

# Evaluation

Summary Terms of Reference



## Strategic Evaluation of the WFP's Use of Technology in Constrained Environments

*Strategic Evaluations (SEs) commissioned by the Office of Evaluation (OEV) are forward-looking and focus on strategies, systemic or emerging corporate issues and/or programmes and initiatives with global or regional coverage.*

### Subject and Focus of the Evaluation

Technology and technological innovation have become a key strategic factor to enable the rapid expansion of WFP's operations; to improve the time- and cost-efficiency and quality of assistance to people in need; to adapt and increase operational resilience to changing conditions, constraints and risks; to take advantage of new opportunities; and to meet donor expectations, including greater accountability.

Yet, there is limited evidence to inform decision making related to the deployment of new technologies in constrained environments in terms of what benefits technology brings to WFP's work and its target populations, how well WFP identifies and manages risks related to technology, how effectively WFP promotes demand-driven, inclusive ICT innovation, and what conditions need to be in place to ensure appropriate and effective use of technologies in constrained environments.

This evaluation will be an opportunity to take stock and assess whether WFP uses, and is equipped to use, the most appropriate technologies to achieve its objectives under constrained conditions. At the same time, it is urgent to assess to what extent WFP manages the increasing risks in relation to the technologies that it chooses to deploy.

### Objectives and Users of the Evaluation

With the aim to serve accountability and learning purposes, the objectives of the evaluation are the following:

- Assess the extent to which WFP effectively and efficiently deploys the most appropriate information and communication technology to achieve its objectives in constrained environments.
- Assess how, why and under which conditions the use of ICTs and data has helped increase WFP's management and programmatic performance in constrained environments.
- Look at how WFP has taken advantage of technological opportunities, and at good practices in adapting ICT applications to evolving constraints.
- Assess whether effective measures are in place to mitigate and manage risks to operations and populations resulting from the use of ICTs and data in constrained environments.

The main users of the evaluation include WFP management and staff at country, regional and HQ level. The engagement with WFP management and staff during the evaluation will contribute to reflections on the WFP Strategic Plan 2022-2026. The evaluation will also provide insights to support WFP's digital transformation agenda and help updating norms, standards and guidelines on the implementation of WFP policies related to digital technology and data.

WFP target population groups in constrained environments are also an important stakeholder of the evaluation as they can be greatly affected by WFP's use of technologies. The evaluation will make particular efforts to hear their voices, in particular those of women and marginalised groups. Furthermore, the evaluation will engage with WFP's full range of partners (governments, civil society, private sector, UN agencies and donors). Secondary users of the evaluation are other actors in the humanitarian and development field, such as other UN agencies and INGOs, academia/think tanks and networks (e.g. ALNAP) to whom the findings of this evaluation might also be of interest.

### Key Evaluation Questions

The evaluation will address the following four key questions:

**Question 1:** Technology - How does the use of technologies help WFP increase the effectiveness and efficiency of its operations in constrained environments?

**Question 2:** People - How does the use of technologies in constrained environments affect the people served by WFP, and how do people affect this use?

**Question 3:** Policies and processes - How appropriate are WFP policies and processes in place to enable strategic use, promote innovation and manage risks in relation to the use of technologies in constrained environments?

**Question 4:** Partnerships - How well does WFP manage its partnerships in relation to the provision and use of technologies in constrained environments?

### Scope and Methodology

The evaluation will cover WFP's use of technologies in constrained environments from January 2014, to June 2021.

## Evaluation Terms of Reference – WFP’s Use of Technology in Constrained Environments

The use of technology in WFP can be analysed through a systems perspective composed of multiple components interacting with each other. The evaluation will be centred on the four key components of this system: Technology; People; Policies and processes, and; Partnerships. The evaluation questions are clustered around each component of the “technology use system”, but the evaluation will also analyse linkages and dependencies between the four key components and reflect how these interact in constrained environments to contribute to organisational management and operational objectives.

The methodology will adopt a mixed approach combining a review of secondary sources, interviews, direct field observation and surveys. Data collection methods will include:

- a) An extensive literature review of relevant WFP and external documents;
- b) Key informants’ interviews;
- c) Two WFP technology users’ surveys (online survey of WFP and partners’ personnel and mobile phone survey of affected populations);
- d) Focus group discussions with affected populations, in particular those who are not digitally well connected.

While having a strategic global outlook, the evaluation will zoom into seven countries to learn from different contexts, from which logical generalizations could be drawn. Seven brief country case study reports will be prepared to support internal learning within WFP. The evaluation will also conduct a benchmarking exercise to compare WFP with other organisations working in similar sectors and environments as WFP, in all dimensions covered by the evaluation.

Data triangulation across different sources and methods will be carried out to validate findings and avoid bias in the evaluative judgement. The evaluation will make a special effort to use technology, as appropriate, to enhance data access, strengthen data analysis and improve communication of evaluation results with evaluation stakeholders.

### Roles and Responsibilities

**Evaluation Team:** The evaluation will be conducted by a team of external consultants with capacity in conducting complex strategic evaluations using a dynamic systems approach. The team will be required to have a strong multidisciplinary expertise in WFP programming and management; information and communication technology equipment and applications used in the humanitarian and development sector; innovation development, implementation and upscaling; protection and ethical issues around information technology and data; the “digital divide”; data generation, analysis, management and

governance; power relationships and politics around information; ICT governance; and partnerships.

**OEV Evaluation Manager:** The evaluation is managed by the WFP Office of Evaluation with Mr. Michael Carbon as Evaluation Manager. He is responsible for the evaluation preparation and design, and first level quality assurance throughout the process. The Director of Evaluation will exercise second level quality assurance and will approve the evaluation products.

### Governance

Two groups will be consulted throughout the evaluation process to review and provide feedback on evaluation products:

- An **Internal Reference Group** of a cross-section of WFP stakeholders from relevant business areas at different WFP levels.
- An **External Advisory Panel** composed of external experts in the fields of humanitarian technology and protection.

### Communications

Preliminary findings will be shared with WFP stakeholders in the Country Offices, Regional Bureaus and Headquarters during debriefing sessions at the end of the fieldwork and through short country case study reports. A stakeholders’ workshop will be held to ensure a transparent evaluation process and promote ownership of the findings and preliminary recommendations. The draft Evaluation Report will be shared with both the Internal Reference Group and the External Advisory Panel for review and comments. A Summary Evaluation Report (SER) will be presented to the Executive Board.

Findings will be actively disseminated, and the final evaluation report will be publicly available on WFP’s website. Key evaluation products will be in English with tailored communications products in other UN languages.

### Timing and Key Milestones

**Inception Phase:** July – December 2020

**Fieldwork:** February – April 2021

**Debriefing:** May 2021

**Reporting:** June – November 2021

**Stakeholders’ Workshop:** September 2021

**Executive Board presentation:** February 2022

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Full Terms of Reference are available at <http://newgo.wfp.org/topics/evaluation>

For more information please contact the WFP Office of Evaluation at: [WFP.evaluation@wfp.org](mailto:WFP.evaluation@wfp.org)