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## Summary report on the evaluation of WFP's Gender Policy (2015–2020)

### Executive summary

The evaluation of the WFP Gender Policy (2015–2020) was commissioned by the Office of Evaluation to support accountability and learning. The evaluation assessed the quality of the policy, its results and the factors that have enabled or inhibited the achievement of good results.

The Gender Policy (2015–2020) continues to be relevant. It is aligned with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the WFP Strategic Plan (2017–2021) and is informed by and upholds international norms and standards. The Gender Office has been highly effective in establishing mechanisms for supporting WFP contributions to gender equality and women's empowerment, including the Gender Action Plan, regional gender strategies, the Gender Results Network and the Gender Transformation Programme; however, overall progress has been hindered by human and financial resource investments that have fallen short of the commitments made by WFP in the Gender Policy (2015–2020) and the Gender Action Plan. While the Gender Action Plan established clear lines of accountability, progress can be linked to the individual interests and motivations of specific senior managers, leading some parts of WFP to make progress with gender mainstreaming while others lagged behind.

There is evidence that WFP's food assistance activities are being adapted to the specific needs of women, men, boys and girls and that efforts are being made to enhance the equal participation of women and men in the design and adjustment of WFP programmes; it is not widespread, however. Increased attention is needed to ensure that women and girls have more opportunities for decision making and greater protection in WFP-supported activities. Some country strategic plans have used sex-disaggregated data and gender analyses to support gender mainstreaming

*In line with the Evaluation Policy (2016–2021) (WFP/EB.2/2015/4-A/Rev.1), to respect the integrity and independence of evaluation findings the editing of this report has been limited and as a result some of the language in it may not be fully consistent with the World Food Programme's standard terminology or editorial practices. Please direct any requests for clarification to the Director of Evaluation.*

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#### Focal points:

Ms A. Cook  
Director of Evaluation  
Tel.: 066513-2030

Ms D. McWhinney  
Senior Evaluation Officer  
Tel.: 066513-3968

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in WFP programmes; however, these approaches are yet to be systematically included in all programmes, which limits the extent to which their contributions to the objectives of the Gender Policy (2015–2020) can be assessed.

The areas of organizational change that have seen the most progress with regard to the accountabilities defined in the Gender Policy are capacity development and, to a lesser extent, evaluation and oversight. In contrast, WFP has not yet met the human or financial targets set out in the Gender Policy (2015–2020). Importantly, the failure to fully meet the corporate financial benchmark of 15 percent of total project costs being devoted to work in gender equality and women's empowerment has limited progress in achieving the policy's objectives. While there is evidence of modest progress towards gender parity, it has not yet been achieved at all levels or for all functions of the organization, and broader gender mainstreaming challenges have been overlooked. There are wide variations in the investments made by regional bureaux and country offices on gender advisors and capacity strengthening to promote gender equality and women's empowerment. Many regional bureaux and country offices view themselves as the users of overly theoretical subject matter rather than creators of context-driven knowledge and communications materials.

Overall, the evaluation concludes that the Gender Policy (2015–2020) requires an update to ensure that gender is firmly embedded in WFP's work at the country level and that the policy contributes to United Nations system efforts to accelerate support for government partners in their efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. This requires continued attention by leadership, the building of effective country programmes and the creation of a positive enabling environment for gender mainstreaming, underpinned by increased financial and human resources for work on gender equality and women's empowerment and improved gender mainstreaming across all levels of the organization.

The evaluation recommendations focus on accelerating WFP's gender mainstreaming efforts by updating the Gender Policy (2015–2020); extending financial investments and resource mobilization efforts so as to implement WFP's corporate commitments; establishing a steering group on gender equality and women's empowerment to strengthen leadership and accountability for gender mainstreaming; revising the regional gender strategies and gender action plans; embedding an analysis of gender, diversity and inclusion in the design of WFP's new human resources accountability framework; investing in a dedicated cadre of gender advisors that will be present at headquarters and the regional and country levels; and ensuring that the guidance for mid-term reviews and evaluations of first-generation country strategic plans incorporate analyses of WFP gender equality activities and that gender is mainstreamed into the design and implementation of second-generation country strategic plans.

## **Draft decision\***

The Board takes note of the summary report on the evaluation of WFP's Gender Policy (2015–2020) (WFP/EB.A/2020/7-B) and the management response (WFP/EB.A/2020/7-B/Add.1), and encourages further action, taking into account considerations raised by the Board during its discussion.

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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.

## Introduction and evaluation features

1. The evaluation of the WFP Gender Policy (2015–2020) and the mechanisms developed to implement it is meant to support both accountability and learning. It covers the period from 2015 to 2019 and addresses three standard policy evaluation questions:
  - How good is the policy?
  - What were the results of the policy?
  - Why has the policy produced the results that have been observed?
2. The cross-cutting nature of the topic means that the intended users of the evaluation are all WFP divisions and units at headquarters and in regional bureaux, country offices and the field, as well as WFP's Executive Board, donors and government and cooperating partners.
3. The evaluation was conducted between July 2019 and March 2020. It used a theory-based approach based on the gender policy theory of change and data collected at the global, regional and country levels through the following lines of inquiry:
  - twelve country assessments, including five field missions and seven desk reviews;
  - a “deep dive” analysis of gender mainstreaming across three programme areas: unconditional resource transfers, asset creation and livelihood support and prevention of malnutrition;
  - a benchmarking analysis using policies of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency and Oxfam;
  - key informant interviews with 212 internal and external stakeholders (59 percent women), focus group discussions with beneficiaries (75 women, 40 men) and a focus group discussion with Executive Board member representatives (8 women, 4 men);
  - an electronic survey of Gender Results Network members that yielded responses from 131 individuals, for a response rate of 20 percent (60 percent female);
  - a review of corporate data sets, including the country office tool for managing (programme operations) effectively (COMET), annual country reports and annual performance reports; and
  - a review of over 400 corporate-, regional- and country-level documents.
4. Limitations included a lack of WFP reporting against the gender policy objectives or established minimum standards; cancellation of the Lebanon country visit due to insecurity; and incomplete data sets for 2019.<sup>1</sup> These limitations did not affect the quality of the data collection process or the validity of the findings.

## Context

5. The WFP Gender Policy (2015–2020) was approved in May 2015. Its primary goal is “to enable WFP to integrate gender equality and women’s empowerment (GEWE) into all of its work and activities, to ensure that the different food security and nutrition needs of women, men, girls and boys are addressed”. It advocates a transformative approach to GEWE to address

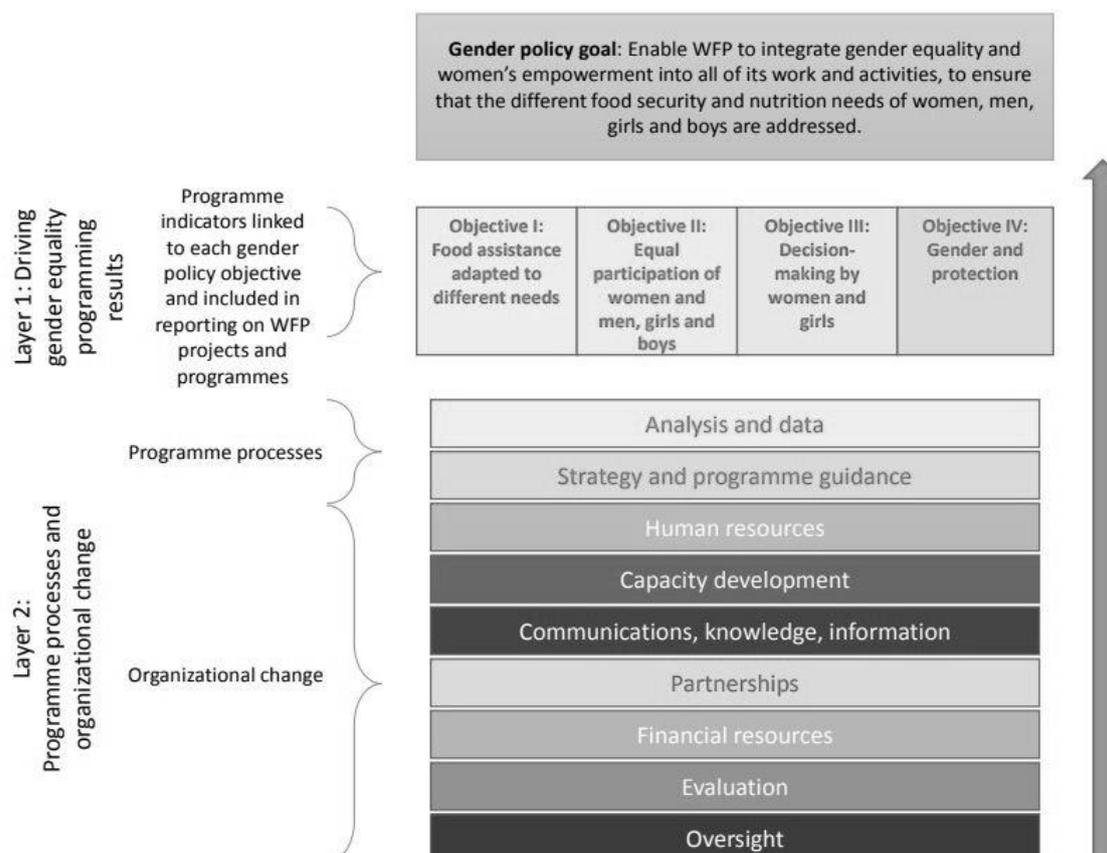
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<sup>1</sup> No data from the annual country reports or the annual performance report for 2019 were available at the time of the preparation of this report.

unequal gender relations and promote sharing of power, control of resources and decision making between women and men.<sup>2</sup> The policy has four objectives:

- i) *Food assistance adapted to different needs.* Women, men, girls and boys benefit from food assistance programmes and activities that are adapted to their different needs and capacities.
  - ii) *Equal participation.* Women and men participate equally in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of gender-transformative food security and nutrition programmes and policies.
  - iii) *Decision making by women and girls.* Women and girls have increased power in decision making regarding food security and nutrition in households, communities and societies.
  - iv) *Gender and protection.* Food assistance does no harm to the safety, dignity or integrity of the women, men, girls and boys receiving it and is provided in ways that respect their rights.
6. To transform the gender policy goal and objectives into a set of actions and accountabilities, in 2016 WFP introduced the Gender Action Plan, which sets out implementation arrangements in two “layers”. Layer 1 focuses on driving gender equality programming results in relation to the four policy objectives. Layer 2 details the internal work on organizational change and programme processes to be undertaken by WFP to ensure that the results are achieved (figure 1).

**Figure 1. Gender Action Plan theory of change**



<sup>2</sup> “Gender Policy (2015–2020)” (WFP/EB.A/2015/5-A).

## Key findings

7. This section provides the key evaluation findings for each evaluation question.

### How good is the policy?

8. The WFP Gender Policy (2015–2020) provides a clear strategic vision, purpose, structure, framework and set of high-level objectives that have been widely communicated across WFP and that remain relevant to WFP’s dual mandate of ending hunger and saving lives. The policy is relevant to the objectives of the WFP Strategic Plan (2017–2021); however, the theory of change does not articulate the interlinkages between organizational change and programme processes or their contribution to gender policy objectives.
9. The Gender Policy (2015–2020) builds directly on the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the 2014 evaluation of the WFP Gender Policy (2009) by using a “transformative” programmatic lens and assigning responsibilities to “business owners” for the delivery of programme processes and organizational change. The policy recognizes the importance of leadership and capacity strengthening across the organization and the need to incorporate gender into WFP’s strategic and programme cycle.
10. The policy is coherent, strategic and partially aligned with the policies of comparator organizations and has demonstrated innovation with the development of the Gender Action Plan and its associated accountabilities. While WFP has adopted a largely instrumentalist approach, this has been appropriate to its mandate.<sup>3</sup>
11. The policy was informed by and remains directly or indirectly relevant to a series of international gender norms and standards, including those in the Beijing Declaration and the 2030 Agenda. It has remained relevant and appropriate to the work of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), with WFP being one of two agencies to pilot and adapt the IASC Gender with Age Marker, in 2019.
12. The majority of WFP corporate policies developed since 2015 have undertaken gender analyses and incorporated GEWE concepts. Attention is required to ensure that this continues in future policies, the next WFP strategic plan and second-generation country strategic plans (CSPs) as the international community enters the Decade of Action to deliver the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
13. Both the policy and the action plan recognize the importance of regional gender strategies and gender analysis in ensuring that gender mainstreaming is adapted to the local context. There is, however, considerable overlap between the policy’s objectives, the indicators in the Corporate Results Framework (2017–2021) and the Gender Action Plan and minimum standards, creating confusion for country offices about what data should be collected, when and for what purpose, as well as which framework should be used for reporting on GEWE-related activities.

### What were the results of the policy?

14. This section provides an assessment of progress towards achievement of the four objectives of the WFP Gender Policy (2015–2020), as well as the programme processes and areas of organizational change defined in the policy.

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<sup>3</sup> While each of the four organizations aspires to achieve gender equality and promote women’s empowerment, the approaches of WFP and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees are oriented towards addressing needs while those of Oxfam and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency are focused on rights.

## **Results for the objectives of the Gender Policy (2015–2020)**

### *Objective I: food assistance adapted to different needs*

15. WFP programmes are not consistently adapted to the specific needs of women, men, girls and boys. While there are examples of programmes in which food assistance has been differentiated, including the targeting of women for cash-based transfers in several countries and the targeting of “at-risk” refugees such as young children and pregnant and lactating women with general food assistance, evidence of significant progress is limited. This is due in part to a lack of reporting on key cross-cutting indicators (for example, “type of transfer by sex and age”) and limited data collection at the individual level.<sup>4</sup> These weaknesses impede robust gender analyses that assess intra-household dynamics affecting the use of WFP food assistance and represent a serious shortcoming in WFP’s monitoring systems.

### *Objective II: equal participation*

16. WFP programmes that support equal participation include community-based participatory planning and the management and oversight of general food distribution committees. The evaluation found that the equal participation of women and men in programme design and the use of sex- and age- disaggregated data was not yet systematic and that equity concerns were not sufficiently considered. A review of country office data found that a majority of offices were not collecting age-related data for their projects, suggesting that such data are only used in programmes like school feeding and nutrition where they are directly relevant. This corroborates findings from past evaluations that criticized WFP for using corporate indicators that quantify the participation of women and men without analysing power structures or changes in gender-based roles, thereby failing to fully capture transformative change.

### *Objective III: decision making by women and girls*

17. WFP supports a growing number of programmes where women, and to a lesser extent girls, have been afforded new opportunities to engage in decision making, including in asset creation and livelihoods, nutrition and school-feeding programmes. WFP targets both women and men with tailored messages aimed at improving intra-household food distribution and dietary diversity. Community-based participatory planning exercises have allowed women to identify community assets that help reduce their unpaid workloads. There is also evidence that women who received training in group farming, value chain facilitation, savings-and-loan groups or latrine construction felt that such activities provided the basis for wider transformative changes in their decision making status in the household and community. WFP needs to ensure that all programmes emphasize the transformative opportunities for increasing the decision making power of women and girls without compromising health and nutrition outcomes.

### *Objective IV: gender and protection*

18. WFP has made moderate progress towards ensuring that food assistance does no harm to the safety, dignity or integrity of the women, men, girls and boys receiving it. Although the majority of women and men report being able to access WFP assistance without protection challenges, this data is undermined by the fact that relatively few assisted people are kept informed of WFP programme interventions, by a weak analytical base and by confusion over the overlapping concepts of gender and protection. Key informants at all levels expressed concern that there was a lack of gender analysis to inform, and provide the basis for oversight over, gender and protection strategies; that concern was also highlighted in other

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<sup>4</sup> Efforts are being made to improve data collection at the individual level, with the introduction of the new “Gender Equality for Food Security” measure, the individual deprivation measure and a gender-responsive monitoring pilot project.

independent evaluations. For instance, the Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network concluded in a 2017–2018 assessment that WFP was paying insufficient attention to protection issues such as gender-based violence and refugee-host tensions.

### **Intermediary results for programme processes**

19. Despite improvements in the systematic collection of sex-disaggregated data, some WFP programmes are still not informed by it. Only 70 percent of projects and CSPs reported on cross-cutting gender indicators in 2018. Where data is collected, it is often not complemented by a qualitative understanding of GEWE; many programmes still view the gathering of data on the “sex of the household head” as synonymous with the use of sex-disaggregated data, to the exclusion of information on other household members.
20. WFP has established clear linkages between the Gender Policy (2015–2020) and CSPs through implementation of the IASC Gender with Age Marker; however, there is a tendency to address GEWE at a generic level rather than in a manner tailored to the specific operational context. While the application of the IASC Gender with Age Marker has contributed to CSP design, the process has often been mechanistic and accountability-focused rather than a dynamic driver of gender mainstreaming.
21. WFP has made significant progress in developing standardized guidance that supports the mainstreaming of GEWE and provides the basis for capacity strengthening efforts, in particular the gender toolkit developed in 2019, guidance on nutrition-sensitive programming developed in 2017 and the food assistance for assets guidance manual developed in 2016. Full integration is yet to be achieved across all policies, action plans and guidelines, however, because not all guidance is shared with the Gender Office for review.

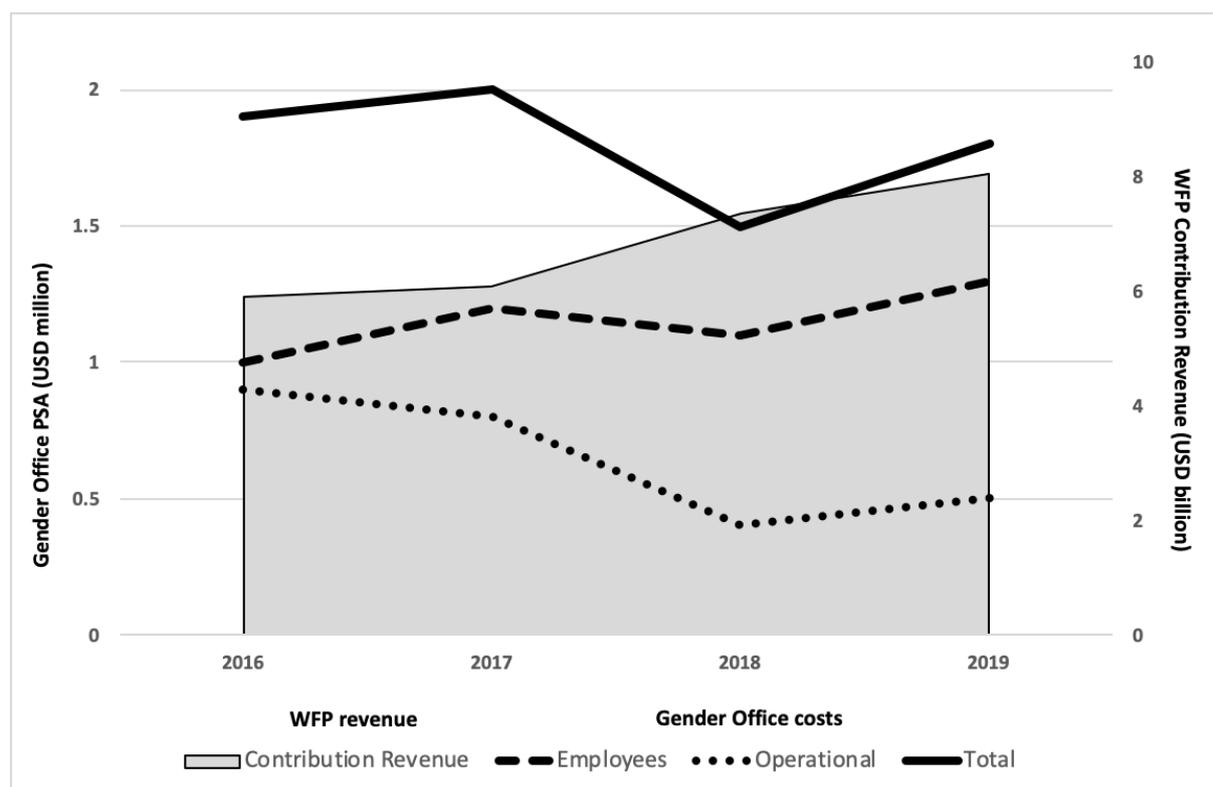
### **Intermediary results for areas of organizational change**

22. Positive shifts in WFP policies and hiring practices to support gender equality since 2015 include commitments by the Executive Director that have been translated into activities to promote gender parity. While these efforts generated some improvement overall (women constituted 38 percent of WFP’s total workforce in 2019, up from 32 percent in 2015), progress has been slow at the P-3, P-5, D-1 and D-2 levels, in certain functions in, for example, the Supply Chain Operations Division and the Information Technology Division, in emergency settings and among national employees (36 percent). Evidence from the 2018 global staff survey and the survey of Gender Results Network members indicates that women employees’ perceptions of gender inequality differ from those of men employees.
23. In the area of capacity development progress is evident in the creation and promotion of the gender toolkit, training programmes and e-learning; however, country-level capacity strengthening has been less encouraging due to a lack of training tailored to on-the-job needs and limited financial commitments for WFP gender advisor positions. WFP has made strides in building and disseminating tools and good practices that support GEWE alongside relevant thematic studies, but many regional bureaux and country offices view themselves as the users of overly theoretical subject matter rather than creators of context-driven knowledge and communications materials. Key informants expressed a strong need for capacity strengthening that uses these materials to integrate gender into programme-specific training and context-specific support.
24. Despite steady engagement by WFP with corporate partners at the global and regional levels, particularly the other Rome-based agencies, the number of corporate-level gender equality partnerships has fallen, from nine in 2016 to seven in 2019, due to financial and staff resource limitations in the Gender Office. Progress at the operational level has been more positive and has focused on the inclusion of GEWE provisions in revised field-level agreements with cooperating partners. Guidance on gender mainstreaming through

government partnerships also remains limited, leaving informants in country offices and regional bureaux unclear about WFP's role in strengthening government contributions to GEWE, particularly with respect to WFP's strategic shift from delivering to enabling.

25. While WFP's financial tracking system for gender equality is undergoing review, evidence suggests that the organization is falling significantly behind its 15 percent target for corporate funding for GEWE across the organization. Systems for gender expenditure tracking were withdrawn in 2017, and although a new approach is being tested, WFP – like all United Nations entities – remains without an accurate picture of resources for GEWE and consequently does not meet the requirements of the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN SWAP) performance indicator 9, on financial resource tracking.
26. Programme support and administrative budget allocations for securing gender expertise and supporting gender mainstreaming have fallen during a period of significant growth in overall WFP contribution income (see figure 2). While there were more gender positions at the end of 2019 than in 2015, only 3 regional bureaux and 21 country offices had dedicated gender advisors. When combined with the number of people working at headquarters in the Gender Office, this means there were 30 people focusing on GEWE out of 18,000 WFP employees. While the Gender Results Network has 700 members, it does not make up for this significant capacity gap.

**Figure 2. WFP programme support and administrative budget allocations for the Gender Office in contrast with WFP contribution revenue (2016–2020)**



Abbreviation: PSA = programme support and administrative (budget)

27. WFP has been largely successful in meeting oversight standards that reinforce high-level accountabilities for GEWE through mechanisms such as UN SWAP, “exceeding requirements” for nine of 16 UN SWAP performance indicators in 2019, “meeting requirements” for four others and “approaching requirements” for the remaining three.

28. UN SWAP has acted as a driver for the integration of gender into evaluations, as reflected in the WFP Evaluation Policy (2016–2021). While independent quality assessments of evaluations highlighted weaknesses in the handling of GEWE in 2016 and 2017, substantial improvements were made in 2018 and 2019, including the commissioning of gender-focused evaluations in 2019.
29. The recent inclusion of gender in the internal audit programme is also welcome, as prior to 2019 very few country office or thematic audit reports included gender risk analyses. Although WFP risk registers have made significant improvements in citing the protection needs of beneficiaries (operational risk) and workforce planning, gender analysis in strategic, operational and fiduciary risk assessments remains limited.

### **Why has the policy produced the results that have been observed?**

30. The Gender Office and regional gender advisors have made significant steps in supporting the integration of gender equality perspectives into CSPs, high-level strategy documents and guidance materials. Bottlenecks persist in some regional bureaux and country offices with respect to resourcing and support for regional gender strategies, gender advisors and capacity strengthening for WFP country and field-level employees. Challenges in hiring and retaining gender advisors include the lack of a structured career pathway for national gender advisors and the rotation of senior gender advisors. These challenges dilute the organization's ability to sustain momentum in gender mainstreaming and capacity strengthening.
31. WFP is to be commended for anticipating external requirements to address gender parity in the United Nations system as prioritized by the Secretary-General and having built on external requirements by identifying targets for all country offices and functional areas in the 2018 gender parity action plan. While WFP has focused on a corporate push towards gender parity among WFP staff, however, human-resource-related investments in other areas that would accelerate wider contributions to gender equality (e.g. attention to the burden of unpaid care and domestic work borne by women or the retention of women employees) are comparatively limited, contributing to differing perceptions of progress between women and men employees, as noted in the 2018 global staff survey.
32. Despite significant resource constraints, the Gender Office has provided sustained leadership by establishing the Gender Results Network and developing online training materials. There is substantial evidence that the Gender Transformation Programme and Gender Results Network have helped catalyse change in several country offices by strengthening capacity among WFP employees and partners; however, across all country and field offices, GEWE capacity strengthening approaches are often viewed as too theoretical and insufficiently tailored to everyday needs.
33. There is strong evidence indicating that while WFP has developed gender-targeted knowledge products, their interpretation and use remain limited due to insufficient integration of GEWE into WFP corporate communications.
34. WFP's failure to fully meet the financial commitments set out in the Gender Action Plan has limited the application of the Gender Policy (2015–2020). Gender Office support for resource mobilization at the country level has not led to shifts in extrabudgetary funding for GEWE.
35. WFP has successfully adopted and used the UN SWAP process to reinforce gender-related accountabilities, with close alignment of UN SWAP, the Gender Action Plan and the Gender Transformation Programme. Attention to gender in WFP evaluations and the integration of gender risk analysis into internal audits are positive shifts and offer a model for enterprise risk management where consideration of gender is weak.

## Conclusions

### Conclusion 1: Relevance and appropriateness of the Gender Policy (2015–2020)

36. The Gender Policy (2015–2020) remains relevant to WFP's commitments to the 2030 Agenda, the SDGs and United Nations reform but requires an update to meet the demands of the evolving global context. The policy echoes and aligns with external normative commitments on GEWE, while recognizing the role of regional bureaux and country offices by reflecting the understanding that "context is everything". The policy's objectives are coherent and applicable to most operational areas but do not reflect shifts in global and organizational thinking regarding transformational change and intersectionality; nor do they fully reflect WFP's transition from saving lives to changing lives. The policy needs to be updated to support WFP's work at the country level firmly within United Nations system efforts to accelerate support for government partners in their efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, which have been articulated through the Decade of Action to deliver the SDGs.

### Conclusion 2: WFP culture and leadership

37. WFP has shown leadership in establishing frameworks to support its work on GEWE, including efforts to address gender parity. While this has led to positive change, the leadership focus on gender parity has overshadowed other aspects of the Gender Policy (2015–2020) and presents a barrier to strengthening WFP's overall approach to GEWE.

### Conclusion 3: Building of effective programmes

38. Until the good practices evident in the organization are taken up by all WFP country offices and GEWE principles are translated into pathways for change tailored to the specific needs of women, men, girls and boys in the national context, the Gender Policy (2015–2020) will remain theoretical and distant from the practical day-to-day concerns of many country and field offices. WFP is missing opportunities to ground the design and development of programmes in a comprehensive contextual analysis of the needs and interests of women, men, girls and boys and the pathways needed to deliver the four objectives of the policy. Consequently, country offices often struggle to translate GEWE concepts into clear actions tailored to their individual CSP strategic outcomes.

### Conclusion 4: Enabling environment for gender mainstreaming

39. Positive efforts to mainstream gender across WFP's organizational functions have to some extent complemented and contributed to a more conducive enabling environment for GEWE at WFP. However, performance in some areas of organizational change is more significant than for others. Capacity building and, to a lesser extent, evaluation and oversight have made positive contributions to the implementation of the Gender Policy (2015–2020), whereas the areas of human and financial resources have not yet reached the established targets. WFP's attention to GEWE is variable and reliant on the individual decision making of regional and country directors to lead gender mainstreaming, rather than ensuring that the accountabilities of all senior managers to the Gender Action Plan are upheld.

### Conclusion 5: Human resources for strengthening WFP's gender architecture

40. WFP's human resource investments have not met the targets set out in the Gender Policy (2015–2020). In order to ensure that GEWE is integral to the culture, learning and results of the organization, WFP needs to properly resource and support its gender architecture in order to operationalize the tools that exist and build the capacities of its employees at all levels.

## Conclusion 6: Financial resources at all levels of the organization

41. Although WFP has been successful in developing regional gender strategies and action plans aligned with those strategies, implementation has been held back by inadequate financial resources and capacity for the decentralized delivery of the Gender Policy (2015–2020). In response to the increasing scale of WFP operations and high level of demand for gender-related support, the reduction in funding allocated to the Gender Office and to regional bureaux for the implementation of regional gender strategies should be a concern for WFP decision makers.

## Recommendations

42. The recommendations below build upon the many positive changes that have begun to take root since the introduction of the Gender Policy (2015–2020) and aim to catalyse increased investment in key areas to support the acceleration of WFP's efforts towards GEWE. The first two recommendations set the strategic direction and resourcing framework and should be acted upon as top priorities. The other recommendations should be addressed systematically in order to strengthen the leadership, accountability and human resources required to deliver the policy and to ensure that gender is fully mainstreamed into the development of second-generation CSPs.

### Strategic recommendations

Recommendation	Priority, responsibility and deadline
<p><b>Recommendation 1: WFP should update the Gender Policy (2015–2020) to accelerate progress towards the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and strengthen WFP's work on promoting gender equality and women's empowerment in the context of food security and nutrition.</b></p> <p>a) The update should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• retain the overall structure, narrative and commitments of the WFP Gender Policy (2015–2020) and alignment with the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and reaffirm the importance of accountability as described in the Gender Action Plan (2015–2020);</li> <li>• review and reframe the governance, leadership, financial, partnership and employee (particularly gender advisor) benchmarks used in gender policy implementation;</li> <li>• enhance the accountability of WFP regional bureaux and country offices for accelerating the fulfilment of corporate gender commitments;</li> <li>• use progressive language that seeks to “leave no-one behind” while recognizing that a one-size-fits-all approach may not be possible across all contexts; and</li> <li>• include an intermediary objective for an enabling environment created by WFP's areas of organizational change to support programme processes and humanitarian operations.</li> </ul> <p>In updating the Gender Policy (2015–2020), WFP should further:</p> <p>b) revise the policy's theory of change through a participatory and consultative process to articulate the interrelationships between the areas of organizational change, programme processes and the policy objectives, as well as the steps that should be taken to ensure that WFP programmes and operations contribute more to gender equality and women's empowerment;</p>	<p><u>Priority:</u> <b>High</b></p> <p><u>Responsibility:</u> Assistant Executive Director of the Programme and Policy Development Department (PD), with the support of the leadership group and regional directors and in consultation with the Executive Board</p> <p><u>Deadline:</u> June 2021</p>

Recommendation	Priority, responsibility and deadline
<p>c) ensure coordination and collaboration to incorporate a gender mainstreaming approach in the next strategic plan as a core part of WFP's enabling role for zero hunger;</p> <p>d) ensure that all WFP programme technical guidance (e.g. for cash-based transfers and general food distribution, school feeding, nutrition, resilient livelihoods) is updated in relation to its contributions to gender equality or that a technical note is provided for guidelines not up for review, with specific examples to illustrate how gender equality and women's empowerment can be used to shape effective, efficient, equitable and empowering WFP programming; and</p> <p>e) develop and implement a communication and dissemination plan for promoting the updated policy that highlights and explains the importance of gender to WFP's mandate and to all its employees, thereby setting the "tone from the top".</p>	
<p><b>Recommendation 2: WFP should allocate sufficient programme support and administrative budget to implement its corporate commitments, including the work of the Gender Office and implementation of the regional gender strategies, and develop strategies to mobilize extrabudgetary and project funding, including through operational and strategic partnerships, in line with United Nations reform.</b></p> <p>a) As WFP continues to mainstream gender into its work it should review the balance of extrabudgetary and programme support and administrative budget funding for securing crucial gender advisor positions and resources at all levels of the organization.</p> <p>b) WFP should expand its partnerships and funding for gender mainstreaming and targeted programming by building on existing good practices, in line with donor expectations and corporate priorities regarding the need for WFP to adapt to the changing global context and the evolving funding landscape.</p> <p>c) WFP should ensure that there is an effective corporate mechanism for tracking gender-related planning and expenditures.</p>	<p><b>Priority: High</b></p> <p><b>Responsibility:</b> Assistant Executive Director of PD, with the support of regional directors, the Assistant Executive Director of the Partnerships and Advocacy Department (PA) and the Assistant Executive Director of the Resource Management Department (RM) and in consultation with the Executive Board</p> <p><b>Deadline:</b> June 2021, in line with the updated gender policy and regional gender strategies</p>

### Operational recommendations

Recommendation	Priority, responsibility and deadline
<p><b>Recommendation 3: The Assistant Executive Director of the Programme and Policy Development Department should establish a cross-organizational steering group on gender equality and women's empowerment to provide distributed leadership, champion the gender policy and ensure accountability for gender policy implementation at all levels of the organization.</b></p> <p>a) The steering group should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• include representatives from the organizational, humanitarian and programme divisions and not be assimilated into any other working group or task force;</li> <li>• have terms of reference defining its membership and rules of engagement that ensure effective participation and that it holds at least two meetings per year; and</li> <li>• have standing agenda items that include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ continued integration of gender into WFP's work;</li> <li>➤ progress towards gender equality outcomes, including through CSPs; and</li> <li>➤ implementation of WFP's gender mainstreaming mechanisms: gender architecture, the Gender Transformation Programme, the IASC Gender with Age Marker and the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>b) Progress reports from WFP's headquarters divisions and regional bureaux should contribute to the discussions of the steering group and the annual updates to the Executive Board on WFP gender policy.</p>	<p><b>Priority: High</b></p> <p><b>Responsibility:</b> Assistant Executive Director of PD, with support from regional and country directors and in consultation with the Executive Board and functional divisions at the headquarters and regional bureau levels</p> <p><b>Deadline:</b> November 2020</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 4: WFP should enhance regional- and country-level ownership of the gender policy and the Gender Action Plan through the revision of regional gender strategies and CSP-aligned gender action plans.</b></p> <p>a) WFP should review and revise existing regional gender strategies in order to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• identify the key gender equality and women's empowerment challenges faced in each region and the balance of WFP's response in each region's humanitarian, development and "delivering to enabling" contexts;</li> <li>• prioritize the organizational changes needed to support gender mainstreaming in country offices and regional bureaux;</li> <li>• steer country offices in the preparation and implementation of CSPs that integrate gender and age, the Gender Transformation Programme and the Gender Action Plan to support delivery of gender equality results in the context of food security and nutrition across the humanitarian-peace-development nexus;</li> <li>• define clear accountabilities tailored to the regional context; and</li> </ul> <p>b) Regional directors should review regional and country office resource mobilization opportunities for gender mainstreaming in line with WFP partnerships and funding priority commitments.</p> <p>c) Regional directors should create clear regional governance structures for overseeing the development and implementation of regional gender strategies.</p> <p>d) Regional reports to the gender equality steering group should provide a quantitative and qualitative analysis of gender equality and women's empowerment changes in terms of organizational shifts and of programme results against gender policy objectives.</p>	<p><b>Priority: Medium</b></p> <p><b>Responsibility:</b> Regional directors, with the support of the Chief of Staff, the Assistant Executive Director of PD, functional units at headquarters and regional bureaux, country directors and deputy country directors</p> <p><b>Deadline:</b> December 2021</p>

Recommendation	Priority, responsibility and deadline
<p><b>Recommendation 5: WFP should ensure that the development of the new human resources accountability framework – as agreed in response to one of the recommendations of the evaluation of the WFP People Strategy (2014–2017) – is informed by an analysis of gender, diversity and inclusion and ensures that senior managers are accountable for inclusive leadership practices and excellence in all areas of gender mainstreaming, including but not limited to gender parity.</b></p> <p>a) This should encompass:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• integration of gender, diversity and inclusion analysis into the preparation of the accountability framework, led by the Human Resources Division (HRM) with the support of the Gender Office;</li> <li>• commitments to capacity strengthening of WFP employees in gender mainstreaming; and</li> <li>• development of specific approaches to strengthening the capacity of individual leaders (regional and deputy regional directors, country and deputy country directors) in gender mainstreaming at the regional and country levels.</li> </ul>	<p><u>Priority:</u> <b>Medium</b></p> <p><u>Responsibility:</u> Director of the Human Resources Division (HRM), in consultation with the Assistant Executive Director of PD and with the support of the Assistant Executive Director of RM and the Gender Office</p> <p><u>Deadline:</u> August 2021</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 6: WFP should invest in dedicated, professional gender advisors at headquarters and regional bureaux and build a cadre of experienced gender advisors to work in its country offices.</b></p> <p>a) WFP should undertake a workforce planning exercise for gender advisors and introduce a human resource plan to ensure that a consistent, funded and sustainable cadre of gender advisors is accessible at all levels of the organization. This should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• establish mandatory, fixed-term professional regional gender advisor positions at the P-4 and P-5 levels with functional links to the Gender Office; and</li> <li>• include standard outline terms of reference for regional and country office gender advisors to guide WFP regional bureaux and country offices in determining the roles and responsibilities of gender advisors, adapted to context.</li> </ul> <p>b) All organizational realignment exercises should include consideration of gender skills and capacity.</p> <p>c) Consideration should also be given to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• establishing a career pathway and professional gender cadre for gender advisors from the country to the regional and global levels, in line with comparative WFP functions; and</li> <li>• including a cadre of diverse gender advisors in the Future International Talent pool for deployment across the organization.</li> </ul>	<p><u>Priority:</u> <b>High</b></p> <p><u>Responsibility:</u> Assistant Executive Director of PD with the support of regional directors, the Assistant Executive Director of RM and the Director of HRM, the Gender Office and a selection of regional and country directors, deputy country directors and regional gender advisors</p> <p><u>Deadline:</u> December 2021, in line with the preparation of regional gender strategies and the human resources accountability framework</p>

Recommendation	Priority, responsibility and deadline
<p><b>Recommendation 7: WFP should ensure that the framework and guidance for mid-term reviews and evaluations of first-generation country strategic plans incorporate quantitative and qualitative analyses of WFP's gender equality-related activities.</b></p> <p>a) The Assistant Executive Director of the Programme and Policy Development Department, with the support of the Gender Office and the technical divisions, should develop and disseminate a framework that uses the IASC Gender with Age Marker process to guide the inclusion of contextually relevant, gender-integrated programming that aligns with the objectives of the Gender Policy (2015–2020) in the design and implementation of second-generation country strategic plans.</p> <p>b) The Director of the Corporate Planning and Performance Division should oversee the finalization and roll-out of guidance materials and templates for the integration of gender equality and women's empowerment into mid-term reviews of country strategic plans by December 2020.</p> <p>c) The Director of Evaluation should update guidance materials and templates for the integration of gender equality and women's empowerment into country strategic plan evaluations by December 2020.</p>	<p><u>Priority:</u> <b>Medium</b></p> <p><u>Responsibility:</u> Assistant Executive Director of PD, with the support of the Director of Evaluation and the Director of the Corporate Planning and Performance Division, in collaboration with regional and country directors, PD technical division leads and the Gender Office</p> <p><u>Deadline:</u> December 2020 (a–c)</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 8: Country offices should mainstream gender into the mid-term reviews and evaluations of first-generation country strategic plans and the design and implementation of second-generation country strategic plans.</b></p> <p>a) Each country office should use the mid-term review, evaluation and gender and age context analyses of its first-generation country strategic plan to integrate gender into its second-generation country strategic plan, including by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• aligning the country strategic plan with the United Nation's common country analysis process to ensure that WFP responds to nationally identified gender equality and women's empowerment needs such that "no one is left behind"; and</li> <li>• ensuring that the planned activities of the second-generation country strategic plan deliver in a way aimed at achieving the objectives of the updated Gender Policy (2015–2020) and equitably address the food security and nutrition-related needs of all beneficiaries.</li> </ul>	<p><u>Priority:</u> <b>Medium</b></p> <p><u>Responsibility:</u> Country directors, with the support of regional directors, regional gender advisors, gender equality steering group members, the Gender Office and PD technical division leads</p> <p><u>Deadline:</u> Ongoing as of January 2021, in line with the ongoing preparation of second-generation CSPs</p>

## Acronyms

CSP	country strategic plan
GEWE	gender equality and women's empowerment
HRM	Human Resources Division
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
PD	Programme and Policy Development Department
RM	Resource Management Department
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
UN SWAP	United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women