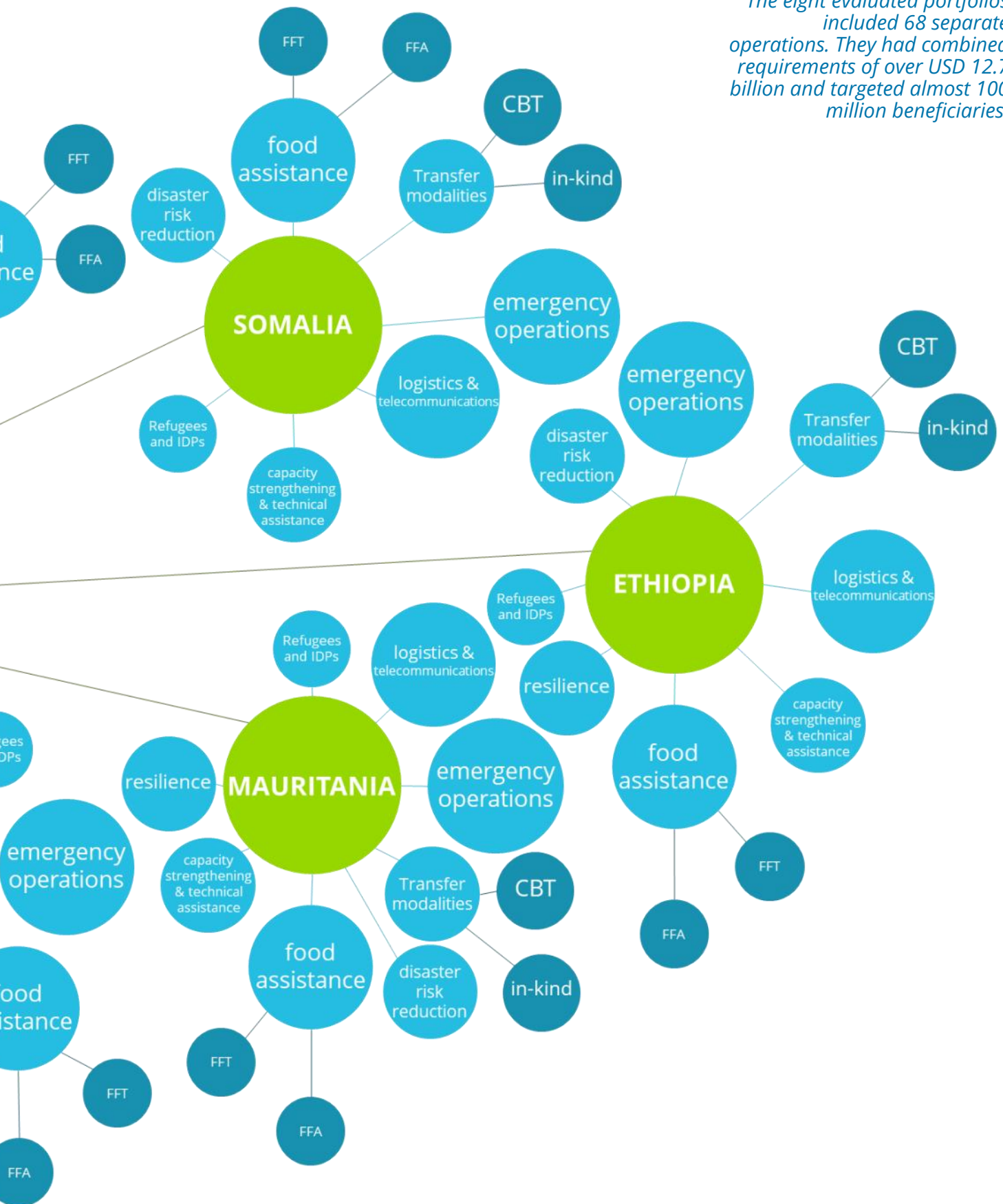
**FIGURE 5: WFP PORTFOLIOS FUNDING AVAILABILITY**





**FIGURE 6 : WFP PORTFOLIOS**

*The eight evaluated portfolios included 68 separate operations. They had combined requirements of over USD 12.7 billion and targeted almost 100 million beneficiaries.*





# FINDINGS

## 2.1 ALIGNMENT AND STRATEGIC POSITIONING

**Relevance to needs.** All eight country portfolios were appropriately designed for the country conditions at the time of design. Under conditions of stability, as in Burundi, Cameroon, Mali and Mauritania, portfolios were development-focused; in the Central African Republic and Ethiopia, emergency and development activities were combined; and in Somalia and South Sudan, designs were mainly emergency-focused. Individual activities were largely relevant to beneficiary needs, except for some resilience activities. However, the needs of certain IDP groups were not met in Ethiopia and Somalia<sup>14</sup>.

**Adapting to volatility.** Outbreaks of conflict, civil war and natural disasters caused humanitarian needs to fluctuate dramatically in all eight countries. WFP swiftly reoriented its operations to address emergency conditions, launching major responses to drought in Ethiopia in 2015/2016 and in Somalia in 2017 and the outbreak of nationwide civil war in the Central African Republic in 2013. In Cameroon, it transformed a small development-focused portfolio into a major emergency response following a massive influx of refugees in 2014.

**Prioritizing life-saving activities.** Facing acute emergency conditions and funding shortages, WFP prioritized life-saving operations in all eight countries. However, the cessation of development-focused activities sometimes compromised WFP's strategic relevance, interrupting continuity with communities and leaving some needs unmet. In Cameroon, for example, school meals,

community cereal banks and nutritional support were discontinued when the 2014 emergency hit.

**Strategic gaps.** There were gaps or weaknesses in strategic planning in six portfolios. Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Ethiopia and Somalia, for example, lacked overarching strategies for several years. Meanwhile, strategies in Mali and Mauritania were overtaken by events (refugee flows and the outbreak of conflict, respectively). In South Sudan, WFP did not proactively adapt its strategic approach to an acute, multi-year crisis. In Burundi, however, WFP's 'far sighted and realistic' recognition of potential conflict supported swift emergency mobilization when political unrest occurred.

**Shift to country strategic plans.** Between 2018 and 2019, all eight country offices implemented WFP's 2016 policy on country strategic plans. A country strategic plan (CSP) was implemented in Cameroon, while in the other countries, one-year interim CSPs (ICSPs) or transitional ICSPs were put in place (figure 7).

The CSPs<sup>15</sup> in Cameroon, the Central African Republic and Mali, which were in place at the time of evaluation, were all relevant to needs and lent greater strategic coherence and vision to WFP's planning in all three countries. In the Central African Republic, for example, the ICSP helped recalibrate the balance between emergency response and early national recovery.

**Coherence with national priorities.** Portfolios were mostly aligned with national policies and priorities, although there were some activity-level gaps in Cameroon

**FIGURE 7: COUNTRY STRATEGIC PLANNING SHIFTS**

	2018	2019
<b>COUNTRY STRATEGIC PLAN</b>	Cameroon	Mauritania
<b>INTERIM COUNTRY STRATEGIC PLAN</b>	Burundi Central African Republic South Sudan	Ethiopia Somalia
<b>TRANSITIONAL INTERIM COUNTRY STRATEGIC PLAN</b>	Mali Mauritania	
<b>TRANSITIONAL INTERIM COUNTRY STRATEGIC PLAN PLANNING</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Defined WFP position, role and specific contribution</li> <li>•Specified outcomes, outputs, activities</li> <li>•Identified resources, technical support and guidance</li> </ul>	

<sup>14</sup> The needs of IDPs displaced by conflict in Ethiopia and those of IDPs in urban areas/adolescent girls in Somalia following the drought.

<sup>15</sup> References to CSPs include ICSPs and transitional ICSPs.



and Somalia<sup>16</sup>. Nutrition and school feeding activities in four countries were implemented directly through national programmes. CSPs facilitated strategic alignment, including for recovery and peacebuilding in Cameroon, the Central African Republic and Mali. Portfolios in Cameroon, Ethiopia and Mauritania encountered challenges in balancing national and WFP targeting priorities, requiring negotiation and compromise.

**Coherence with United Nations frameworks.** In all eight countries, portfolios cohered with United Nations frameworks, including United Nations development assistance frameworks and humanitarian response plans or their equivalent. WFP was an active partner in the development of these frameworks in all countries. CSP development also helped define WFP's role within the wider United Nations response in Cameroon, the Central African Republic and Mali.

**Donor priorities influencing choices.** In all eight countries, donor preferences regarding activity selection, targeting and transfer modalities shaped WFP strategic choices. Individual donor influence was magnified by a narrow donor base in Burundi, the Central African Republic and Mali. In at least five countries, differing donor positions on transfer modalities and resilience proved challenging to reconcile.

**Limited gender sensitivity in design.** Seven portfolios<sup>17</sup>

lacked adequate gender analysis to inform design. Following the implementation of the 2015–2020 Gender Policy, however, gender analysis was conducted in Ethiopia and Somalia, and gender mainstreaming was stepped up in five portfolios. Overall, designs still focused on “including women” rather than transformative change such as increasing women's participation in decision making and resource management or ensuring leadership. Targets were oriented towards “equal participation”, in line with WFP's corporate indicators, although the evaluations of the portfolios in Cameroon and the Central African Republic critiqued the indicators' limitations. Country offices in Ethiopia, Somalia and South Sudan developed dedicated gender strategies.

**Limited protection analysis.** WFP used available data to ensure protection-sensitive programme design in Mali, Somalia and South Sudan but missed opportunities to apply available information and/or lacked adequate engagement on the issue with national stakeholders in Cameroon, the Central African Republic and Somalia.

**Variable internal coherence.** The design of portfolios in the Central African Republic, Ethiopia and Mali harnessed strong internal synergies, but opportunities were missed elsewhere. CSP preparation in Cameroon and the Central African Republic also supported a more integrated approach.





## 2.2 STRATEGIC DECISION MAKING AND CHOICES

**Factors influencing decision making.** Beyond operational conditions and funding, the following factors informed WFP's strategic choices: consultations with national stakeholders; use of learning and evidence; risk assessment and mitigation; and human resources.

**Consultation with national stakeholders.** WFP consulted extensively with national stakeholders to prepare strategies and plans in six countries, for example, through a year-long dialogue with partners in South Sudan. CSP development processes supported consultations in Cameroon, the Central African Republic and Mali, including a 2017 zero hunger review in Cameroon.

**Use of learning and evidence.** The eight country offices applied food security and nutrition analysis to inform strategic choices. However, conflict, fragility or capacity analysis was insufficiently conducted or applied, and some designs had information gaps, for example on the

underlying causes of food security and undernutrition (Mali and Mauritania) and nutrition status (the Central African Republic and Ethiopia). Only in Burundi, Cameroon and Somalia were the findings from evaluations and reviews adequately applied to inform portfolio design.

**Risk assessment and mitigation.** Portfolios in Cameroon and Somalia incorporated comprehensive risk management and mitigation procedures. The others, however, had gaps, such as insufficient analysis in some key risk areas (the Central African Republic, Mali and Mauritania) and gaps in plans for monitoring against mitigation plans (South Sudan). In Somalia, WFP adopted a risk-sensitive approach, operating only in areas where it could physically monitor operations, while in South Sudan a high level of risk-tolerance enabled WFP to reach even security-challenged areas.

**Lack of staffing continuity.** In five countries, gaps in management and staff continuity constrained the quality of WFP's strategic planning. Linked to gaps in strategic planning, this also compromised WFP's reputation and visibility, for example in Ethiopia.

<sup>16</sup> These were the discontinuation of support to nationally prioritized community cereal banks in Cameroon, and a limited fit between state-level resilience-building strategies and WFP interventions in Somalia.

<sup>17</sup> All except South Sudan.

## 2.3 WORKING IN PARTNERSHIPS



### APPROACHES TO PARTNERSHIP

The emphasis on working through partnerships of the 2016 CSP policy was gradually adopted in all eight country offices. Partners praised WFP's strong technical and adaptive capacities, its transparency and openness and its proactive engagement with partners. In Cameroon and Ethiopia, however, WFP's reputation as a mainly emergency focused organization limited its potential engagement in development-oriented initiatives.



### CLUSTER SYSTEM AND WORKING GROUPS

WFP led the logistics and emergency telecommunications clusters and co-led the food security cluster or working groups in seven countries<sup>18</sup>. It also participated in clusters and working groups on protection, education, nutrition, gender-based violence, and camp coordination and management. Its cluster leadership or co-leadership was considered efficient and effective, although some strategic and operational coordination weaknesses were found in the Central African Republic, Somalia and South Sudan.



### NATIONAL GOVERNMENT PARTNERSHIPS

WFP was a leading and influential partner to host governments, despite challenging institutional environments. Roles varied according to conditions: in Ethiopia, WFP provided strategic partnership for nationally-led programmes; in the Central African Republic, Mali and Somalia it also acted as a service provider where the state was temporarily absent or weak. Tensions and trade-offs between national and WFP priorities, such as on targeting, were generally managed well and without detriment to relationships.



### UNITED NATIONS AND ROME-BASED AGENCY COORDINATION

Operational coordination with United Nations agencies including the other Rome-based agencies encompassed joint needs assessments; food security surveys; data-sharing (e.g. on refugee status registration) and joint implementation in school feeding, asset creation/resilience programming and the prevention of malnutrition, as well as REACH<sup>19</sup> initiatives. However, in six countries, practical barriers including diverse programming cycles, resource capacities and funding streams impeded planned synergies. Rome-based agency coordination was not optimized in Cameroon, Ethiopia, Somalia and South Sudan with challenges including financial constraints and the limited field presence of WFP sister agencies.



### DONOR PARTNERSHIPS

Despite challenges in reconciling diverse donor priorities, WFP had generally strong country-level partnerships with donors. Relationships were reinforced through extensive consultations on strategic planning. However, in Cameroon, Ethiopia and Mauritania communication gaps created the perception that WFP transparency or information sharing was limited. This difficulty also arose where donors lacked physical presence in the country during crisis periods, such as in the Central African Republic and Mali.



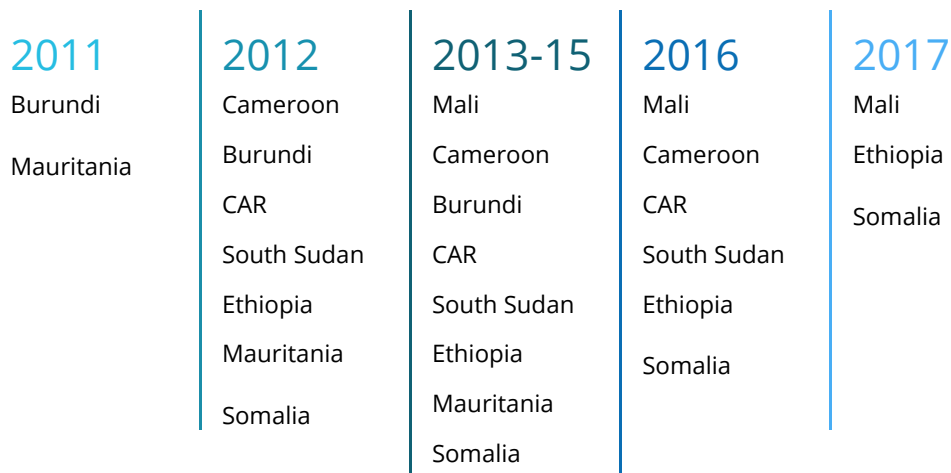
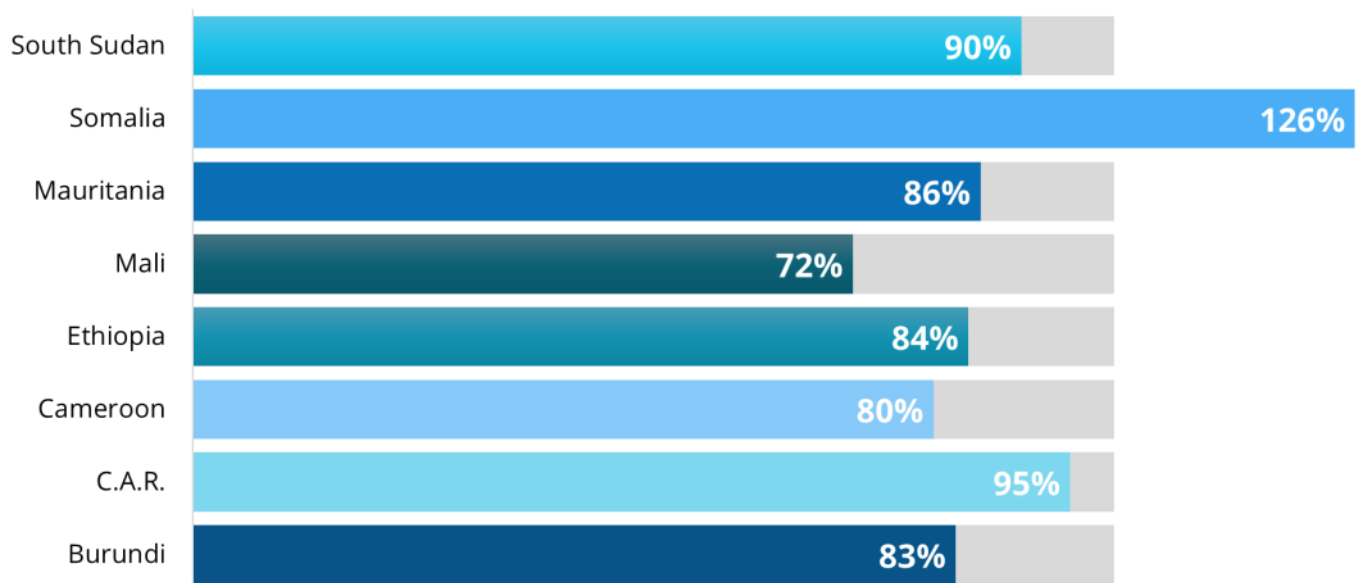
### COOPERATING PARTNER RELATIONSHIPS

Relationships with cooperating partners were close and mutually beneficial in all eight countries. Challenges included the limited capacity of cooperating partners in all countries and high volumes/short-durations of field-level agreements in Mauritania.

<sup>18</sup> Not relevant in Burundi. In Ethiopia, the logistics cluster was activated to support the Government's emergency response to an impending food crisis, not to provide direct logistics coordination for other humanitarian agencies. In Mauritania, the logistics cluster was focused on providing information but did not include any WFP logistics services to United Nations agencies or NGOs.

<sup>19</sup> Renewed Efforts Against Child Hunger.

**FIGURE 8: PLANNED VERSUS ACTUAL BENEFICIARIES BY COUNTRY**



Source: Standardized project report data<sup>19</sup>

## 2.4 PERFORMANCE AND RESULTS

**Geographic targeting.** Six of the evaluations found challenges in geographic targeting. These included differences between national and WFP priorities; information gaps arising from access limitations, particularly in conflict-affected countries; weak internal synergies; and inconsistent approaches used by United Nations agencies.

**Beneficiary targeting** was generally effective in six countries but suffered some activity-level weaknesses. These included the insufficient prioritization of vulnerable populations in nutrition and school feeding in Burundi, the Central African Republic and Somalia; inconsistent

resistance of local political pressure in Mauritania; and differing approaches used by United Nations agencies in the Central African Republic and Mali. WFP SCOPE beneficiary registration system addressed weaknesses in refugee/IDP targeting in five countries from 2016 onwards, improving accuracy and reducing inclusion and exclusion errors.

**Monitoring** suffered from limitations in data availability, quality and reliability, particularly at the outcome level. There were improvements after 2014, however, when new corporate tools and guidance became available to support implementation of the WFP Strategic Results Framework (2014–2017).

## PORTFOLIO OUTPUTS

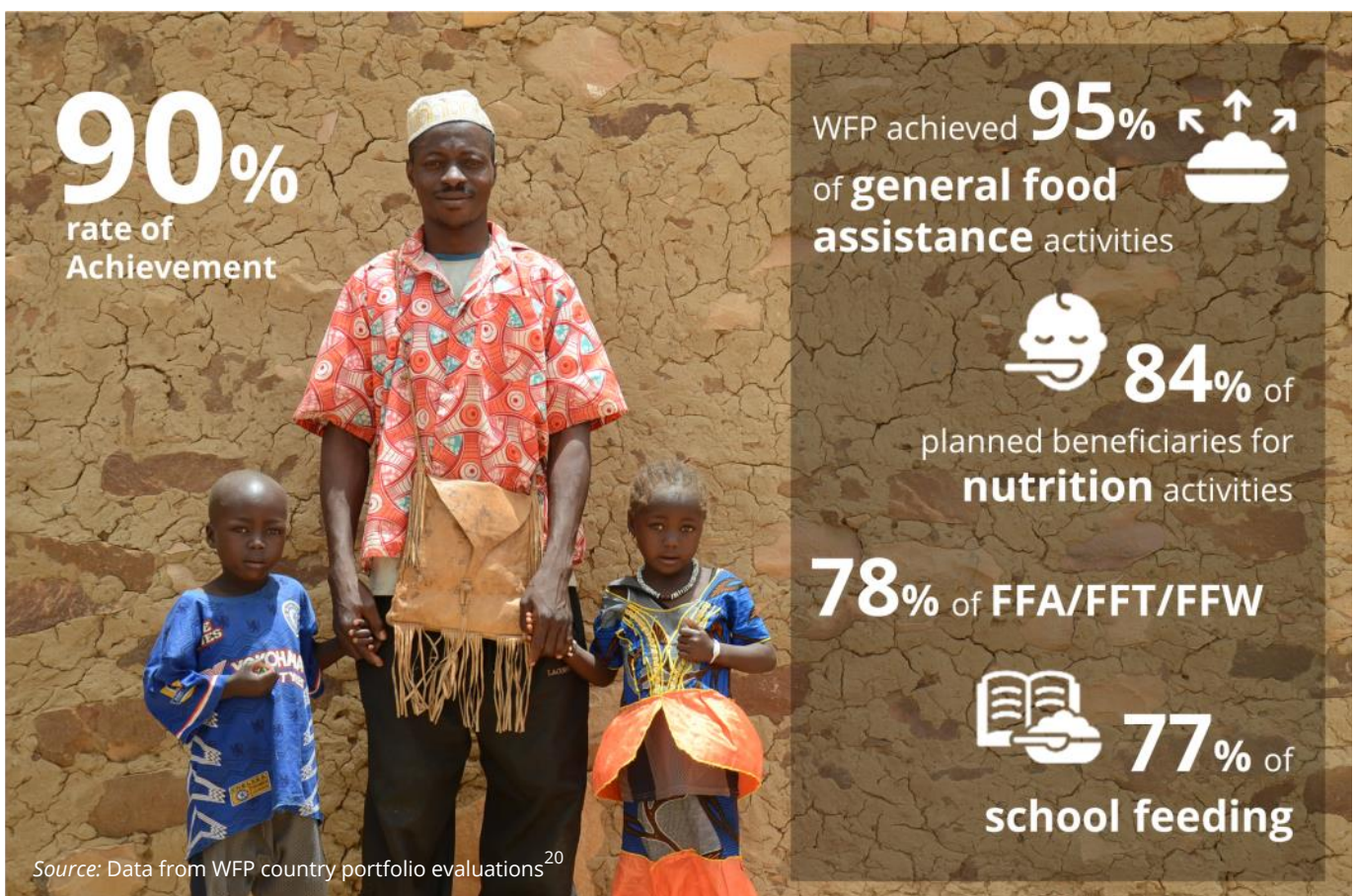
WFP reached on average 90 percent of directly targeted beneficiaries across the eight portfolios between 2011 and 2017. Planned caseloads varied significantly in all countries.

Overall, WFP achieved its planned targets most consistently for general food assistance. It reached 84 percent of planned beneficiaries for nutrition activities, 78 percent of those for FFA/FFT and 77 percent of those for school feeding activities (figure 9).

**Delivering less food than planned.** Overall, 94 percent, or over USD 442 million, of planned cash-based transfers were made (figure 9). Around 59 percent of planned food distribution (over 4 million mt) took place (figure 10). These shortfalls meant reduced consumption days and food volumes for beneficiaries, particularly for early recovery and livelihood activities when life-saving activities had to be prioritized.

**Transfer modalities.** Transfer modalities: The use of cash-based transfers increased significantly over time, from a combined planned total of USD 6.4 million in 2012 to USD 79.6 million in 2016. Compared with in-kind delivery alone, cash-based transfers were associated with increased food and nutrition security in six countries. For example, in the Central African Republic and South Sudan, beneficiaries who received vouchers had better food consumption and dietary diversity scores than those who received only food. Camp-based beneficiaries who received a combination of cash and food in Ethiopia had lower malnutrition rates and higher dietary diversity scores than those who received food only. Where conditions permitted its use, cash was beneficiaries' preferred option in six countries because it improved their ability to purchase fresh foods; facilitated greater dietary diversity; and increased beneficiary decision making regarding food.

**FIGURE 9: PERCENTAGE OF PLANNED TARGETING THAT WAS ACHIEVED, BY ACTIVITY (2011–2017, EIGHT COUNTRIES)**



Source: Data from WFP country portfolio evaluations<sup>20</sup>

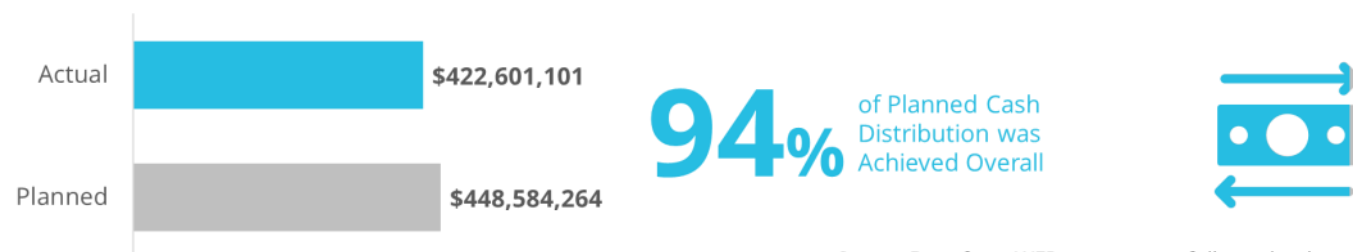
<sup>19</sup> Figure 8 uses standardized project report data provided by the Office of Evaluation to show the total beneficiaries from each year in all eight countries. This avoids the risk of double counting when aggregating multiple years. The overall percentage achieved is based on dividing the sum of all actual beneficiaries by the sum of all planned beneficiaries (across all eight countries from 2011–2017).

<sup>20</sup> Figure 9 uses data from WFP country portfolio evaluations to show the percent of actual and planned beneficiaries across all eight countries from 2011–2017 for each of four main activity categories; these categories are not mutually exclusive or exhaustive. .



**FIGURE 10: COMPARISON OF PLANNED AND ACTUAL CASH-BASED TRANSFER DISTRIBUTION (USD)**

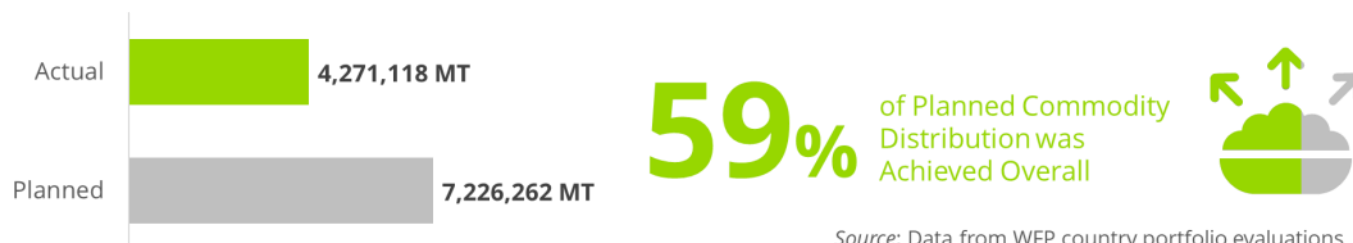
Planned vs. Actual Cash Distribution



Source: Data from WFP country portfolio evaluations

**FIGURE 11: COMPARISON OF PLANNED AND ACTUAL METRIC TONS OF FOOD DISTRIBUTED (MT)**

Planned vs. Actual Commodity Distribution



Source: Data from WFP country portfolio evaluations

<sup>22</sup> Food consumption score (acceptable), diet diversity score (average), coping strategy index, community asset score, recovery rate, mortality rate, default rate, non-response rate, enrolment rate and retention rate.

<sup>23</sup> The methodology applied was a frequency analysis of progress against sample indicators per year. Thus, a green code for diet diversity score (DDS) in 2014 does not indicate the average DDS value for all operations where DDS was measured in all eight portfolios. Instead, it means that WFP was found to meet DDS targets more frequently than not in 2014.

<sup>24</sup> WFP. 2015. Policy on Building Resilience for Food Security and Nutrition (WFP/EB.A/2015/5-C). <https://www.wfp.org/content/policy-building-resilience-food-security-and-nutrition>

## OUTCOMES

Bearing in mind data limitations, figure 10 reflects the performance of WFP assessed by ten outcome indicators<sup>22</sup> for which data are available across the eight portfolios for 2014–2017<sup>23</sup>. In most countries, WFP met or almost met its targets for malnutrition-related indicators (recovery, mortality, default and non-response rates) and for enrolment rates. Its performance varied when measured against targets for dietary diversity, community asset and coping strategy index scores; targets related to food consumption scores proved the most challenging to meet.

**Averting disaster.** Such aggregate-level results, however, mask major contributions to averting disaster. For example, WFP’s role in the humanitarian response to drought in Ethiopia helped prevent widespread catastrophe in 2015/2016, while in Somalia and South Sudan WFP food assistance was credited with helping prevent famine on several occasions between 2014 and 2017.

**Resilience activities.** WFP used FFA and FFT activities to prevent and reduce food and nutrition insecurity in all eight countries. From 2015 onwards, these “prevent and reduce” activities were undertaken under the broad rubric of resilience<sup>24</sup>. There were design weaknesses in four countries, and the sustainability of assets was uncertain in five. However, the gradual implementation of WFP’s 2015 Policy on Building Resilience for Food Security and Nutrition promises future improvement.

**Nutrition.** Outcome data shown in figure 12 indicate that WFP assistance helped improve the nutrition status of beneficiaries, although financial constraints limited the number of beneficiaries reached. Rates of chronic

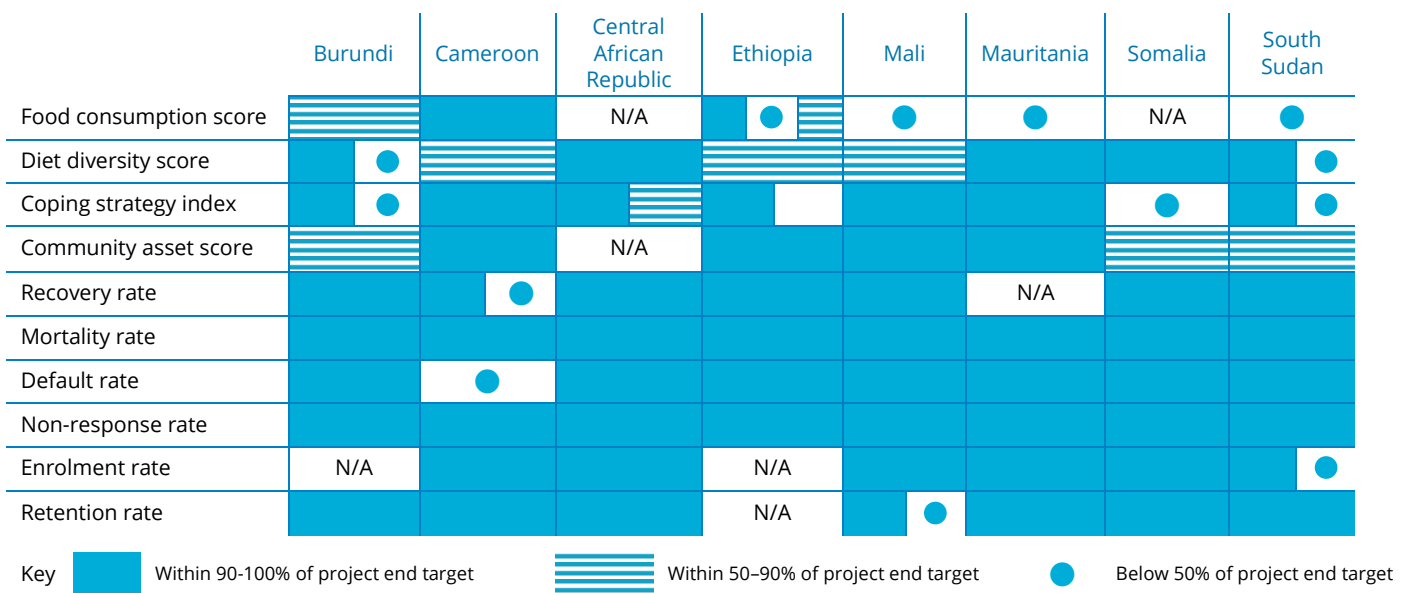
malnutrition, however, were only reduced in Cameroon. Evaluations reported scope for improved targeting and synergies with United Nations agencies and governments to ensure the consistent treatment of moderate acute malnutrition and to help prevent chronic malnutrition through measures such as greater integration of nutrition-sensitive approaches in other sectors. Some evaluations highlighted opportunities to link nutrition activities more closely with emerging national safety nets.

**Capacity strengthening.** During periods of stability, WFP helped build national capacities for food security and nutrition monitoring early warning and preparedness and supply chain management and logistics. Political instability or conflict interrupted implementation in four countries, while shortcomings in design and implementation occurred in five, including limited scale or scope of activities; piecemeal approaches; insufficient financial or human resources; and weak integration with partner intentions.

**Social protection/safety nets.** Six portfolios included activities aimed at facilitating the development or implementation of national social protection or safety net systems. WFP engagement varied according to the maturity of national systems, ranging from helping to build policy frameworks for nascent systems (in Somalia) to providing technical services for more established systems (in Burundi and Mali). Activities were largely judged to be effective.

provider where the state was temporarily absent or weak. Tensions and trade-offs between national and WFP priorities, such as on targeting, were generally managed well and without detriment to relationships.

**FIGURE 12: OUTCOMES ACHIEVED**



## 2.5 STRATEGIC USE OF COMPARATIVE ADVANTAGES

**Comparative advantages.** To help achieve results, WFP harnessed its comparative advantages in food and nutrition security analysis; logistics; agility and ability to operate at scale; field knowledge; innovation; and humanitarian advocacy.

**Food and nutrition security analysis.** In all eight countries, high-quality WFP food and nutrition security analysis, generated even under highly challenging conditions, positioned WFP centrally within the collective humanitarian response. However, four CPEs noted the need for a better understanding of the structural causes of malnutrition.

**Agility and scale.** WFP's adaptive capacity, including its ability to launch major emergency responses swiftly where needed, was highly praised. For example, in South Sudan WFP expanded support from 883,000 beneficiaries in 2012 to over 2.1 million in 2014. In Ethiopia in 2015/2016, WFP mobilized to serve over 10 million people in need. In Somalia in 2017, WFP scaled up assistance from 400,000 beneficiaries to 2.5 million within four months. In six countries, WFP also switched rapidly between transfer modalities.

**Logistics and common services.** WFP's logistics capacity was universally praised for supporting collective humanitarian responses, particularly at times of severe crisis such as in the Central African Republic and South Sudan. Common services provided through special operations also played a fundamental role. These included the WFP-run United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS), which provided the humanitarian community with access to remote and insecure areas in Cameroon, the Central African Republic and South Sudan.

**Extensive field knowledge.** WFP's field knowledge, supported by its extensive partner network, was praised for helping to ensure relevant and appropriate assistance. For example, in Burundi, WFP's deep knowledge of the hunger and nutrition situation and the political, social and economic context helped shape the collective humanitarian response.

**Innovation.** Positive results were achieved from experimenting with innovation, often through the use of technology. Examples included piloting new programmatic approaches or transfer modalities, such as the home-grown school feeding pilot in Ethiopia, which influenced the Government's emergency school feeding programme; using technology for food security assessment and

monitoring; and using biometric systems for beneficiary registration<sup>25</sup>.

**Humanitarian advocacy.** WFP humanitarian advocacy succeeded in drawing attention to emergencies and mobilizing external support in Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Mali, Somalia and South Sudan. It also helped secure humanitarian access in environments with security challenges and persuaded national authorities to apply specific transfer modalities or programmatic approaches.

## 2.6 HUMANITARIAN PRINCIPLES, ACCESS AND THE TRIPLE NEXUS

**International humanitarian principles.** Despite complexities under conflict conditions<sup>26</sup>, WFP assistance largely adhered to international humanitarian principles (IHPs) in all eight countries. Its neutrality and impartiality were highly praised. For example, in Somalia, WFP and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) were regarded as "the guardian[s] of humanitarian principles" in a context of "blurred lines" between humanitarian, political and military agendas. In Mali, WFP's neutral approach garnered respect from all parties to the conflict.

Challenges included the inability to comprehensively address the humanitarian principle of humanity given resource constraints (all eight countries); difficulties in interpreting and applying the principles at the local level in Mauritania, Burundi and South Sudan; and complexities in ensuring full operational independence where WFP cooperated closely with governments in Burundi, Ethiopia and South Sudan.

**Humanitarian access.** There were access constraints in all countries except Burundi and Mauritania. WFP's neutrality facilitated its engagement in access negotiations in Ethiopia, Mali, Somalia and South Sudan, with third-party agents or UNHAS helping to deliver supplies; monitoring was conducted through mobile methods or third parties.

### Supporting peacebuilding and the triple nexus.

Although the "triple nexus" concept gained currency after most of the evaluations had been completed, five CPEs reflected WFP contributions to peacebuilding. In Burundi, Mali, and South Sudan, WFP worked within national peace agreement frameworks, although in the Central African Republic and Mali, it did not consistently seize peacebuilding opportunities. In Ethiopia, WFP participated in a dedicated peace and development programme.

<sup>25</sup> Somalia, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Mauritania and South Sudan.

<sup>26</sup> WFP. 2018. Evaluation of WFP Policies on Humanitarian Principles and Access in Humanitarian Contexts. <https://www.wfp.org/content/wfpps-policies-humanitarian-principles-and-access-humanitarian-contexts-policy-evaluation-ter>.





## 2.7 GENDER, PROTECTION AND ACCOUNTABILITY TO AFFECTED POPULATIONS

**Gender.** All eight portfolios “reached women” as beneficiaries in terms of equitable distribution; women made up an average of 52 percent of beneficiaries in the eight portfolios (figure 13). However, despite implementation of the WFP Gender Policy (2015–2020), few transformative changes were sought or achieved (box 1).

**Protection.** All eight portfolios adopted proactive approaches to protection, despite an inconsistent analytical base. Six adhered to the 2012 WFP Humanitarian Protection Policy. Actions included developing protection-

specific strategies and embedding protection in gender strategies; employing dedicated protection staff; raising protection issues with governments; and generating and applying protection-related data in programme design and implementation.

**Accountability to affected populations.** Scant attention was paid to accountability to affected populations (AAP) in the portfolios. Only in Ethiopia were most beneficiaries aware of targeting criteria, complaint procedures and entitlements; elsewhere, such awareness was lacking. Feedback and complaint mechanisms were implemented in Burundi, Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Mali and Somalia, although their effectiveness could not be assessed in Burundi and Mali<sup>27</sup>.

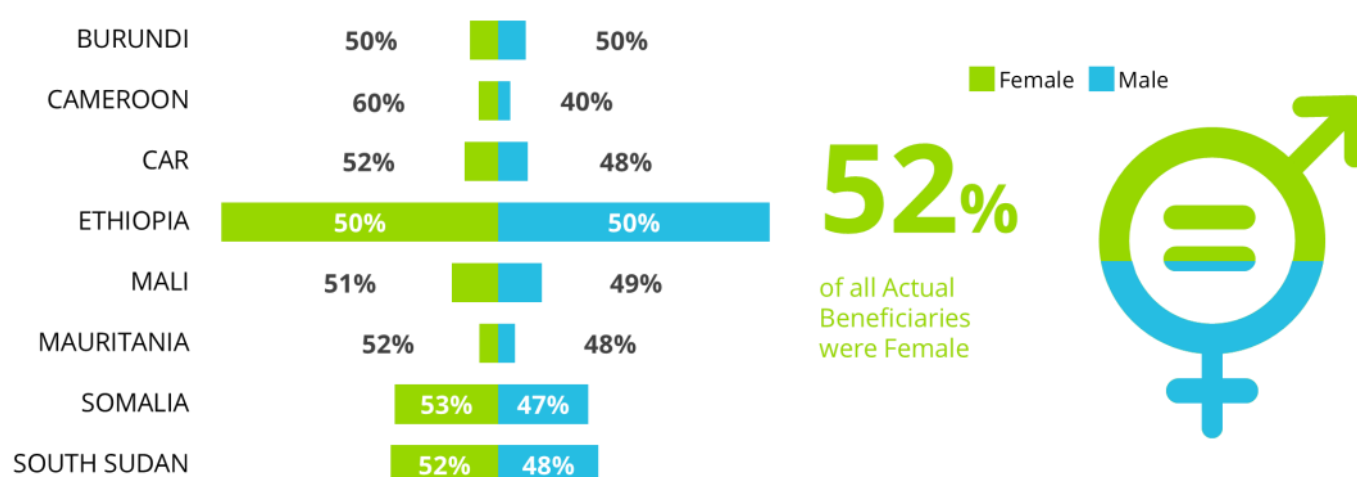
### BOX 1: GENDER RESULTS ACHIEVED

- Increased girls' enrolment and attendance at school (Burundi, Ethiopia, Mali and South Sudan)
- Improved access to health services for women (Mali)
- Increased female representation on FFA management committees (Somalia)
- Increased financial autonomy (Mali)

#### Results gaps

Across portfolios, there were few transformative results in areas such as women's leadership, decision making or control over resources.

**FIGURE 13: BENEFICIARIES DISAGGREGATED BY SEX AND BY COUNTRY (2011–2017)**



<sup>27</sup> In Mauritania no system was in place (despite being planned).

<sup>28</sup> The evaluations for the Central African Republic, Cameroon, Mali and Somalia refer to cost-efficiency/effectiveness analysis, but only concerning the choice of transfer modalities for general food assistance (CBTs or in-kind). The other four do not report comprehensively on cost-efficiency or effectiveness.

## 2.8 EFFICIENCY

**Timeliness and cost-effectiveness.** Portfolios in Burundi, Ethiopia, Mali and Somalia performed efficiently overall, considering contextual constraints, in terms of the following:

- i) *Timeliness:* In Burundi, Ethiopia and Somalia, WFP delivered mostly timely assistance with few or limited interruptions or pipeline breaks. Delays elsewhere were caused by insufficient or unpredictable funding; frequent population displacements; access limitations; and infrastructure weaknesses.
- ii) *Cost-efficiency:* No CPE could report on overall portfolio cost-efficiency or cost effectiveness<sup>28</sup>. However, all eight portfolios successfully reduced costs, including by retargeting using vulnerability criteria; changing transfer modalities (particularly from in kind to cash) or commodity types; and/or switching procurement modalities.

The following drivers of efficiency were noted:



*Biometric beneficiary registration*, which reduced inclusion/exclusion errors and limited duplication.



Use of *cash transfer modalities*, which reduced costs and increased timeliness.



Ensuring *preparedness*, which facilitated timely emergency response.



*Emergency activation*, which enabled swift mobilization for large-scale (Level 3) emergencies.



*Supply chain management procedures*, including cost-sharing agreements across country offices and pre-positioning to reduce the use of cargo planes. The Global Commodity Management System reduced lead times by 74 percent in Ethiopia, 62 percent in Somalia and 54 percent in South Sudan.



*Infrastructural rehabilitation and development* including the rehabilitation of airstrips in South Sudan; port infrastructure improvements in Somalia; warehouse rehabilitation in Ethiopia; and the construction of a humanitarian logistics and storage hub in Djibouti to serve Ethiopia and the wider Horn of Africa.

## 2.9 SUSTAINABILITY

In volatile operating environments, opportunities for sustainability were limited. However, in five countries WFP adequately linked emergency activities to transition, recovery and development, for example through the “twin track” approach to emergency response and development in Mali and Somalia.

Strategies for handover to national partners were developed in four countries but could not be implemented because of a sudden return to emergency conditions (Cameroon); limited government capacity or engagement (Mali and Mauritania); and/or limited funding (Mali).

Four portfolios lacked adequate exit strategies. When conflict or funding gaps caused activities to cease without warning, as in Burundi, Somalia and South Sudan, beneficiaries had little time to find alternative means of support.





COUNTRY  
PORTFOLIO  
EVALUATION  
RECOMMENDATIONS  
AND  
MANAGEMENT  
RESPONSES



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**T**he CPEs included 60 recommendations in total; WFP management agreed with 54 of them and partially agreed with the remaining 6.

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Recommendations were formulated through participatory processes with WFP country offices, headquarters and regional bureaux.

Annex II lists the most frequently occurring recommendations. All CPEs highlighted strategic planning and partnerships; food security analysis; nutrition; and

monitoring and evaluation as areas for improvement. Implementation of the agreed evaluation recommendations had begun or was well under way in all countries at the time of writing, and evaluation recommendations had influenced the development of CSPs. However, in some countries, limited operational space impeded full implementation. In others, such as Somalia, recommendations were considered too optimistic for the prevailing conditions in the country.

Wherever CSPs were developed during or after CPEs, WFP applied the learning and evidence generated by the evaluations to inform its strategic planning. All evaluation recommendations from the eight CPEs were reflected in dedicated CSP strategic objectives and/or mainstreamed across CSP strategic intentions (see annex III).



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## This synthesis finds that WFP portfolios in sub-Saharan Africa faced persistent challenges over time. Confronting recurring cycles of hunger and vulnerability, they addressed acute and unpredictable needs while adjusting to corporate change.

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The CPEs highlighted how WFP's specialized capabilities and technical assets were applied to address the effects of war, political instability and climate change on food security and nutrition. The organization's strengths in rapid adaptation and scale-up; extensive emergency response capacity; technical abilities in food security and nutrition analysis; and committed relationships with national partners prove valuable assets, not least in supporting famine prevention in Ethiopia and Somalia.

Where conditions and funding permitted, WFP activities spanned the humanitarian–development continuum. Delivery targets were largely met, although most achievements were the result of emergency rather than development responses. Performance was enhanced by high tolerance of risk in many areas, alongside innovation and an agile approach. In complex operating environments, assistance largely adhered to the International Humanitarian Principles; with WFP respected at the country level, as a neutral and impartial actor, despite some challenges at the local level. Effective humanitarian advocacy helped enable access in insecure areas.

However, strategic gaps and weaknesses – including during periods of stability – were compounded in some countries by gaps in staff and management continuity. Strategies sometimes became obsolete when crises hit. The implementation of WFP's 2016 Policy on Country Strategic Plans promises improvement in this area, supporting clearer strategic positioning and a more coherent approach. Extensive consultation also helped define operational contributions to the collective response.

Nonetheless, the synthesis underlines the importance of a sound analytical base, alongside preparedness measures, scope for flexibility and systematic risk assessment and mitigation.

Limited explicit attention was paid to the humanitarian–development–peacebuilding triple nexus, but there were some emerging contributions. Focusing on resilience will help increase progress but requires a long-term view and partnerships, appropriate technical approaches and explicit attention to peacebuilding.

WFP generally worked well in partnership, particularly with host governments, although there were some practical barriers to operational coordination with partner United Nations agencies and WFP did not always communicate consistently with donors. Reconciling diverse donor priorities across operational areas is an ongoing challenge that requires clear advocacy, rationales and communication.

Protection was well integrated into portfolios, despite limited analysis at the design stage. Attention to AAP was inconsistent at best, exacerbating the difficulties of weak or inadequate exit strategies. In some cases, a sudden cessation of activities without warning risked causing hardship to beneficiaries.

Approaches to gender remained focused on “including women”, guided by limited corporate indicators. With few transformative changes sought or demonstrated, WFP's commitment to a “shift in gear” as called for in its Gender Policy and associated gender action plan was not yet evident.

Finally, in volatile circumstances WFP faced some major dilemmas. When confronted by emergency needs, it – of necessity, and encouraged by donor contributions – prioritized saving lives over activities to support recovery and transition. Yet this came at a cost, affecting the continuity of activities and WFP's commitments to relationships and communities and to changing lives, limiting potentially valuable humanitarian and development gains. Such choices are not fully under WFP's control, but sound planning and preparation, clear rationales for decision making, and advocacy for multi-year funding are essential if WFP's work is to ensure linkages across the triple nexus and prioritize prevention and preparedness in future.





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The following seven lessons have been drawn from the eight CPEs.

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**2 Resilience presents an opportunity for integrated planning.** While resilience approaches were relatively new in the eight portfolios, their broad, systemic and medium-term nature makes them relevant across the triple nexus and to preparedness and prevention. They would benefit from being tailored to the circumstances in which they are to be employed and a medium-term approach to partnerships and resourcing.

**1 A strong analytical base supports strategic relevance.** Flexible planning informed by a comprehensive analytical base supports ongoing strategic relevance. This includes conflict, capacity, gender, political economy, protection and risk analysis, as well as analysis of the root causes of poverty and vulnerability. Inbuilt flexibility supports effective preparedness and response capacity.

**3 Capacity strengthening requires long-term planning and commitment.** Similarly, short-term training activities alone do not fully achieve results where institutional capacity is limited. There is a need for a systems approach in which capacity analysis is undertaken from a governance and political economy perspective and clear entry points geared to medium-term partnerships are identified.



**Mauritania:** Cash transfer innovations: telephone banking, Proxy Means Testing, national approaches to safety nets



**Mali:** Woman's empowerment focus in all relevant activities, including household decision-making and leadership on food management committees



**Cameroon:** Humanitarian Response Plan reflected attention to resilience and vulnerability



**South Sudan:** Resilience context analysis improved targeting of resilience building to areas of repeated crisis



**4 Adherence to the International Humanitarian Principles requires adapting to context.** While WFP's assistance largely adhered to the International Humanitarian Principles, conflict-affected contexts are nuanced and create particular needs. The interpretation of International Humanitarian Principles according to the local context facilitates their application, particularly for cooperating partners.

**5 Protection and AAP require sustained attention.** While protection and AAP benefit from clear institutional frameworks, implementation can be challenging in practice, particularly under emergency conditions. Key ingredients include a directive approach; sustained management attention; and feedback loops from monitoring through to programming. CSPs provide valuable entry points for mainstreaming.

**6 Gender requires a transformative approach.** Gender equality cannot be met simply by "serving women" or by targeting "equal numbers" in standard programme models. Tailored approaches that are based on analysis and address structural inequalities are needed. Robust accountability frameworks should support the targeting and tracking of gender-transformative gains.

**7 Investment in innovation pays dividends.** The innovations used in the evaluated country portfolios, mostly based on technology, have proven their worth in enhancing efficiency and effectiveness as well as WFP's reputation. An ethos of continual improvement and an entrepreneurial spirit underpin them and, if supported, can continue to deliver benefits.



**Ethiopia:** Improved anticipation of shocks through partnership with the National Disaster Risk Management Commission; signs showing entitlements at distribution sites and beneficiaries informed at monthly pre-distribution meetings



**Somalia:** Achieved impartiality: neutral approach to distribution; preserving operational independence; not flying with the United Nations Support Office



**Burundi:** Flexible strategic planning supported crisis response





# SYNTHESIS RECOMMENDATIONS



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The following six recommendations aim to support WFP as it continues its strategic shift under the CSP process. They are based on two conditions:

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- Synthesis recommendations assume that the recommendations of individual country portfolio, policy and strategic evaluations are implemented in full. Those presented here highlight additional or specific issues arising from aggregate-level analysis.
- Although recommendations 4–6 on operational improvement are directed at regional bureaux and country offices, they encourage the gathering and use of learning to help improve the wider organization.

## AREA 1: STRATEGIC PLANNING

### 1. IMPROVE THE AVAILABILITY AND USE OF GUIDANCE TO SUPPORT CSP DESIGN

(I) Provide clear and specific guidance (particularly within CSP and national zero hunger strategic review guidance) to ensure that CSPs include:

- The use of conflict-sensitive approaches (including conflict/fragility analysis, do no harm and peacebuilding approaches, where relevant);
- Support for innovation (including building the evidence base; piloting/trialling approaches; monitoring and reporting on results);
- Risk identification and mitigation in CSP design across the spectrum of political, strategic and conflict-related risks.

RESPONSIBLE

Headquarters: Policy and Programme Division (OSZ), Emergency Preparedness and Support Response Division (OSE) and Enterprise Risk Management Division (RMR)

TIMING

By Q4 2019

(II) At the next available opportunity (CSP formulation/mid-term review) ensure that these areas are fully and explicitly addressed.

RESPONSIBLE

Country offices with support from regional bureau in Dakar (RBD)/ regional bureau in Nairobi (RBN)

TIMING

2019–2021: Depending on the next round of CSPs and/or mid-term reviews



## 2. STRENGTHEN THE FINANCIAL AND PARTNERSHIP BASE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT AND PEACEBUILDING ASPECTS OF ZERO HUNGER

(I) Develop regional medium-term partnership strategies explicitly defining WFP's comparative advantage and intended contributions to the collective development and peacebuilding elements of zero hunger.

### RELEVANT STRATEGIC/POLICY EVALUATION RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 5, strategic evaluation of the pilot country strategic plans: "Seek to address constraints on flexible and predictable financing."

### RESPONSIBLE

RBD/RBN with engagement of relevant country offices

### TIMING

By Q1 2020

(II) Develop a fundraising strategy to strengthen medium to long-term financing of development and peacebuilding activities. Include the following:

- Clear and time-bound targets for more flexible and predictable funding for development and peacebuilding activities in the context; and
- Communication strategies to convey the cost and potential harm to communities of interrupting ongoing development and peacebuilding activities to address emergency response.

### RELEVANT STRATEGIC/POLICY EVALUATION RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 3 (ii), strategic evaluation of WFP's support for enhanced resilience: "Develop a fundraising strategy for long-term funding of initiatives on resilience enhancement, including through thematic funding windows (such as for climate resilience) and engagement with the private sector (for example, on insurance instruments)."

### RESPONSIBLE

RBD/RBN with engagement of relevant country offices and support from headquarters Partnerships & Governance Department (PG)

### TIMING

By Q1 2020

## 3. ADDRESS STAFFING AND MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS IN FRAGILE CONTEXTS AND PROTRACTED CRISES

(I) Examine incentives to ensure that hard-to-fill duty stations receive assistance with filling key management and staffing posts and for ensuring continuity thereafter (mindful of diversity issues and the corporate gender parity action plan).

(II) Build or enhance skills for fragile situations and protracted crises, including skills relevant to conflict-sensitive approaches, peacebuilding, political awareness, innovation, gender, protection, the IHPs and AAP.

(III) Build or enhance staff capacities to engage in policy dialogue with national and local authorities in key areas, including with regard to developing policy and strategy frameworks where they are absent or weak.

### RESPONSIBLE

Human Resources Division, RBD/RBN

### TIMING

By Q1 2020 (To align with the timing of staff reassignment)

## AREA 2: OPERATIONAL IMPROVEMENT

### 4. DEVELOP REGIONAL-LEVEL OPERATIONAL PLANS FOR DEVELOPMENT AND PEACEBUILDING ACTIONS REQUIRED TO REDUCE FOOD AND NUTRITION INSECURITY, APPLYING A GENDER-TRANSFORMATIVE LENS

(I) Within the multi-year planning opportunity presented by CSPs, and based on the mapping of root causes and national capacity, identify the regional-level medium-term development and peacebuilding actions required to prevent and reduce food and nutrition insecurity, focusing on strengthening systems where feasible.

#### RELEVANT STRATEGIC/POLICY EVALUATION RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1(iv) and (v), strategic evaluation of WFP's contribution to enhanced resilience: "Define approaches to the strengthening of resilience in protracted crisis and conflict situations."

#### RESPONSIBLE

RBD/RBN with engagement of relevant country offices and support from headquarters OSZ, and the Gender Office (GEN)

#### TIMING

By Q4 2019

(II) Build or enhance skills for fragile situations and protracted crises, including skills relevant to conflict-sensitive approaches, peacebuilding, political awareness, innovation, gender, protection, the IHPs and AAP.

#### RELEVANT STRATEGIC/POLICY EVALUATION RECOMMENDATIONS

"Define approaches to the strengthening of resilience in settings affected by recurrent and worsening climate shocks."

#### RESPONSIBLE

RBD/RBN with engagement of relevant country offices and support from headquarters OSZ, and the Gender Office (GEN)

#### TIMING

By Q4 2019

### 5. SYSTEMATIZE LOCALIZED ADHERENCE TO THE IHPs, PARTICULARLY IN COMPLEX EMERGENCIES AND PROTRACTED CRISES

(I) Strengthen staff competencies related to humanitarian principles and access, particularly in complex emergency situations, including by developing tailored training modules.

(II) Ensure that humanitarian principles are integrated into engagement with cooperating and commercial partners, including selection processes, field level agreements, assessments, planning and communications.

(II) Country offices should report on the implementation of these recommendations to their regional bureaux.

#### RELEVANT STRATEGIC/POLICY EVALUATION RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations 3 and 4, evaluation of WFP policies on humanitarian principles and access in humanitarian contexts:

- "Considerably strengthen staff competencies on humanitarian principles and access, particularly in complex emergency situations."
- "Give more priority to humanitarian principles in all elements of engagement with cooperating partners."

#### RESPONSIBLE

Country offices, with support from RBD/RBN and headquarters Emergencies and Transitions Unit (OSZPH)

#### TIMING

By Q2 2020



## 6. IMPROVE ADHERENCE TO AAP COMMITMENTS

(I) Ensure dissemination of WFP AAP tools and guidance across country offices.

(II) Implement systematic feedback and complaint mechanisms, including two-way communication with various beneficiary groups to ensure that their interests are understood and that they receive information on their entitlements.

(III) Clearly define and communicate the AAP standards expected of cooperating partners and reflect them in field level agreements.

### RELEVANT STRATEGIC/POLICY EVALUATION RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 6, evaluation of the WFP protection policy: "By the end of 2019, the Programme and Policy Division should develop a new strategy for engagement with affected populations and vulnerable groups, which should be based on strengthened community feedback mechanisms."

Recommendation 4 (iv), evaluation of WFP policies on humanitarian principles and access in humanitarian contexts: "Better define the standards for accountability to affected populations expected of partners."

### RESPONSIBLE

Country offices with support from RBD/RBN and OSZPH

### TIMING

By Q4 2019





# ANNEXES

## ANNEX I

### COUNTRY PORTFOLIO KEY FEATURES

	CPE term	Funding		Beneficiaries		Operations				Activities				Transfer modalities		Local purchase	Technical assistance	Refugees/IDPs
		Portfolio value (USD millions)	% funded	Portfolio total (millions) planned over period	% reached over period	EMOP	PRRO	DEV/CP	SO	FEA/FFT	SF	GFA	Nutrition	In-kind	Cash/voucher			
<b>BURUNDI</b>	2011-2015	287	61	4.3	86	1	2	1		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
<b>CAMEROON</b>	2012-2017	402.8	57	4.5	77	5	2	2	2	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
<b>C.A.R.</b>	2012-2017	869.3	64	5.5	98	5	1	1	9	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
<b>ETHIOPIA</b>	2012-2017	3 958.3	57	48.6	75	1	4	1	4	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
<b>MALI</b>	2013-2017	829.3	51	7.7	82	1	1	1	5	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
<b>MAURITANIA</b>	2011-2015	553.2	53	2.7	79	5	2	2	3	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x
<b>SOMALIA</b>	2012-2017	1 978	50	10	136	1	2			x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
<b>SOUTH SUDAN</b>	2011-2016	3 848.4	69	16.5	99	3	1			x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Total		12 726.3	59	99.8		22	15	8	23	8	8	8	8	8	8	7	8	8

## ANNEX II

### COUNTRY PORTFOLIO EVALUATION RECOMMENDATIONS AND MANAGEMENT RESPONSES

THEMES	FREQUENCY	COUNTRIES	SPECIFIC AREAS	REFLECTED IN CSP STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES/INTENT
Strategic planning/ partnerships	8	All	Reinforcing strategic planning, including contributions to the triple nexus, from a partnership perspective	8
Food security analysis	8	All	Enhancing analysis of the food/nutrition security situation/root causes	8
Nutrition	8	All	Applying nutrition-sensitive approaches; building/improving partnerships e.g. with the Scaling Up Nutrition movement, United Nations agencies and governments	8
Monitoring and evaluation	8	All	Improving outcome monitoring; enhancing third-party monitoring	8
Capacity development	7	All except Mali	Mapping institutional capacity gaps; mainstreaming capacity strengthening in programming	7
Gender	7	All except South Sudan	Intensifying gender mainstreaming e.g. through by developing gender strategies/ action plans	7
Humanitarian- development continuum	6	Burundi, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Mali, Somalia, South Sudan	Adopting integrated humanitarian and development responses, encompassing emergency response capacity while building long-term resilience	6

## ANNEX III

# COUNTRY PORTFOLIO EVALUATION SYNTHESIS RECOMMENDATIONS AND COUNTRY PORTFOLIO EVALUATION RECOMMENDATIONS

Mapping of CPE Synthesis Recommendations and individual CPE Recommendations

CPE Synthesis Recommendations	Rec 1 Strategic Planning		Rec 2.1 Develop medium-term partnership strategies for relevant development and peacebuilding areas of Zero Hunger		Rec 2.2 Articulate and communicate WFP value-added development and peacebuilding spheres to partners, linked to fundraising		Rec 3 Prioritise the strategic dimensions of management and staffing in fragile contexts/protracted crises		Rec 4 Develop regional-level operational plans to strengthen the focus on development and peacebuilding actions required to reduce food and nutrition insecurity with a gender transformative lens						Rec 5 Systematise localised adherence to the IHPs, particularly in complex emergencies/protracted crises		Rec 6 Improve adherence to AAP commitments	
	Strategic alignment (Rec 1)	Outcome analysis (Rec 9)	Resilience (Rec 7)	Resource mobilization (Rec 8)	Resilience (Rec 7)	Resilience (Rec 7)	Resilience (Rec 7)	Targeting, Integration (Rec 2)	Nutrition (Rec 5)	School feeding (Rec 6)	Gender (Rec 3)							
<b>Recommendation</b>	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	Targeting, Integration	No	No	Gender (Rec 3)								
<b>Reflected in</b>	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	Targeting	Yes	No	No								
<b>Recommendation</b>	Yes	Yes	Peace-building (Rec 1)	Funding (Rec 2)	Peace-building (Rec 1)	Funding (Rec 2)	No	No	Gender (Rec 4)	Gender (Rec 4)								
<b>Reflected in</b>	Yes	Yes	Peace-building (Rec 1)	Funding (Rec 2)	Peace-building (Rec 1)	Funding (Rec 2)	No	No	Gender (Rec 4)	Gender (Rec 4)								
<b>Recommendation</b>	No	No	No	No	No	No	Staffing and continuity (Rec 3)	Resilience (Rec 3)	Nutrition (Rec 5)	Refugees							AAP/protection	
<b>Reflected in</b>	No	No	No	No	No	No	Staffing and continuity (Rec 3)	Resilience (Rec 3)	Nutrition (Rec 5)	Refugees							No	
<b>Recommendation</b>	Yes	Yes	Enhance synergies with national social protection systems (Rec 3)	School feeding and nutrition (Rec 5)	Targeting and underlying causes of food insecurity (Rec 1)	School feeding and nutrition (Rec 5)	Geographic coverage (Rec 2)	Geographic coverage (Rec 2)	Geographic coverage (Rec 2)	Technology (Rec 8)	Develop a strategy for mainstreaming gender issues (Rec 6)						Feedback mechanisms on protection and humanitarian access (Rec 7)	
<b>Reflected in</b>	Yes	Yes	Enhance synergies with national social protection systems (Rec 3)	School feeding and nutrition (Rec 5)	Targeting and underlying causes of food insecurity (Rec 1)	School feeding and nutrition (Rec 5)	Geographic coverage (Rec 2)	Geographic coverage (Rec 2)	Geographic coverage (Rec 2)	Technology (Rec 8)	Develop a strategy for mainstreaming gender issues (Rec 6)						Yes	
<b>Recommendation</b>	Yes	Yes	National safety net (Rec 1)	Efficiency	Efficiency	Efficiency	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes								
<b>Reflected in</b>	Yes	Yes	National safety net (Rec 1)	Efficiency	Efficiency	Efficiency	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes								
<b>Recommendation</b>	Yes	Yes	double nexus/synergy (Rec 1)	Efficiency	Efficiency	Efficiency	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes								
<b>Reflected in</b>	Yes	Yes	double nexus/synergy (Rec 1)	Efficiency	Efficiency	Efficiency	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes								

# Acronyms

<b>AAP</b>	accountability to affected populations
<b>C.A.R.</b>	Central African Republic
<b>CBT</b>	cash-based transfer
<b>CPE</b>	country portfolio evaluation
<b>CSP</b>	country strategic plan
<b>ICSP</b>	interim country strategic plan
<b>IDPs</b>	internally displaced persons
<b>FFA</b>	food assistance for assets
<b>FFT</b>	food assistance for training
<b>IHP</b>	international humanitarian principles
<b>RBD</b>	Dakar Regional Bureau
<b>RBN</b>	Nairobi Regional Bureau
<b>REACH</b>	Renewed Efforts Against Child Hunger
<b>t-ICSP</b>	transitional interim country strategic plan
<b>UNHAS</b>	United Nations Humanitarian Air Service
<b>UNICEF</b>	United Nations Children's Fund

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