



Terms of Reference

Synthesis of evidence and lessons on country capacity strengthening from decentralized evaluations (2016 - 2020)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Background.....	2
1.1 Introduction	2
1.2 Context.....	5
2. Purpose of the Synthesis	9
2.1 Rationale and Objectives	9
2.2 Stakeholders and Users.....	10
3. Synthesis questions, scope and component evaluations	10
3.1 Synthesis questions.....	10
3.2 Scope	11
4. Proposed approach.....	13
4.1 Synthesis methodology.....	13
4.2. Quality assurance	14
5. Organization of the Synthesis	15
5.1. Phases and deliverables	15
5.2 Synthesis Team composition.....	17
5.3 Roles and Responsibilities	17
5.4 Communication	18
ANNEXES	19
Annex 1: List of Decentralized Evaluations to be reviewed in the synthesis.....	19
Annex 2: Evaluation Timeline	22
Annex 3: WFP Internal Reference Group (IRG) composition.....	24
Annex 4: Literature Review	25
Annex 5: E-library.....	31
Annex 6: Communication and learning plan.....	33

1. Background

1. The purpose of these terms of reference (TOR) is to guide the conduct of the proposed Synthesis of Evidence and Lessons on how country capacity strengthening was evaluated by WFP's decentralized evaluations from 2016 to 2020.¹ More specifically, it aims to provide key information to stakeholders about the synthesis exercise, to guide the evaluation team, including specifying expectations during the various phases of the synthesis evaluation.
2. The TOR are structured as follows: section 1 provides information on the context for this synthesis; section 2 presents the rationale, objectives, stakeholders and main users of the synthesis; section 3 presents the evaluation questions and scope; section 4 identifies the approach and methodology; section 5 indicates how the synthesis evaluation will be organized.

1.1 Introduction

3. In 2016, WFP selected a new model for its evaluation function, combining centralized evaluation with demand-led decentralized evaluation, in line with Strategic Plan commitments and related organization strengthening initiatives. WFP's evaluation plans are set out in Regional Evaluation Plans and in the triennial programme of work for OEV, which also includes synthesis reports.
4. Evaluation syntheses are an approach used to highlight issues that cut across different evaluations, and to address questions using an existing evidence base.² OEV adheres to the following definition of evaluation synthesis: *a combination and integration of findings from quality-assessed evaluations to develop higher-level or more comprehensive knowledge and inform policy and strategic decisions.*³
5. Decentralized evaluations are commissioned and managed by country offices, regional bureau or headquarters-based divisions other than the Office of Evaluation (OEV). They cover operations⁴, activities, pilots, themes, transfer modalities or any other area of action at the sub-national, national or multi-country level. They follow OEV's guidance, including impartiality safeguards and quality assurance system.⁵ They are not presented to the Executive Board.
6. In 2018, the minimum coverage norm⁶ for decentralized evaluations set by OEV's Evaluation Policy 2016-2021 was revised to ensure that decentralized evaluations are planned and conducted based on an existing need for evidence, that they have a clear purpose and that they complement other evaluations within the Country Strategic Plan (CSP) cycle. Commissioning units select topics or interventions to be evaluated and time the evaluations

1 Between 2016 and 2020, 77 decentralized evaluations have been completed.

2 This also entails that evaluation syntheses generally do not include extensive field-based primary data collection activities.

3 Adapted from: Wyburn et al (2018) Understanding the Impacts of Research Synthesis: Environmental Science and Policy Journal, Volume 86, August 2018, pp 72-84.

4 Under WFP's Integrated Roadmap, operations have gradually been replaced by CSP/ICSPs.

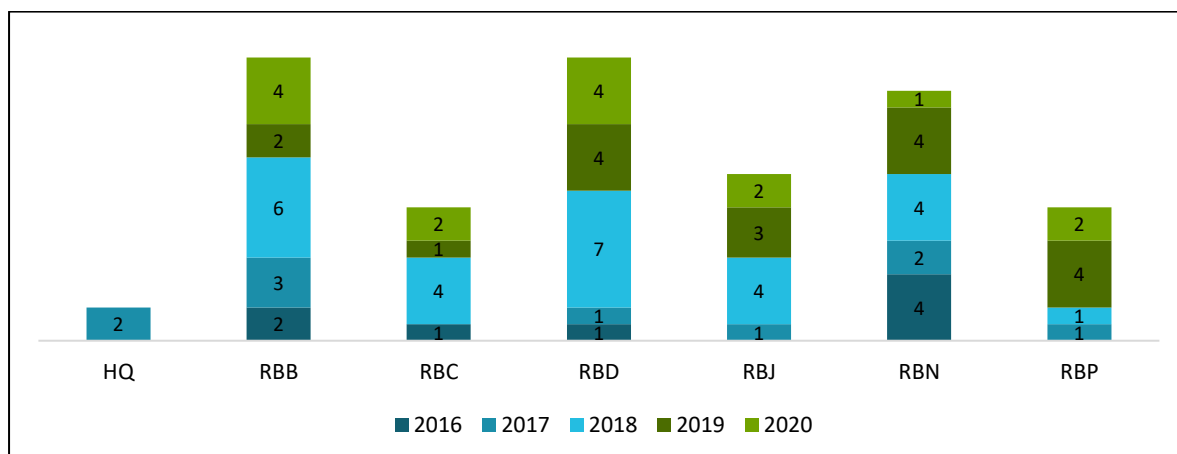
5 WFP Evaluation Policy 2016-2021.

6 Minimum evaluation coverage norm: At least one decentralized evaluation is planned and conducted within each CSP and ICSP cycle. Should the CSP or ICSP be extended beyond 5 years, the country office should conduct an additional decentralized evaluation.

so that the results can be used in the preparation of CSP and interim-CSP and to inform programming decisions. As such, the range of topics and programmatic areas covered within decentralized evaluations can vary.

7. Since 2016, 77 decentralized evaluations have been completed, as shown in figure 1. The distribution of decentralized evaluations by region shows that West Africa, Asia and Pacific and East Africa regions have completed the highest number since 2016.

Figure 1: Completed DEs by region and year of completion (2016 – 2020)

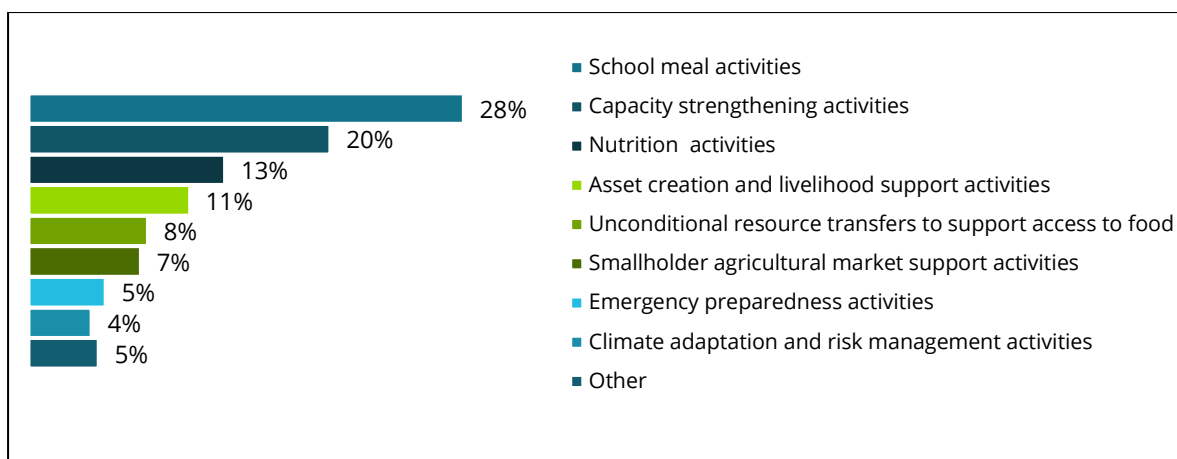


Source: OEV Management Information System (MIS)

8. Over the 2016 – 2020 period, the majority (28%) of decentralized evaluations focused on school feeding programmes. The second largest set (20%) focused on capacity strengthening activities, providing a growing body of evidence on the design, implementation and results of country capacity strengthening (CCS). In decentralized evaluations, country capacity strengthening is mostly covered along with other activities, such as school feeding for example.
9. Nutrition activities were the third largest area of focus and asset creation and livelihood support activities the fourth, followed by unconditional resource transfer and smallholder agricultural market support (see figure 2 below). As the Regional Bureaux redefine the priorities for decentralized evaluations, in consultation with country offices and through their regional evaluation strategies and plans, the range of themes covered is expected to broaden, with increasing attention to smallholder agriculture market support, emergency preparedness, climate adaptation and asset creation and livelihood support.⁷

Figure 2: Decentralized Evaluations by programmatic area of focus (2016 – 2020)

⁷ WFP Annual Evaluation Report, 2019.



Source: OEV Management Information System (MIS)

10. The Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development - in particular, Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 17, target 17.9 - emphasizes the need to “enhance international support for implementing effective and targeted capacity building in developing countries and to support national plans to implement the sustainable development goals.”⁸ As WFP supports countries to achieve their SDG targets by 2030 and beyond, the organization is increasingly transitioning to capacity strengthening as a means of supporting national systems and recognizes that strong and sustained national capacities are critical to addressing the multiple causes of hunger and responding to the food security and nutrition needs of vulnerable populations over the long-term.
11. The corporate policy framework for country capacity strengthening is currently being reviewed.⁹ There is an expectation that this process will result in the formulation of a new/revised policy on country capacity strengthening, and/or a corporate CCS strategy by 2021. This, together with the preparation of the new WFP Strategic Plan (2022 – 2026), make this synthesis of WFP’s country capacity strengthening in decentralized evaluation very timely.
12. The synthesis aims to bring together findings on CCS from WFP decentralized evaluations conducted since 2016, providing learning and generating further evidence on CCS programming, support WFP to enhance its corporate approach to CCS, as well as to inform the formulation of a new/ revised capacity development Policy, and/or a corporate CCS strategy.
13. The evidence generated through the findings, lessons and recommendations of this synthesis, should be useful to:
 - i) Enhance the knowledge base on WFP country capacity strengthening and provide an overarching picture of WFP’s performance in CCS across country offices that commissioned a decentralized evaluation.
 - ii) Identify recurrent findings useful to derive lessons on country-capacity strengthening at country-level and corporately to support country offices in better engaging and positioning itself as a strategic partner with national Governments.
 - iii) Inform improved programming, WFP’s forthcoming strategy on country capacity strengthening or policy update, and relevant corporate guidance.

⁸ <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org>.

⁹ WFP’ 5th Policy Cycle Task Force Meeting, NFRs and forward agenda (internal document).

- iv) Contribute to the wider knowledge base by providing lessons and findings to external stakeholder supporting and engaging in country capacity strengthening activities.
 - v) Provide synthesis products of interest to different audiences within WFP, including Executive Board Members.
14. The synthesis evaluation is scheduled to take place from September 2020 until March 2021. This synthesis report will be presented for consideration to the WFP Executive Board in June 2021.

1.2 Context

Country Capacity Strengthening in the current WFP context

15. Agenda 2030 speaks to the core mandate and values of the UN and presents both the opportunity and responsibility for the UN to avail its knowledge, convening power and expertise to nations in support of its implementation. The WFP Strategic Plan (2017-2021) is fully aligned with Agenda 2030 and WFP embraces a *Whole of Society* approach to zero hunger which means it engages with – and supports capacity strengthening of – a range of state and non-state actors (civil society, private sector, communities and individuals), as relevant to context to support the country capacities required to achieve national SDG2 food security and nutrition objectives and targets, as well as relevant SDG17 objectives.
16. The WFP framework for capacity strengthening recognizes that without supportive policies, strategies and procedures (enabling environment domain), well-functioning organizations (organizational domain), and educated, skilled people (individual domain) state and non-state duty carriers cannot effectively plan, implement and review their efforts to deliver intended products and services to their target groups. Effective CCS support must therefore address all three domains, recognizing the interdependencies between them. Single interventions (e.g., trainings) are not likely to make a significant difference unless they represent a key leverage point that can shift an entire system’s behaviour.¹⁰
17. Applying this holistic and systems-strengthening approach to its interventions, WFP supports stakeholder capacities through five pathways: (i) policies and legislation; (ii) institutional effectiveness and accountability; (iii) strategic planning and financing; (iv) stakeholder programme design and delivery; and (v) engagement and participation of communities, civil society and private sector.
18. WFP’s Capacity Development Policy update¹¹ adopts the following internationally accepted definitions:
- ‘Capacity’ is defined as the ability of people, organizations and society as a whole to manage their affairs successfully.
 - ‘Capacity development’ is defined as the process whereby people, organizations and society as a whole unleash, strengthen, create, adapt and maintain that ability over time.
19. In the past decade, significant changes in the global debates on capacity development include: i. the shift from a focus on the skills of individuals to emphasis on the performance of wider groups or organizations and then to the notion of capacity to deliver results as one

10 WFP Corporate Approach to Country Capacity Strengthening (CCS) – CCS toolkit component 001.

11 WFP Policy on Capacity Development: An Update on Implementation WFP/EB.2/2009/4-B, October 2009.

dimension of capacity required to make an organization or system endure, adapt and perform over time; and, ii. a shift from viewing capacity development as linear and externally generated, to seeing it as self-organizing, emergent and part of a complex adaptive system.¹²

20. In WFP's Strategic Plan 2017-2021 there is evidence of both *capacity development* and *country capacity strengthening* terminologies being used, but most recently in the updated guidance and CCS toolkit the terminology applied is *country capacity strengthening*.¹³
21. The mid-term review of WFP's Revised Corporate Results Framework¹⁴, highlights that while the CRF includes 13 activity categories, including country capacity strengthening and individual capacity strengthening, the latter is among the least used given the lack of definition. In addition to 'activity categories', capacity strengthening is also referred to as a strategic outcome and as a transfer modality. Further, there is also a lack of clarity as to what a capacity strengthening transfer is and who should be counted as a direct beneficiary. There is a need for WFP to develop a framework that better tracks and reports on results in the "changing lives"/development contexts as WFP has been unable to measure capacity strengthening results using the existing CRF indicators and approaches.
22. WFP's Corporate Partnership Strategy (2014-2017)¹⁵ highlights WFP's commitment to partnerships with partners such as host governments and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and to support them in developing capacity for designing and implementing nationally owned hunger solutions. Today, this approach is reflected in Country Strategic Plans, which have the potential to improve the quality of WFP's assistance by providing an opportunity for designing and delivering interventions in line with national priorities and stakeholders needs and establishing the basis for effective partnerships. Initial stakeholder engagement began with the Zero Hunger Country Strategic Review, and formulation of WFP Country Office CSP outcomes is informed by an-depth understanding of relevant capacity assets and needs.
23. WFP's Policy on South-South and triangular cooperation (SSTC)¹⁶ identifies strengthening country systems and capacities as one of the guiding principles for WFP's engagement in SSTC¹⁷. In facilitating South-South and triangular cooperation, WFP focuses on local systems and institutions to promote the sustainability of food security programmes and local ownership. At the country and regional level, WFP may receive a request from a host government for support on capacity strengthening via South-South Cooperation for technical assistance or country-to-country knowledge exchange and learning. Also, the

12 See footnote 11.

13 The 2004 WFP Policy on Building Country and Regional Capacity, which is still in force, provides a useful perspective on the longer-term evolution of CCS within the organisation although adopting slightly different terminology.

14 WFP Mid-term Review of the Revised Corporate Results Framework, 2020.

15 WFP Corporate Partnership Strategy –WFP/EB.A/2014/5B, May 2013.

16 The SSTC policy adopts the definition as follows: South-South Cooperation is defined as "A process whereby two or more developing countries pursue their individual and/or shared national [...] objectives through exchanges of knowledge, skills, resources and technical know-how, and through regional and inter-regional collective actions, including partnerships involving governments, regional organizations, civil society, academia and the private sector, for their individual and/or mutual benefit within and across regions. South-South cooperation is not a substitute for, but rather a complement to, North-South cooperation. Triangular cooperation is defined as a: "[c]ollaboration in which traditional donor countries and multilateral organizations facilitate South-South initiatives through the provision of funding, training, and management and technological systems as well as other forms of support.

17 WFP South-South and Triangular Cooperation Policy - WFP/EB.A/2015/5-D, April 2015.

Policy on Capacity Development refers to SSTC as offering a possible modality for knowledge transfer and best practice exchange.

24. CCS support is offered by WFP in response to stakeholder requests for support in strengthening their own national food security and nutrition systems. WFP can provide needs-based and context-specific guidance and feedback across a range of areas, through a systematic and participatory approach that enables stakeholders to strengthen and embed essential capacities.¹⁸
25. WFP has been engaging in country capacity strengthening for years, in humanitarian and development contexts.¹⁹ WFP's 1994 Mission Statement states that "all assistance – whether relief, recovery or development – should aim to develop capacities for self-reliance". Since then, WFP has made consistent reference to capacity development in its key strategic documents. In WFP's first (1998-2001)²⁰ and second (2002-05)²¹ Strategic and Financial Plans, this was formulated as promoting "national institution building, and local capacity building through broad-based participation". Capacity strengthening was a strategic priority from WFP's 2004-2007 Strategic Plan²² onwards, with Strategic Priority 5 aimed at helping governments establish and manage national food assistance programmes. It was mainstreamed in subsequent Strategic Plans.
26. Recent lessons learned, and Agenda 2030 provide the organization with an opportunity to strengthen its conceptual and operational approach to CCS to better contribute to national SDG efforts and results. In 2016/17, an independent evaluation of WFP's Policy on Capacity Development: An Update on Implementation and an internal audit of WFP's country capacity strengthening identified several areas where the organization needed to strengthen its ability to deliver and demonstrate sustainable capacity strengthening results over time.
27. The evaluation of the Policy on Capacity Development²³ found that WFP's capacity development work, both in terms of funding and continuity of engagement, was constrained by the agency's emergency focus and short-term operational horizon. The evaluation concluded that WFP was supporting capacity development processes in a wide range of geographic and thematic contexts despite limited corporate support, resources, guidance and tools. The evaluation cautioned that continuing 'business as usual' given the Agenda 2030 and new Strategic Plan commitments would lead to considerable reputational risk.
28. Recommendations from the evaluation included a temporary, multi-stakeholder management transition team be struck to address this; that Country Offices be provided with relevant, concrete and practical tools and guidance on capacity strengthening; that WFP enhance its internal capacity to support work in this area; and heightening the monitoring and evaluation of, as well as reporting on, WFP's capacity strengthening work.

18 WFP Capacity Strengthening Supports Nations to End Hunger – Beyond the Annual Performance Report 2018 Series.

19 [WFP Corporate Approach to Country Capacity Strengthening, 2016](#).

20 WFP Strategic and Financial Plan 1998-2001 – WFP/EB.A/97/4-A.

21 WFP Strategic and Financial Plan 2002-2005 – WFP/EB.A/2001/5-B/1.

22 WFP Strategic Plan 2004-2007, WFP/EB.3/2003/4-A/1.

23 Evaluation of WFP's Policy on Capacity Development: an Update on Implementation, 2016.

29. The internal audit found successful examples of country capacity strengthening intervention, which however in their design and implementation do not make optimal use of existing corporate concepts, guidance and tools. Ultimately, this results in WFP's engagement in country capacity strengthening activities having limited internal and external visibility. Furthermore, fragmented knowledge management systems and practices, leave WFP with a corporate culture not always supportive of capacity strengthening. These shortcomings are closely linked to inadequate systems, processes and practices in the mobilization and management of both financial and human resources for capacity strengthening.²⁴
30. Similarly, findings from WFP's Evaluation of the Corporate Partnership Strategy, completed in 2017, found the Strategy has not enabled the development of clear incentives for staff and managers to engage in stronger partnering behaviors or of an explicit communications strategy for partnerships. The evaluation recommended that a costed action plan to implement the partnership pillar of the Strategic Plan 2017-2021 is finalized; that a Partnership Action Plan with specific resources is developed as a mandatory component of each Country Strategic Plan; that guidance and tools on partnership are revised and updated; that specific guidance on preparation of country level partnership action plans is developed; that systems to capture and report on qualitative data on partnering are strengthened; and that prioritized partnership agreements with UN agencies, NGOs, private sectors actors, financial institutions and economic organizations are revised.
31. The above-mentioned evaluations will be used as secondary data sources for this synthesis.
32. The spread of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) continues to have significant impact on national food security & nutrition (FSN) programmes. Addressing the food and nutrition needs of vulnerable populations during the epidemic is critical, and a large proportion of these populations are assisted through national programmes. WFP Covid-19 guidance on Country Capacity Strengthening sets out a key objective for WFP to support and empower national responses that are the first line of defense against the impacts of the COVID-19 crisis.²⁵

Evaluative synthesis in the current WFP context

33. There is growing demand for evidence generation across WFP, and a commitment for further systematic use of evidence to inform strategic directions, policies and programmes. Evaluation synthesis are one of the products commissioned by OEV to respond to such growing interest in and demand for succinct and actionable analysis drawing from completed evaluations.
34. OEV has commissioned evaluation syntheses in the past: including annual syntheses of Operations Evaluations from 2014 to 2017; synthesis of impact evaluations on moderate-acute malnutrition.²⁶
35. In 2017, OEV changed its approach in response to the growing body of quality evaluation evidence, initially focusing on centralized evaluations. The Synthesis of WFP's Country Portfolio Evaluations in the Sahel and Horn of Africa from 2016 to 2018, was presented to

24 WFP Internal Audit of WFP's Country Capacity Strengthening, 2016

25 WFP Covid-19 Immediate guidance on country capacity strengthening (internal).

26 WFP/EB.1/2018/5-C/Add.1.

the Executive Board for consideration in June 2019.²⁷ This was followed by a Synthesis of Evidence and Lessons from Policy Evaluations, presented to the Executive Board in June 2020.²⁸ In 2020, OEV will initiate this synthesis of decentralized evaluations in reflection of the growing body of quality of decentralized evaluation evidence to support evidence use and uptake.

36. In recent years, OEV, has been shifting its focus to respond to country needs and Agenda 2030 priorities by strengthening evidence partnerships and capacities to deliver more syntheses evaluations²⁹, and to support efforts to ensure a strong use of evaluative evidence in Country Strategic Plans through the formal OEV review of draft CSP documents. Regional Evaluation Officers are also increasingly supporting the use of evidence by country offices by preparing summaries of evaluative evidence to contribute to CSP planning processes.
37. The present synthesis aims to expand the learning from decentralized evaluations and strengthen OEV's efforts to provide synthesis products of interest to different target audiences within WFP, including Executive Board Members. It is timed to inform the formulation of a new corporate CCS strategy or the update of the 2009 WFP Policy on Capacity Development, which updates the 2004 policy document "Building Country and Regional Capacities", the preparation of the new WFP Strategic Plan (2022 – 2026), and above all to support the development of the second generation CSPs, which will start to be presented to the Executive Board for approval in November 2020.

2. Purpose of the Synthesis

2.1 Rationale and Objectives

38. Evaluation syntheses serve the dual objectives of accountability and learning. As such, this synthesis will provide evidence and learning on WFP's performance in country capacity strengthening and provide accountability for results to WFP stakeholders. This synthesis aims to:
 - Contribute to learning through the identification of recurring findings, lessons learned and evidence on CCS across WFP decentralized evaluations, that can generate informed discussions and contribute to WFP evidence-based strategic and operational decision-making, guide country offices in designing and delivering effective CCS that engages a wide range of actors and addresses issues at the individual and organizational levels and in the enabling environment, through a holistic approach to systems strengthening.
 - Provide useful insights into the effectiveness of CCS and report on the performance of CCS interventions at country-level seeking to capture internal and external enablers that drive or constraint programme performance, and provide recommendations aimed at shifting organizational culture to facilitate better positioning and engagement of WFP in longer-term capacity strengthening.
 - Provide evidence to inform the development of the forthcoming new/ revised capacity development Policy, and/or a corporate CCS strategy, that will outline the corporate

27 WFP/EB.A/2019/7-C.

28 WFP/EB.A/2020/7-D.

29 WFP OEV 2019 Annual Evaluation Report.

action plan for effective operationalization of the 2009 Capacity Development Policy and inform other corporate and country-level processes in relation to CCS.

- Provide useful insights to country offices on potential adjustments to CCS elements in the design of second-generation Country Strategic Plans.
- Provide a lens to analyze and interpret issue relating to CCS and serve as a secondary source of evidence for CSP evaluations, which by design include a CCS dimension.
- Serve an accountability purpose through exploring the extent of management response to recommendations on CCS from decentralized evaluations.

2.2 Stakeholders and Users

39. The synthesis will seek the views of, and be useful to, a range of WFP's internal and external stakeholders. The primary internal stakeholders and intended audience of the synthesis are the WFP CCS programme and policy owners responsible to set WFP strategic and operational direction and develop normative guidance, as well as Regional Bureaux (RB) and Country Offices (CO) who primarily address food insecurity and malnutrition through CCS activities. WFP Senior Management, and the Executive Board members are also primary users of this synthesis.
40. As secondary audience, the synthesis will be of interest to national governments, donor government agencies, other UN agencies, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and civil society organizations (CSOs).

3. Synthesis questions, scope and component evaluations

3.1 Synthesis questions

41. The synthesis will address seven main questions, which are geared to explore evaluation results at country and corporate level. The synthesis team will further develop and tailor these questions during the inception phase of the synthesis exercise.
- i) To what extent has the design of country capacity strengthening interventions been relevant to national development priorities? To what extent have the approaches pursued by WFP contributed to the successful positioning of WFP in light of the current WFP strategic Plan?
 - ii) What are the main contributions that WFP has made to strengthen the capacities of state and non-state actors?
 - iii) What are the common issues and potential opportunities most recurrently highlighted across decentralized evaluations regarding CCS intervention design and implementation? To what extent are these issues reflected in CCS corporate guidance?
 - iv) What internal and external factors contributed to positive or negative results in CCS implementation? Are there particular programmes areas and contexts in which the CCS approach has worked better and why?
 - v) To what extent has WFP's approach to country capacity strengthening contributed to achieving sustainable, strengthened capacities at the environment, institutional and/or individual level?
 - vi) What are the broad principles and lessons from CCS that emerge that should inform WFP's engagement with state and non-state actors in the context of the Agenda 2030?

- vii) What is the extent of implementation of the actions agreed in the final management response by the targeted responsible entities in relation to CCS activities? What actions have been taken to implement the recommendations?
42. This synthesis will also note the extent to which attention to gender equality, women's empowerment and equity in programming has led to enhanced capacities.
43. At inception stage, the synthesis team will refine and prioritize the evaluation questions, in agreement with OEV.

3.2 Scope

44. This synthesis will include all decentralized evaluations that include country capacity strengthening interventions, in line with the following criteria:
- Evaluation type: decentralized evaluations commissioned and managed by country offices, regional bureau or Headquarters-based divisions.
 - Time period: decentralized evaluations completed over the time period 2016-2020.
 - Quality of evaluation: decentralized evaluations assessed by OEV's post-hoc quality assessment (PHQA) system as either meeting or exceeding requirements.³⁰
 - Type of activity category³¹: decentralized evaluations whereby country capacity strengthening activities were carried out by WFP, and whereby country capacity strengthening has been adopted as a transfer modality.
45. A preliminary shortlisting of evaluation reports was carried out based on decentralized evaluations assessed by OEV's post-hoc quality assessment (PHQA) system as either meeting or exceeding requirements,³² which resulted in the identification of 40 reports³³ to be included in the synthesis.
46. As the information contained in OEV's management information system in relation to activity categories covered in decentralized evaluations is manually tagged, the coverage of CCS activities across decentralized evaluations will have to be reviewed. As such, the evaluation team will be expected to produce a synthesis method note for the refinement of the scoping

30 Since 2016, OEV has used an outsourced post-hoc quality assessment mechanism, through which independent assessors rate the quality of all completed WFP evaluations against WFP's own evaluation quality standards, which are based on international professional evaluation standards and include the requirements for evaluation set by the United Nations System-Wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UNSWAP).

31 Activity categories are presented in annex 1 of WFP's Revised Corporate Results Framework (2017-2021) WFP/EB.2/2018/5-B/Rev.1.

32 Since 2016, OEV has used an outsourced post-hoc quality assessment mechanism, through which independent assessors rate the quality of all completed WFP evaluations against WFP's own evaluation quality standards, which are based on international professional evaluation standards and include the requirements for evaluation set by the United Nations System-Wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UNSWAP).

33 In the period 2019-2020, there are 20 additional completed decentralized evaluations that have not been assessed by post-hoc quality assessment.

protocol including the inclusion/ exclusion criteria used to finalise sample of reports that will be included in the synthesis during the inception phase.

47. To determine and finalise the total number of evaluations to be included in the synthesis scope, the team will undertake a first level screening of all 40 evaluation reports (presented in annex 1), based on the extent to which CCS is covered. Evaluation reports are listed by their commissioning bureau and country, title, evaluation type, completion date and post-hoc quality assessment result.
48. In the period 2019-2020, 20 additional decentralized evaluations have been completed. However, these evaluations have not yet been assessed by OEV's post-hoc quality assessment mechanism. The inclusion of these reports in the scope of the synthesis will be determined after the above-mentioned first level screening is applied, through which the evaluation team will also determine whether the evidence on CCS provides a rich body of evaluative insights for the synthesis.
49. Should the CCS evidence from the screening of the 40 reports be limited, the evaluation team may be asked to undertake a second level screening of the 20 additional reports to assess the extent to which CCS is covered. Depending on the outcome of this screening, the team will either apply a light touch review to assess the extent to which the individual decentralized evaluations meet quality standards prior to its inclusion in the synthesis scope, or alternatively, use the evidence to add descriptive information to supplement or nuance fully fledged findings emerging and established from the analysis of the other evaluations in the universe.
50. Capacity strengthening is conceived as means/driver to achieve results in a programmatic area, and usually accompanied by (at least) one activity. Within WFP's Revised Corporate Results Framework, capacity strengthening foresees two activity categories - individual capacity strengthening and institutional capacity strengthening. Decentralized evaluations can cover more than one programmatic intervention, and the final sample selected for the synthesis will comprise mainly of evaluations that cover country capacity strengthening as a cross-cutting theme related to another programmatic interventions (for example, capacity strengthening in relation to school meals and nutrition). Assessment of evaluation results in relation to the specific programmatic areas will not be part of the synthesis scope to keep the focus as tightly as possible on CCS drivers, modalities etc.
51. CCS interventions are cross-cutting in WFP's five strategic objectives.³⁴ Furthermore, as CCS activities are often implemented with national partners, the synthesis shall take into account the various engagements and modalities through which CCS is implemented.
52. The time period covered by the synthesis falls under WFP Strategic Plans 2014-2017 and 2017-2021, as well as two distinct WFP Results Framework (Strategic Results Framework 2014-2016 and Corporate Results Framework 2017-2021). The synthesis team is therefore

³⁴ [WFP Strategic Plan 2017-2021](#).

expected to take into consideration the evolution and different positioning of CCS interventions in time, in the analysis and results of the synthesis.

53. The synthesis is expected to draw from a broad and diverse body of information, evaluative evidence, primary and secondary data. The main data sources are presented in annex 5:
54. Primary data gathered for the synthesis will mainly come from interviews with WFP stakeholders.
55. The synthesis team is not expected to carry out a new set of evidence quality reviews for all the decentralized evaluations included in the synthesis, but to take into account and rely on the results of the independent post-hoc evaluation quality assessment system used by OEV.³⁵ Nonetheless, should specific issues or discrepancies relating to evidence quality emerge at the analysis stage, the synthesis team is expected to highlight and probe them further as needed.

4. Proposed approach

4.1 Synthesis methodology

56. The fully-fledged synthesis methodology will be developed during the Inception Phase of the exercise. Key features of the design are expected to be:
 - Confirmation of final sample of evaluations.
 - Development of a comprehensive analytical framework, which responds to the synthesis questions.
 - Systematic analysis via (electronic or manual methods) of the component evaluation reports, including data extraction and coding.
 - Primary data gathering through interviews with key stakeholders, such as evaluation managers of relevant decentralized evaluations, CCS programme and policy advisors both at HQ, country and regional level, and South-South cooperation regional focal points to verify and deepen data from component evaluations.
 - Secondary data gathering with structured analysis of documentation linked to the synthesis questions.
57. Secondary methods should apply the same method and analytical framework where feasible; where this is not feasible, it should apply a structured framework to ensure consistency and rigor of data collection.
58. The primary approaches to be adopted by this synthesis exercise are systematic and inductive. These will be operationalised as follows:
 - Systematic: applying structured analytical fields to data sources, to ensure consistent and transparent extraction of evidence, and to ensure that findings are fully traceable back to the body of evidence.

³⁵ The assumption being that each decentralized evaluation and related content of the management response underwent multiple rounds of reviews, inputs, stakeholder feedback and quality assurance during the drafting before it's approval by the relevant commissioner.

- Inductive: Pre-defining an initial set of categories for analysis which correspond to the analytical framework but allowing other important categories and themes to emerge as the evidence base consolidates. Thus, categories may be merged, adapted or adjusted in response to higher- or aggregate-level themes emerging.
59. The synthesis team is also expected to work in an iterative manner with OEV by submitting a synthesis protocol and analytical approach that may evolve and be refined during the course of the synthesis in light of how evidence will cluster around specific areas of interest.
 60. An additional deliverable of this synthesis will be a short method note (to be featured in annex) to describe the methodology followed to carry out the synthesis.
 61. The methodology should reflect the standards for independence and impartiality, in line with WFP's commitments under its Evaluation Policy 2016-2021.
 62. Based on the analyses from the desk review and additional primary information, this synthesis report is expected to present key lessons, conclusions and recommendations to:
 - a) introduce new, or validate existing insights into WFP CCS programme and policy design, and implementation processes at the country-level;
 - b) introduce new, or validate existing, insights into how WFP learns and drives changes that informed by decentralized evaluation results on CCS;
 - c) put forward recommendations to CCS policy owners and programme implementers.
 63. Ethical consideration shall be taken into account in the methodology. All members of the synthesis team will abide by the 2016 UNEG Norms and Standards and the 2020 UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation. The synthesis team will also commit to signing Annex 9 of the Long-Term Agreement regarding confidentiality, Internet and Data Security Statement.

4.2. Quality assurance

64. WFP's evaluation quality assurance system sets out processes with in-built steps for quality assurance and templates for evaluation products, including synthesis. The quality assurance system will be systematically applied during this synthesis.
65. The synthesis team will be required to ensure the quality of data (validity, consistency and accuracy) throughout the analytical and reporting phases. OEV also expects that all deliverables from the synthesis team are subject to a thorough quality assurance review by the commissioned company to maintain corporate quality of evaluation-related products.
66. Quality assurance of the evaluation products will be conducted by the Office of Evaluation. This quality assurance process does not interfere with the views and independence of the synthesis team but ensures the synthesis report provides the necessary evidence in a clear and convincing way and draws its conclusions on that basis.

5. Organization of the Synthesis

5.1. Phases and deliverables

67. The synthesis is structured in five phases summarized in the table below. The synthesis team will be involved in phases 2 to 5.

Table 1: Summary timeline – Synthesis

Main Phases	Timeline	Tasks and Deliverables
1. Preparatory	Aug – Sep 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of synthesis questions Identification of evaluation universe/library preparation Quality assurance of component evaluations Final TOR Constitution of Internal Reference Group Synthesis Team and/or firm selection & contract
2. Inception	Oct – Nov 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Briefing of Synthesis Team Document review Refine Synthesis Questions Confirm evaluation universe (protocols for inclusion/exclusion) and evidence quality Develop Inception Note including analytical framework, full methodology, synthesis organization
3. Synthesis preparation	Nov – Dec 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data extraction and coding Document review Interviews Validation of coded data Higher level analysis
4. Reporting	Jan – Mar 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report Drafting Comments Process Validation and Learning Workshop Final synthesis report
5. Dissemination	Mar – Jun 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Editing and formatting Two-page summary brief development Management Response preparation³⁶ Executive Board discussion

³⁶ The preparation of the management response is the responsibility of senior management, in particular of the CCS unit.

5.2 Synthesis Team composition

68. The synthesis will be conducted by at least a team leader and a data analyst. The team leader requires experience in the following areas:

- Minimum 10 years of professional evaluation experience
- Proven technical expertise in country capacity strengthening activities and modalities
- Proven experience with synthesis methods and approaches and prior experience of designing and conducting evaluation syntheses
- Proven experience with qualitative and quantitative data analysis
- Strong analytical skills and ability to identify patterns and divergences in findings and strategic implications
- Excellent English writing skills, with ability to express synthesised/summarised messages accurately

69. Ability to fully comprehend, analyse and assess evaluation reports in French and Spanish is required.

5.3 Roles and Responsibilities

70. This synthesis is managed by WFP OEV. Federica Zelada, Evaluation Officer, has been appointed as the evaluation manager (EM). Her responsibilities include drafting the TOR; selecting and contracting the synthesis team; preparing and managing the budget; setting up the internal reference group; conducting the 1st level quality assurance of the synthesis products and soliciting WFP stakeholders' feedback on draft products.; providing access to all component evaluations and related material; draft report.

71. The EM will be the main interlocutor between the synthesis team, represented by the team leader, and WFP counterparts to ensure a smooth implementation process.

72. Deborah McWhinney, Senior Evaluation Officer, will provide second level quality assurance. The Deputy Director of Evaluation will approve the final synthesis products on satisfactorily meeting of WFP evaluation quality standards, which are expected to be systematically applied throughout the synthesis process.

73. Under overall guidance from the Team Leader (TL), the team's responsibilities include:

- Finalize and submit for review the synthesis methodology and protocol for data extraction and analysis;
- Develop a synthesis matrix; conduct in-depth reviews of the full body of decentralized evaluations (2016-20), their related management response matrices and recommendations database;
- Carry out key informants' interviews; draft the synthesis report for feedback and discussion at an internal virtual validation workshop;
- Submit the revised draft synthesis to OEV and address WFP comments before finalisation.

74. The main body of the final report is expected not to exceed 20/25 pages or 7,500 words.

75. An Internal Reference Group composed of selected WFP stakeholders will be established to review and comment on the draft synthesis report, be available for interviews with the synthesis team and attend the validation and learning workshop.

5.4 Communication

76. All synthesis products will be produced in English. A communication plan will be set out including details about how to communicate the synthesis report within and outside WFP. The summary report along with the management response to the synthesis recommendations will be presented to the WFP Executive Board in June 2021. The final synthesis report will be posted on the public WFP website and OEV will ensure dissemination of lessons through the annual evaluation report.

77. The relevant Headquarter division and the Regional Evaluation Units will be encouraged to circulate the final synthesis report with their staff, with WFP country offices and WFP external stakeholders.

ANNEXES

Annex 1: List of Decentralized Evaluations to be reviewed in the synthesis

N.	Regional Bureau	Country	Title	Type	Completion year	PHQA rating
1	RBB	Bangladesh	Evaluation of USDA McGovern Dole School Feeding Programme Evaluation 2015-2017	Activity	2018	62
2	RBB	Bangladesh	Mid-Term Evaluation of McGovern Dole School Feeding Programme 2015-2017	Activity	2017	70
3	RBB	Cambodia	Evaluation of McGovern Dole School Feeding Programme Evaluation 2013 - 2016	Activity	2018	66
4	RBB	India	Endline evaluation for TPDS Reforms project in Bhubaneswar urban and rural	Activity	2019	64
5	RBB	Laos	Mid-Term Evaluation of McGovern Dole School Feeding Programme 2015-2017	Activity	2017	71
6	RBB	Nepal	Mid-Term Evaluation of McGovern Dole School Feeding Programme 2014-2016	Activity	2017	69
7	RBB	Philippines	Evaluation of Disaster Preparedness and Response/Climate Change Adaptation Activities	Operation	2018	69
8	RBC	Algeria	Evaluation of the Nutrition Components of the Protected Relief and Recovery Operation 200301	Activity	2018	73
9	RBC	Jordan	Evaluation of WFP's General Food Assistance to Syrian Refugees in Jordan from 2015 to mid-2018	Activity	2018	77
10	RBC	Pakistan	Evaluation of Food Assistance to conflict-affected population in Pakistan from 2015-2017	Activity	2018	64
11	RBC	Tunisia	Evaluation of WFP's capacity strengthening activities to develop the School Meals Programme 2016-2018	Activity	2019	61
12	RBC	Turkey	Mid-term Evaluation of Emergency Social Safety Nets	Activity	2018	74
13	RBD	Cote d'Ivoire	Evaluation of Protected Relief and Recovery Operation 200464	Operation	2018	70
14	RBD	Gambia	Evaluation of Development Programme 200327	Operation	2018	74
15	RBD	Guinea	Evaluation of Country Programme 200326	Operation	2018	61

16	RBD	Liberia	Evaluation of USDA McGovern-Dole-funded International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program 2013-2016	Activity	2017	75
17	RBD	Mali	FAO/WFP Joint Evaluation of DEVCO-funded resilience activity in northern Mali	Activity	2018	61
18	RBD	Niger	Evaluation of Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation 200961	Operation	2018	60
19	RBD	Senegal	Evaluation of CBT Modality in School Feeding Activities	Transfer modality	2018	61
20	RBD	Sierra Leone	Evaluation of Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation 200938	Operation	2018	71
21	RBD	Togo	Evaluation of Capacity Strengthening in School Feeding	Activity	2019	66
22	RBJ	Eswatini	Evaluation of National School Feeding Programme 2010-2018	Activity	2019	66
23	RBJ	Lesotho	Evaluation of assessing the contribution of school feeding to developmental objectives	Activity	2018	74
24	RBJ	Malawi	Final Evaluation of the School Meals Programme 2013-2015	Activity	2018	76
25	RBJ	Malawi	Mid-Term Evaluation of Integrated Risk Management and Climate Services Programme 2017-2019	Activity	2019	70
26	RBJ	Republic of Congo	Mid term Evaluation of Country Programme 200648	Operation	2018	68
27	RBJ	Zambia	Mid term Evaluation of the Country Programme 200891	Operation	2018	66
28	RBJ	Zimbabwe	Evaluation of WFP's Lean Season Assistance	Activity	2017	62
29	RBN	Burundi	Evaluation des programmes intégrés de cantines scolaires financés par l'Ambassade des Pays Bas	Activity	2019	73
30	RBN	Ethiopia	Evaluation of McGovern Dole School Feeding Programme in Afar and Somali region 2013-2017	Activity	2018	70
31	RBN	Kenya	Evaluation of USDA McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Programme 2014-2016	Activity	2017	62
32	RBN	Kenya	Evaluation of the effects of GFD Cash Modality scale up for the refugees and host community in Kakuma and Dadaab Camp	Transfer modality	2018	63
33	RBN	Kenya	Evaluation of WFP's Asset Creation Programme in Kenya's Arid and Semi-arid Areas 2009 - 2015	Activity	2016	72

34	RBN	Rwanda	Midline Evaluation of USDA McGovern-Dole Food for Education and Child Nutrition Programme	Activity	2019	72
35	RBN	Uganda	Evaluation of WFP's Nutrition Programs in the Karamoja region 2013-2015	Activity	2016	63
36	RBP	Latin America RB	Evaluación final del Proyecto "Respuesta al fenómeno de El Niño en el Corredor Seco", El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras y Nicaragua, 2016-2018	Operation	2019	74
37	RBP	Bolivia	Evaluation of Bolivia Country Programme 200381	Operation	2019	75
38	RBP	Colombia	Mid-term Evaluation of Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation 200708	Operation	2017	72
39	RBP	Ecuador	Evaluación de la respuesta del PMA para avanzar hacia un enfoque de asistencia alimentaria vinculado a los sistemas de protección social	Thematic	2018	66
40	RBP	Nicaragua	Evaluación del Programa País 200434	Operation	2019	75

Source: OEV Management Information System

Annex 2: Evaluation Timeline

	WFP Synthesis of Decentralized Evaluations - Key actions	Dates
	Phase 1 Preparation	2020
Draft zero	Scoping and ToR preparation	Jul- Aug
D1	Revised draft ToR shared w/ IRG for feedback (window for comments until 14 September)	7-Sept
	Review and discuss QA2 IRG comments received and produce final revised draft	18 Sept
Final	Final revised draft ToR shared with DoE for final clearance	21 Sept
	Phase 2 Inception	
	Start up and team orientation	
	Mobilize synthesis team	28 Sep - 9 Oct
	Introductory calls - synthesis team and OEV	12 Oct
	Desk review of documents	
	Initial review of documents and e-library	12-16 Oct
	Draft synthesis method note (including selection of evaluation sample)	19-30 Oct
	Revise draft method note based on QA feedback	
	OEV review of draft synthesis method note	2-3 Nov
	Synthesis Team revises draft method note	4 -6 Nov
	Finalize draft method note based on DoE comments	
	DoE review and comment on synthesis method note	7-10 Nov
	Synthesis Team revises and finalizes synthesis method note	11-13 Nov
	Phase 3 - Desk review, content analysis and interviews	
	In-depth review of relevant information across evaluations	16-Nov - 11 Dec
	Conduct content analysis and desk reviews	16-Nov - 11 Dec
	Conduct interviews with IRG and other stakeholders	16-Nov - 11 Dec
	Phase 4 - Reporting	2021
Draft zero	Synthesis Team Prepares draft synthesis report (D0)	14 Dec -20 Jan 2021
	EM 1st round review of draft zero synthesis report	21-21 Jan
	QA2 review of the zero draft	25-26 Jan
	EM compiles comments (EM + QA2 comments) and send it back to TL	27 Jan
D1	Synthesis Team revise draft synthesis report based on EM+QA2 feedback (D1)	28 - 2 Feb
	EM sends D1 for DOE review with recommendation memo from QA2	DDoE comment window 3-7 Feb
D2	Synthesis team revises and submits draft synthesis report reflecting DoE's comments (D2)	8 - 11 Feb
	EM checks and shares draft synthesis report with IRG	12 Feb
	IRG comment window to review of draft 2 synthesis report	IRG comment window 12 Feb - 26 Feb

	Virtual validation and learning workshop	25 Feb
	Deadline for stakeholder comments	26 Feb
	OEV consolidates comments matrix and sends it to the Synthesis Team	27 Feb
D3	Synthesis Team revises and submit synthesis report (D3) and response to comments	27 Feb - 2 Mar
	EM check feedback addressed and share with QA2	2 March
	QA2 review and comment on D3 synthesis report	3-4 March
	Synthesis team revises and submits draft synthesis report based on QA2 comments	5 March
	EM submits D3 to DoE for approval/DoE comment on D3 of Synthesis	DDoE comment window 6-10 March
D4	Revise and submit draft synthesis report	11-12 March
	DoE shares final draft synthesis report with OPC for comment	EMG comment window 13 – 23 March
	EM consolidates comments and shares with TL	24 March
Final report	Revise and submit final synthesis report	25 March
	DoE review of final synthesis report	DDoE final review 26-27 March
	Final submission of the synthesis report to the EB Secretariat	2 April 2021 deadline EB Secretariat

Legend: DDoE: Deputy Director of Evaluation, WFP; EB: Executive Board EM: Evaluation Manager (WFP Evaluation Officer assigned to the synthesis); EMG: Executive Management Group (of WFP); IRG: Internal Reference Group; LTA: Long Term Agreement with OEV; LTA-QA: Quality Assurance review carried out by the LTA firm before submitting any interim or final deliverable; QA2: second level quality assurance in OEV RA: Research Analyst from WFP Office of Evaluation assigned to support the evaluation process; CPP: WFP Performance Management and Monitoring Division; TL: Team Leader (independent consultant/from independent evaluation firm)

Annex 3: WFP Internal Reference Group (IRG) composition

HQ-level IRG member (to be nominated)	
Asset creation and livelihoods	Bezuayehu Olana
Capacity strengthening	Maria Lukyanova
C&V/ CBT	Cinzia Cruciani
Climate Change	Vera Mayer
Gender	Cecilia Roccato
Nutrition	Siti Halati
Partnerships	Noemi Vorosbak
Performance measurement	Natasha Nadazdin
School feeding	Jutta Neitzel
Smallholder Agricultural Market Support	Damien Fontaine
Social protection	Sarah Loughton
South-south and triangular cooperation	Andrey Shirkov
Supply Chain	Graan Jaff
RB-level membership in the IRG	
RB membership of the IRG includes Colleagues in the Policy / Programme Advisors role	
RBB	Luna Kim, Regional M&E Officer
RBC	Honey Basnyat, Regional CCS focal point
RBD	Agnes Ndiaye Faye, Programme Officer
RBJ	Karen Rodrigue-Gervais, Regional CCS focal point
RBN	Francis Opiyo, Regional CCS focal point
RBP	Yasmin Swidan, Regional CCS focal point

Annex 4: Literature Review

Historical outlook: policy and mandate

The notion of capacity development has evolved over the past decades. The evolution went from focusing on human resource development and individuals, to a concept that captures individuals, organizations and the wider society. In the development dialogues, there is acknowledgement that sustainable capacity development is a process driven by those whose capacities are to be developed. Meaning that even though assistance plays an important part in developing capacities, if it is imposed externally, it is less likely to develop sustainable capacities. Therefore, the development of sustainable capacities, needs to be demand-driven.

Capacity development is a core function of the United Nations development system and has appeared in resolutions of the General Assembly for the past two decades. The General Assembly Resolution of 1995 A/RES/50/120 comprehensively addressed the issue of capacity development (then referred to as capacity-building). The General Assembly notes that “...that the objective of capacity-building and its sustainability should continue to be an essential part of the operational activities of the United Nations system at the country level, with the aim of integrating their activities and providing support to efforts to strengthen national capacities in the fields of, inter alia, policy and programme formulation, development management, planning, implementation, coordination, monitoring and review;”³⁷

An Inter-Agency Task Team on Capacity Development was established in 2005 to support defining the role of UNDG members in capacity development and provide guidance to UN Country Teams (UNCTs) in supporting national capacity development strategies and identify ways of measuring effectiveness of capacity development efforts.³⁸ In 2006, a Position Statement on Capacity Development was formulated to establish the overarching policy on capacity development for UNDG members. The United Nations Development Group recognizes capacity development as one of five key principles for UN country programming, alongside a human rights-based approach, gender equality, environmental sustainability and results-based management.

Capacity development in the United Nations development system

The UN provides capacity development support to national governments, global, regional, and national institutions and organizations, with a view to maximizing country ownership and ensuring target stakeholders can effectively, efficiently, and self-sufficiently manage and deliver products and services to their target groups.

The United Nations Development Group (UNDG) recognizes capacity development as one of six key programming approaches for UN integrated programming at country level, together with results-focused programming; risk-informed programming; development, humanitarian and peacebuilding linkages; coherent policy support and partnerships. Actors seeking to support sustainable development need to comprehend that solid capacity must be created locally and sustained. For this reason, the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review (2017-2020), calls for the UN development system to “support the building, development and strengthening of

³⁷ General Assembly resolution A/RES/50/120, p.5

³⁸ UNDG Programme Group, *Enhancing the UN's Contribution to National Capacity Development – A UNDG Position Statement*. United Nations. New York. December 2006.

national capacities to support development results at the country level and to promote national ownership and leadership, in line with national development policies, plans and priorities.”

The UNDG defines³⁹:

- Capacity as the ability of people, organizations and society as a whole to manage their affairs successfully.
- Capacity development as “the process whereby people, organizations and society as a whole unleash, strengthen, create, adapt, and maintain capacity over time,” in order to achieve development results.
- Capacity development support as “efforts by external individuals or organizations to reinforce, facilitate, and catalyze capacity development.”
- Capacity assessment as “the identification of capacity assets and needs at national and local levels,” equivalent to measuring baselines and the progress of (capacity) development indicators. Capacities can be grouped in three levels: individual, organizational and enabling environment, which altogether are interdependent and mutually reinforcing.

For effective capacity development, experiences within the United Nations Development system and elsewhere, indicate that capacity development should be addressed at all three levels and follow a systems approach. For example, developing skills of individuals will not be effective if policies and systems in the organization do not support the utilization of these newly acquired skills.

In addition, it is essential to understand whose capacities are to be developed, what capacities are to be developed, and why capacities are to be developed.⁴⁰

- Whose capacities* are to be developed; General Assembly resolutions refer to ‘national capacities’. National capacities are assumed to include the capacities of state actors, as well as non-state actors who may or may not be involved in implementation of government programmes and initiatives.
- What capacities?* United Nations entities support the development of *technical capacities* in their areas of specialization, for example, FAO supports capacity development of small-scale farmers in conservation agriculture, as well as functional capacities, for example, planning, monitoring and evaluation. UNDG guidance and agency specific guidance stress the importance of developing technical capacities as well as functional capacities.
- Why develop national capacities?* Capacity development is not an end in itself, but rather seeks to contribute to development effectiveness, and in turn, impacts development positively. Developing national capacities enables national actors to define their own development priorities, improve national prosperity, and manage their social, economic and environmental affairs in sustainable ways.

For most entities within the United Nations development system, capacity development is integral to what they do and is integrated into their strategic plans and programming documents, including the UNDAF.

39 UNDG Capacity Development Companion Guidance, 2017

40 Capacity Development: A report prepared for the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs for the 2016 Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review, 2015

Support to capacity development by United Nations entities covers technical (sector) capacities as well as functional capacities of individuals, organizations and the wider enabling environment. Some form of capacity assessment is usually conducted as part of country programming and the UNDAF. In addition to supporting the development of national capacities through country offices and regional centers where appropriate, United Nations entities facilitate South-South and triangular cooperation as mechanisms for capacity development.

The UNDG Capacity Development Companion Guidance suggests that improving national policy and regulatory environments and strengthening systems and institutional functions whilst building skills, should be core objectives of integrated programming across the board and a common approach in the pursuit of all strategic priorities. 41

Agenda 2030 speaks to the core mandate and values of the UN and presents both the opportunity and responsibility for the UN to avail its knowledge, convening power and expertise to nations in support of its implementation.

WFP's Policy Framework for Capacity Development

In WFP, the progress of policies on capacity development and relevant guidance started with "Building Country and Regional Capacities" (2004), which provided a framework for implementing capacity development in the Strategic Plan (2004 – 2007). The 2008 WFP Evaluation of the Capacity Development Policy and Operations⁴² recommended a policy update and the inclusion of a results framework; this was undertaken in 2009.

In 2004, WFP started outlining the approach to "Building Country and Regional Capacities"⁴³ in order to strengthen the national institutions to help fight hunger. In 2009 the Capacity Development Policy updated the 2004 policy document and to a certain extent remains valid, as the WFP works towards establishing the goals for the 2030 Agenda, considering WFP's Evaluation of the Policy on Capacity Development of 2017 and the 2009 policy on Capacity Development.

WFP's policy update applies internationally accepted definitions:

- "Capacity" refers to the ability of people, organizations and society as a whole to manage their affairs successfully.
- "Capacity development" denotes the process whereby people, organizations and society as a whole identify, strengthen, create, adapt and maintain that ability over time.

The main highlights of the policy are⁴⁴:

- Lives can be saved in emergencies if countries themselves have the capacity to respond quickly, efficiently and effectively to situations of acute hunger. Lives can be rescued from the deadly and debilitating impact of malnutrition and chronic hunger if countries that have the will to act also have the means and capacity to do so. By working to strengthen country and regional capacities to address acute hunger and chronic malnutrition, WFP can improve

41 UNDG Capacity Development Companion Guidance, 2017

42 WFP Evaluation of the Capacity Development Policy and Operations.

43 WFP/EB.3/2004/4-B.

44 WFP Policy on Capacity Development: An Update on Implementation (WFP/EB.2/2009/4-B) and Summary Report of the Evaluation of WFP's Capacity Development Policy and Operations (WFP/EB.A/2008/7).

its contribution to countries' own efforts to save lives, promote development, and achieve the first Millennium Development Goal — to end hunger.

- For WFP, capacities to build, develop or strengthen relate to issues of hunger and malnutrition, especially as they affect the poorest and most vulnerable individuals and communities. These capacities include: (i) the ability to identify and analyse hunger and vulnerability issues; (ii) the capacity to plan and implement food assistance strategies to eradicate hunger and improve food security; and (iii) the commitment to ensure adequate knowledge and advocacy with regard to hunger and food-insecurity issues.
- WFP, in partnership with other agencies, will take a systematic approach to creating capacity development activities that will work to build, develop and/or strengthen country and regional capacities related to issues of hunger and malnutrition, especially as they affect the poorest and most vulnerable individuals and communities. WFP's comparative advantage in undertaking any of these activities must be assessed at the country or regional level, given its own abilities to contribute to capacity development.

The policy update was followed by an action plan for implementation of the capacity development and hand-over components of the WFP Strategic Plan (2008– 2013) issued in 2010. Other capacity development-related guidance documents include:

- Operational Guide to Strengthen Capacity of Nations to Reduce Hunger (2010);
- The Ability and Readiness of Nations to Reduce Hunger (Ability and Readiness Index) (2010);
- Implementing Capacity Development: WFP's Approach to Hunger Governance and Capacity Development (2013);
- The National Capacity Index (NCI) – Measuring Change in Capacity for Hunger Governance in Support of Projects to Strengthen National Capacity to End Hunger (2014);
- Capacity Gaps and Needs Assessment in Support of Projects to Strengthen National Capacity to End Hunger (2014); and
- Design and Implementation of Technical Assistance and Capacity Development (2015).

The WFP Strategic Plan (2008-2013)⁴⁵ had a stand-alone Strategic Objective 5, focused on strengthening the capacities of countries to reduce hunger, including through hand-over strategies and local purchases. With the Strategic Plan (2014–2017) WFP incorporated capacity development goals across each of the four Strategic Objectives. The Strategic Plan established a foundation for partnership based on a clear understanding of common priorities, individual roles and core strengths.

Currently, WFP operates under its Strategic Plan 2017-2021, developed as part of an Integrated Roadmap to Zero Hunger, foreseeing enhanced approaches to its capacity strengthening and explicit work with national partners.

WFP recognizes strong and sustained national capacities are critical to addressing the multiple causes of hunger and responding to the food security and nutrition needs of vulnerable populations over the long-term. Through its extensive and deep field presence, WFP brings a solid understanding of context, beneficiary needs and local conditions, and regular contact with a wide range of actors who are key in the design and implementation of anti-hunger initiatives.

⁴⁵ WFP Strategic Plan (2008-2011) – WFP/EB.A/2008/5-A/1/Rev1, May 2008.

Agenda 2030 provides WFP with an opportunity to leverage this knowledge and expand its role from one of operational partner of choice to one of strategic capacity enabling partner.”⁴⁶

WFP Corporate Approach and Framework for Country Capacity Strengthening

Recognizing the need for more comprehensive and sustainable support to strengthen national systems, WFP has developed a robust conceptual framework and operational approach for capacity strengthening efforts that address individual, organizational and enabling environment needs. This ensures that the technical and functional capacities created in individuals are retained within their organizations and properly utilized in the long run.

WFP’s revised approach to CCS is grounded in ensuring partnership with, and ownership by, national stakeholders, and recognizing existing national capacity assets. It also acknowledges that achieving capacity strengthening results takes time and requires mutual trust and commitment by all parties. As a result, WFP focuses heavily on ensuring that its CCS support is demand-driven, context-appropriate and optimizes existing capacities.

WFP embraces a Whole of Society approach to zero hunger which means it engages with, and supports capacity strengthening of a range of state and non-state actors, as relevant to context.⁴⁷ The WFP fundamentals principles in order to achieve a solid CCS can be divided into:

Partnerships: Effective partnerships are critical to effective CCS; no one organization or government can address complex food security and nutrition challenges alone. Partnerships beyond and across sectors and areas of expertise are critical.

Ownership: Capacity strengthening cannot be imposed from the outside. Consensus and partnership with countries are the most critical elements of capacity strengthening and facilitate constructive approaches to reaching capacity goals and achieving sustainable results.

Recognition: Identifying and recognizing existing capacity assets is critical to effective CCS; if interventions do not build on the national/local capacities already in place, the integrity of development achievements can be compromised and progress can remain rootless, illusory and vulnerable⁴⁸.

Trust: The relationships WFP establishes based on mutual trust and commitment will be more important to the long-term success of its CCS activities than the plans themselves.

Time: CCS requires time, commitment, investment and patience on all sides, flexibility to recognize changing needs over time and acceptance of its complexity.

WFP recognizes that country capacity strengthening is all about supporting national systems and services and that the achievement of national development targets hinges on capacities of individuals, organizations and societies to transform in order to reach development objectives.

Without supportive laws, policies, strategies and procedures (enabling environment), well-functioning organizations (organizational domain), and educated, skilled people (individual domain) state and non-state duty bearers cannot effectively plan, implement and review their

46 WFP Corporate Approach to Country Capacity Strengthening (CCS).

47 WFP Capacity Strengthening Supports Nations to End Hunger, 2018.

efforts to deliver intended products and services to their target groups. Effective CCS support must therefore address all three domains, recognizing the interdependencies between them. Single interventions (e.g., trainings) are not likely to make a significant difference unless they represent a key leverage point that can shift an entire system's behavior.

With these fundamentals' principles in mind, WFP supports stakeholder capacities along a critical pathway. This framework helps systematically identify capacity assets, gaps and priorities along five dimensions that are critical to effective national response systems, and relates to: Policies and legislation; institutional effectiveness and accountability; strategic planning and financing; stakeholder programme design, delivery & M&E; engagement and participation of communities, civil society and private sector.⁴⁹

WFP has developed a series of innovative tools to help operationalize the CCS framework. Between 2016 and the present, these tools have been field-tested, adjusted and validated by WFP colleagues on the ground in over 20 countries. The tools include comprise of: a one page quick reference guide for country-office and stakeholders listing 15 critical steps to facilitate participatory, multi-stakeholder engagement around CCS; and exercise sheet that help WFP and stakeholders create a detailed road map for implementing the entire process; a sheet that guides parties in articulating clear and coherent "Capacity Outcome Statements"; a capacity needs mapping template to guide parties through a systematic assessment of existing capacities to define baselines conditions; the database of country capacity strengthening.

49 WFP corporate Approach to Country Capacity Strengthening.

Annex 5: E-library

	Year
WFP sources	
EVALUATIONS INCLUDED IN THE SYNTHESIS SCOPE	
Full set of evaluations included in the scope	2016-2020
Full set of management responses issued in response to these evaluation	2016-2020
Implementation status of follow-up actions to recommendations	2020
COUNTRY STRATEGIC PLANS AND PROJECT DOCUMENTS	
Country Strategic Plan or Interim Country Strategic Plan document for all countries included in the scope	
Project documents related to the evaluation reports included in the scope	
CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT/ COUNTRY CAPACITY STRENGTHENING (CCS)	
Capacity Development Policy - An Update on Implementation 2009	2009
Operational Guide to Strengthen the Capacity of Nations to Reduce Hunger	2010
National Capacity Index	2014
Guidelines on Technical Assistance and Capacity Development	2015
WFP Corporate Framework for CCS	2016
WFP Theory of Change for CCS	2017
WFP Capacity Needs Mapping for CCS	2017
Guidance on Capacity Strengthening of Civil Society	2017
Capacity Development Policy 2009 _Evaluation, Annexes and Management Response	2017
Capacity Strengthening Supports Nations to End Hunger	2019
Country Capacity Strengthening - COVID-19 Immediate Guidance	2020
CCS RBP and RBD workshops documentation	
Guidance on How to Engage National Counterparts in Line with COVID-19 Response	2020
SCHOOL FEEDING	
Revised School Feeding Policy	2013
School Meals Monitoring Framework Guidance	2017
Smart School Meals	2017
Schools, health and nutrition. COVID-19 makes us rethink of education	2020
A chance for every schoolchild - WFP School Feeding Strategy 2020 - 2030	2020
CASH AND VOUCHER	
Cash and voucher Policy	2008
Cash and voucher Policy Evaluation, Annexes and Management Response	2014
CORPORATE PARTNERSHIP STRATEGY	
Corporate Partnership Strategy (2014 - 2017)	2014
Corporate Partnership Strategy (2014-2017) Evaluation, Annexes and Management Response	2017
GENDER	
Gender policy	2009 & 2015
Gender Policy 2009 Evaluation, Annexes and Management Response	
HUMANITARIAN PRINCIPLES	
Policy on Humanitarian Principles and Access	2018

NUTRITION	
Nutrition Policy	2012 & 2017
Nutrition Policy 2012, Evaluation, Annexes and Management Response	2015
SAFETY NETS	
Update of WFP's Safety Nets Policy	2012
Evaluation of the Update of WFP's Safety Nets Policy	2019
SOUTH-SOUTH AND TRIANGULAR COOPERATION	
South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSTC) Policy	2015
Terms of Reference – Evaluation of the South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSTC) Policy	2020
WFP EVALUATION SYNTHESSES AND MANAGEMENT RESPONSES	
Annual and Regional Operation Evaluations Series	
Annual Synthesis of OpeEval 2013-2017	2017
RBB OpeEval Series Regional Synthesis	2017
RBC OpeEval Series Regional Synthesis	2017
RBD OpeEval Series Regional Synthesis	2017
RBJ OpeEval Series Regional Synthesis	2017
RBN OpeEval Series Regional Synthesis	2017
RBP OpeEval Series Regional Synthesis	2017
Policy Evaluations	
Synthesis report of WFP's policy evaluations (2011–2019) and Management response	2020
CPEs in Africa	
Synthesis report of WFP's country portfolio evaluations in Africa (2016–2018) and Management response	2019
ANNUAL EVALUATION REPORTS	
Annual evaluation reports	2016-2019
AUDIT REPORTS	
Capacity development	
Internal Audit of WFP's Country Capacity Strengthening, Desk review and Management comment	2016
WFP STRATEGIC PLANS AND RELATED DOCS	
WFP Strategic Plan (2014-2017) and related docs	2014-2017
WFP Strategic Plan (2017-2021) (IRM) and related docs	2017-2021
Mid-Term Review of WFP Strategic Plan (2017-2021)	2020
WFP Revised Corporate Results Framework	2018
WFP Mid-term Review of the Revised Corporate Results Framework	2020
ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORTS	
Annual Performance Reports	2016-2019
MOPAN	
MOPAN WFP Report	2019
MOPAN WFP Brief	2019

Annex 6: Communication and learning plan

Internal (WFP) Communications Plan

When Evaluation phase	What Communication product/ information	To whom Target group or individual	What level Organizational level of communication e.g. strategic, operational	From whom Lead OEV staff with name/position + other OEV staff views	How Communication means	When	Why Purpose of communication
Preparation		HQ, RB and CO (as needed)	Consultation	Andrea Cook, DoE Francesca Bonino (OIC), QA2 Federica Zelada EM	Consultations, meetings, emails	Aug/ Sep 2020	Review/feedback For information
TOR	Draft ToR Final ToR	HQ HQ	Strategic	Anne-Claire Luzot, DDoE Deborah McWhinney, QA2 Federica Zelada EM	Emails Web	Sep. 2019	Review / feedback For information
Desk review/ Analysis/ Synthesis	Aide-memoire/PPT	OEV	Operational	Federica Zelada EM	Emails, Meetings at HQ	Dec 2020	Sharing preliminary findings. Opportunity for verbal clarifications
Synthesis Report	D1	HQ	Operational & Strategic	Federica Zelad EM	email	Jan 2021	Review / feedback
	Final Report	HQ, RB and CO (as needed)	Strategic	Anne-Claire Luzot, DDoE Deborah McWhinney, QA2 Federica Zelada EM	email	Feb / March 2020	Review / feedback (EMG on SR)
Post-report/EB	2-page synthesis brief	HQ RB and CO	Informative	Anne-Claire Luzot, DDoE Deborah McWhinney, QA2 Federica Zelada EM	email	March 2020	Dissemination of evaluation findings and conclusions
Throughout	Sections in brief/PPT or other briefing materials	HQ RB and CO (as needed)	Informative & Strategic	Anne-Claire Luzot, DDoE Deborah McWhinney, QA2 Federica Zelada EM	Email, in-person interactions	As opportunities arise (roughly every 1.5 month)	Information about linkage to Strategy Evaluations and

							other new / ongoing Policy Evaluations
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External Communications

When Phase of the synthesis plus planned month/year	What Communication product/information	To whom Target organization or individual	From whom Evaluation management, evaluation team, etc.	How Communication means	Why Purpose of communication
TOR, Sept 2020	Final ToR	Public	OEV	Website	Public information
Reporting, edited version March 2021	Final report and Management Response	Public	OEV and RMP	Website	Public information
Evaluation Brief, June 2021	2-page evaluation brief	Board members and wider Public	OEV	Website	Public information
EB Annual Session, June 2021	Synthesis summary	Board members	OEV & RMP	Formal presentation	For EB consideration