



Mid-Term Review of the Revised Corporate Results Framework

IN FIVE MINUTES

BACKGROUND

The Corporate Results Framework (2017–2021) (CRF) defines accountability for programme and management, and guides planning, monitoring, and reporting at all levels of the organization. It was approved by the Executive Board in November 2016 as part of the Integrated Road Map (IRM). One year later, work started on a revised CRF (rCRF) to better incorporate WFP's contribution to the SDGs. The rCRF was approved in November 2018, and adjusted in June 2019 to include the 2021 targets for the programmatic outputs and performance indicators, as requested by the Executive Board. The rCRF integrates changes made in management performance; adds a new set of SDG-related indicators to communicate WFP contributions to the SDGs at national level; enhances programme measurements of capacity-strengthening, social and behaviour change communication (SBCC), disabilities and school feeding; and provides the flexibility for further development metrics and activities. The rCRF does not introduce major changes in the CRF Line of Sight.

METHODOLOGY

The mid-term review (MTR) of the CRF is expected to inform any necessary midway correction and contribute to the formulation of the next Corporate Results Framework. It was timed to inform and at the same time, draw upon the mid-term review of the Strategic Plan which was undertaken in parallel. The MTR, undertaken from end January to end March 2020 by a senior staff member external to the Resource Management department, encompassed a desk review; interviews with headquarters, regional

bureaux and field staff; a CRF programme survey conducted in all country offices; and an analysis of a survey targeted to headquarters' functional area leads on key performance indicators (KPIs) of performance management. The review focused on the effectiveness of the CRF in supporting the 1) design, 2) monitoring, 3) reporting, 4) performance management of functional areas and 5) enabling environment of the Country Strategic Plan (CSP).

MAIN FINDINGS

DESIGN

The CRF has met the basic requirement of supporting programme planning, monitoring and reporting, especially for WFP humanitarian work. The results chain in the Strategic Plan (SP) and CRF is considered logical and has been useful in creating a backbone of CSPs aligned with SDGs as well as in providing flexibility in programme design. However, the many layers of the overall results chain, which is long and wide, would benefit from greater simplicity and consistency. This is an issue to be addressed by the next SP and its related future CRF. There is also a generalized call for the formal use of a theory of change in CSP design to enhance understanding of the framework and support CSP design, performance management and reporting. In addition, WFP needs to create stronger synergies across performance, monitoring and evaluation systems to be able to measure advances in the strategic plan attributable to WFP and also to areas where a significant contribution is made to broader multi-stakeholder strategies under Agenda 2030.

MONITORING

While data quality, collection, analysis and reporting have improved and country offices are increasingly monitoring and reporting on both outputs and outcomes, monitoring is perceived to be mainly for corporate reporting and is not sufficiently utilized to support evidence-based decision-making, management, learning and evaluation that would enhance programme design and implementation. There is a need to review and understand information requirements, including for longer-term and more qualitative results, and to streamline and identify the best sources. Indicators used in emergency and protracted contexts are considered satisfactory, however, there is a need to develop a framework that better tracks and reports on results in the “changing lives”/development contexts including in capacity-strengthening, resilience, policy development, social protection and SBCC.

REPORTING

Reporting through ACRs and APRs has progressed over time and now provides a global and more holistic appraisal of WFP’s performance in-country and globally. The rCRF, used for the first time in 2019, presented additional layers of financial information at strategic outcome level in the ACR, at strategic result level in the APR, and making beneficiary figures and transfer value available by programme areas. However, there remains a disconnect between the programme results and financial systems, hampered by the bundling of CSP activities (mainly in humanitarian settings), which has created significant challenges in reporting Resources to Results (R2R). There is a lack of corporate agreement on what financial information and analysis is needed to measure WFP efficiency. Country offices also must be able to respond to the high level of demand by local donors for detailed expenditure information related to their contributions as well as to the granular level of information deemed critical for reporting by technical areas.

MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE

There is a general appreciation of its processes and planning tools, and acknowledgement of its alignment to the Strategic Plan and its influencing of leadership. However, there is scope to streamline the tools and ensure that KPIs are strengthened and utilized for decision-making. There is a need to link programme and management performance measurement more comprehensively, under a single results architecture.

ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

The copious information requirements and fast pace of change has overwhelmed staff, there has been limited socialization and communication about the results framework, and clarity in understanding has been limited to certain pockets within the organization.

SYNOPSIS OF RECOMMENDATIONS

- Begin a bottom-up, comprehensive corporate/country overview of information requirements (COIR) for different levels of the organization, different contexts, and for UN and external stakeholders as soon as possible. This exercise, which is looking to the development of the next CRF, could build on the Simplify 2020 Initiative, but go

beyond to look at all aspects of information requirements and alternative sources, as well as complementary narratives. This work needs to dovetail with that being undertaken for the next SP and be completed by end of 2020.

- Clarify what financial information is needed that can best measure and provide information about performance and inform decision-making. This should be part of the Simplify 2020 Initiative and feed into the COIR. A deeper understanding of how UN agencies handle R2R should also be considered.
- Review and develop WFP’s Performance Management Policy and Results Measurement System. This could result from the larger COIR exercise, which would need to engage staff from country offices, regional bureaux, headquarters and all functional areas.
- Move forward with work to simplify the complexity related to bundling, tagging and rationalization of data. Also move forward with updating of guidelines, definitions and business rules which will improve rigour and standardization. There is also a need to continue investing in and developing WFP IT systems to make monitoring data more reliable, timely and useful. However, clarity on the information requirements is needed before any major systemic changes are undertaken.
- Prepare for a theory of change to be formally introduced into CSP design, programme areas, and if agreed, the next SP, through a directive on WFP’s use of theory of change. This would inform the next results framework.
- Move forward excellent work to improve performance measurement especially in changing lives/development contexts, and look into alternative means of demonstrating results. This should eventually feed into the larger COIR mentioned above, which will be a critical foundation for the next CRF.
- Recognize that during CSP design, country offices, regional bureaux and headquarters are to more seriously engage in developing detailed monitoring, review and evaluation plans, ensuring that they reflect the minimum levels of data collection to serve monitoring, evaluation and reporting for both corporate and country office purposes.
- Build a broader understanding of the rCRF by managers, programme and other staff through trainings and orientation as well as the bottom-up engagement in the broader COIR exercise.
- Improve management KPIs and their component indicators, ensuring functional areas are more comprehensively represented and performance measurement more insightful. Methodologies should be refined, building on lessons learned from the 2019 APR data collection.
- Continue developing WFP IT systems to facilitate data recording, storage, cleaning, analysis and reporting. Initiatives such as DOTS, dashboards, COMET enhancements and MODA can greatly facilitate monitoring, making monitoring data more reliable, timely and useful.