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Synthesis of evidence and lessons from WFP's policy evaluations (2011–2019)



World Food
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

WFP policies provide the normative framework within which the organization realizes its corporate goals as articulated in its successive strategic plans. The policies reflect WFP's dual humanitarian and development mandate.

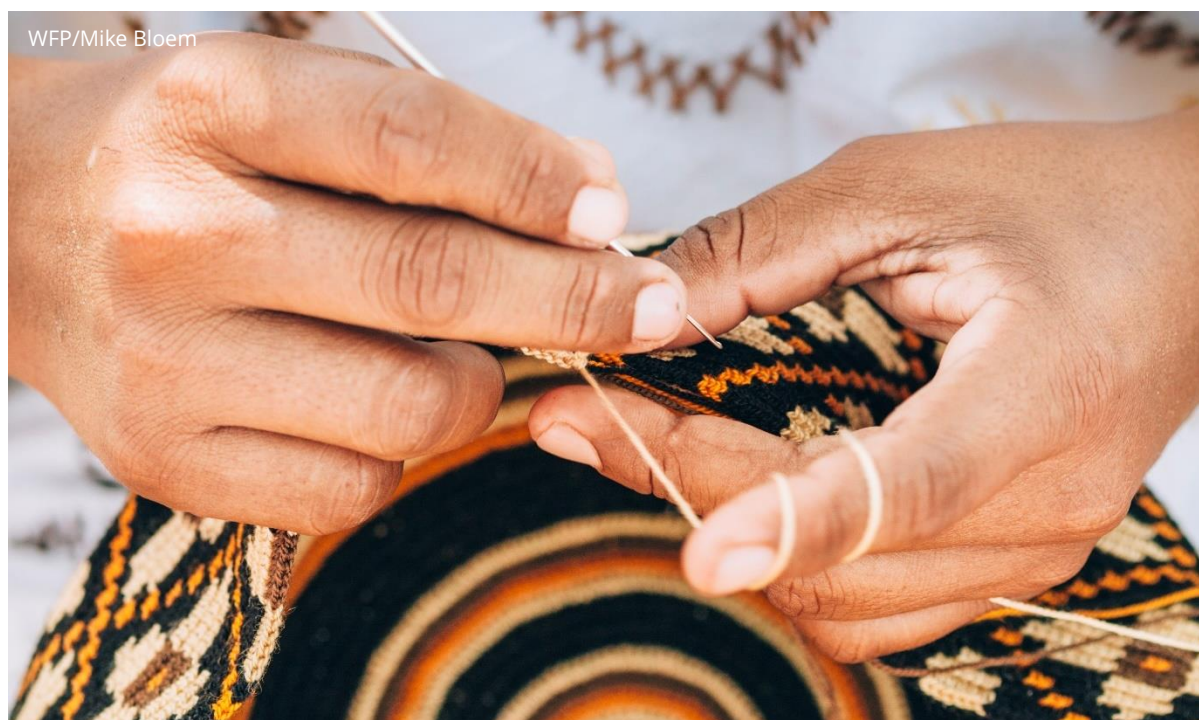
This report synthesizes the findings of nine policy evaluations conducted between 2011 and 2019. It brings together evidence and lessons to inform ongoing consideration of the WFP policy cycle and function.

The evidence shows a currently diffuse and complex policy environment at WFP. A lack of policy coherence, coordination and prioritization risks both coverage gaps and confusion and competition between

overlapping policy areas. Individual policies struggle to define both their relationships to other WFP policies and their relative importance to the organization, compounding difficulties for WFP employees on the ground.

This situation arises from systemic weaknesses in WFP's policy formulation and implementation arrangements, identified in policy evaluations conducted since 2011. Challenges include unsystematized approaches to designating policies and related documents; inconsistent use of formal classification categories for Executive Board submission; a lack of clear policy typology for different areas of work; and weaknesses in policy scrutiny and approval processes. Policy design quality has suffered from unclear standards and expectations for content, including weak evidence bases; gaps in internal logic; inconsistent and unclear use of terminology; and limited gender mainstreaming.

Despite extensive consultation on design and the production of guidance complementing policy documents, policy



implementation in WFP over the period was constrained by a range of factors. These included limited leadership and management commitment; weak or lacking accountability frameworks; limited dissemination; and insufficient human and financial resources. Evaluations revealed policies that were not actively used across the organization, particularly below the headquarters level.

Internal management reporting on the implementation of evaluation recommendations lacks reliability. There is evidence that recommendations are taken seriously and acted upon by policy owners, however, although not always consistently or comprehensively. Recommendations on policy revision and updating, implementation mechanisms, building staff capacities, generating research and forming partnerships were all addressed to at least some degree. However, matters requiring more systemic change – such as knowledge management and accountability systems – have received less comprehensive treatment.

The lessons from this synthesis suggest that constructing an enabling policy environment within WFP would be facilitated by clarifying policy nomenclature; aligning the policy

universe with WFP absorptive capacity; defining a common framework for policy content, geared to coherence; and robustly embedding accountability and resources for policy implementation. Policies also require more than a standalone document; they require full and visible corporate leadership, momentum and resources, as well as implementation-level guidance and comprehensive accountability.

To support the shift to an enabling policy environment, the synthesis includes three strategic and three operational recommendations. The strategic recommendations are that WFP clarify and confirm the policy cycle procedure, updating the 2011 policy formulation document; clarify policy governance and accountability procedures; and define the policy universe through an updated WFP policy framework, applying coherence as a key principle. The operational recommendations are that WFP adopt a policy building approach with clarified standards for staff; overhaul the current policy compendium; and review the processes for developing high-quality management responses to evaluations and ensuring follow-up on evaluation recommendations.





INTRODUCTION

The WFP Strategic Plan (2017–2021) sets out the role of WFP within the commitments of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It presents WFP’s vision to lift the most vulnerable and marginalized people out of hunger, moving from saving lives to changing lives, focusing first on those in greatest need.

WFP policies provide the normative framework within which the organization aims to realize these goals. Policies cover WFP programmatic areas, corporate themes and cross-cutting concerns. They reflect WFP’s dual mandate for humanitarian and development activity.

At a time of United Nations system reform and implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the Secretary-General’s Decade of Action to deliver the global goals, and as WFP moves into its second generation of country strategic plans, WFP’s policy function faces increasing demands. This synthesis brings together evidence and lessons from nine policy evaluations, conducted during the period 2011–2019, to help inform the organization’s future decision making.

Context

Policy framework – WFP currently has 33 policies in force.¹ A compendium of policies relating to the strategic plan is updated and presented to the Executive Board for information on an annual basis. It lists all current policies and is meant to note those superseded and those in need of updating.²

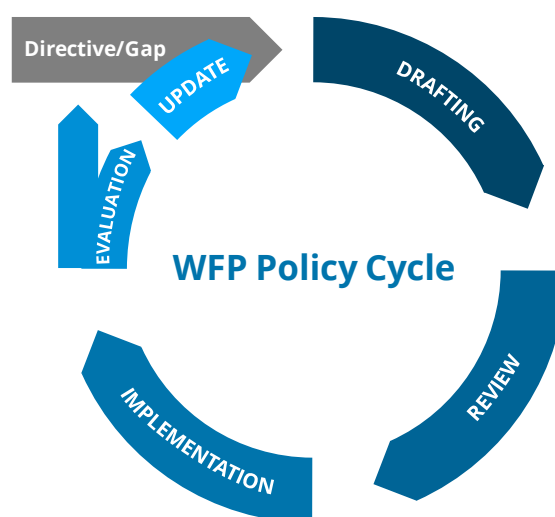
Policy cycle – According to the policy formulation document approved by the

Executive Board in 2011,³ new WFP policies may be initiated when:

- ▶ WFP enters into new areas of work;
- ▶ a gap in existing policies is identified; or
- ▶ the changing context or directives from governing bodies require a policy to be reviewed and reissued.

The 2011 policy formulation document presents the WFP policy cycle, which follows a path from policy initiation through to policy drafting, review, implementation and evaluation (figure 1):

FIGURE 1: WFP POLICY CYCLE



Policy governance – Under the 2011 policy formulation document, policies are submitted to the Executive Board according to three classifications, as follows:

- ▶ **For approval:** Policy papers prepared following a directive from the General Assembly or ECOSOC that bring WFP into a new area of work and/or have significant budget implications;
- ▶ **For consideration:** Other policy papers; and
- ▶ **For information:** Policy updates, operational guidelines, implementation plans and other reports.

Policy management – Since February 2015, policy approval has been the remit of the WFP Executive Management Group (EMG), subject to Executive Director and

subsequently Executive Board endorsement.⁴ In 2019 WFP formed an internal policy cycle task force⁵ responsible for setting the direction for policy priorities and coordinating policy change within the organization.⁶

Policy evaluation – All policies approved after 2011 and included in the policy compendium are meant to be evaluated from four to six years after the start of their implementation.⁷ For policies approved prior to 2011, evaluation of either the policy itself or the theme addressed by the policy is based on the criterion of continued relevance to WFP’s work or potential to contribute to new policy development. The topics of some policies are also covered by strategic evaluations and may not be the subject of a dedicated policy evaluation. Evaluations may also be commissioned early upon request, subject to approval by the Director of Evaluation. Selection of policies to be evaluated is based on the length of time since approval, consultation with management and utility. Policy evaluations assess the quality and results of specific policies and the systems, guidance, initiatives and programmes established to implement them, as well as the factors that enable or inhibit the achievement of results.

Purpose

The purpose of this synthesis is to enhance the knowledge base on WFP policy development and policy effectiveness,

identify recurrent findings useful for deriving lessons in different policy areas and reflect on how effectively WFP has responded to and used policy evaluations to improve results.⁸ It addresses four questions:

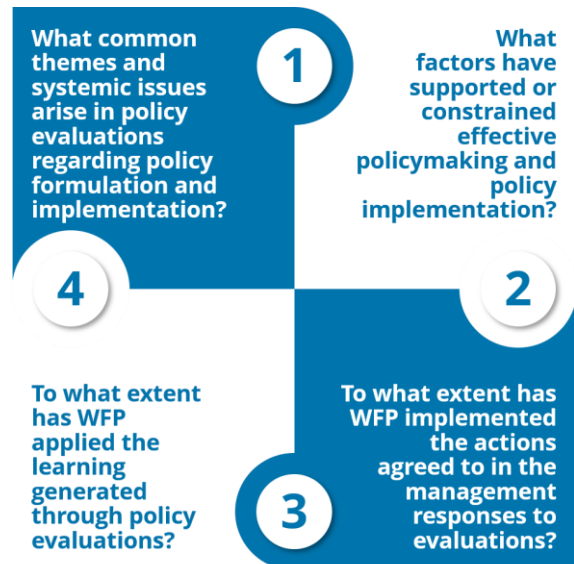
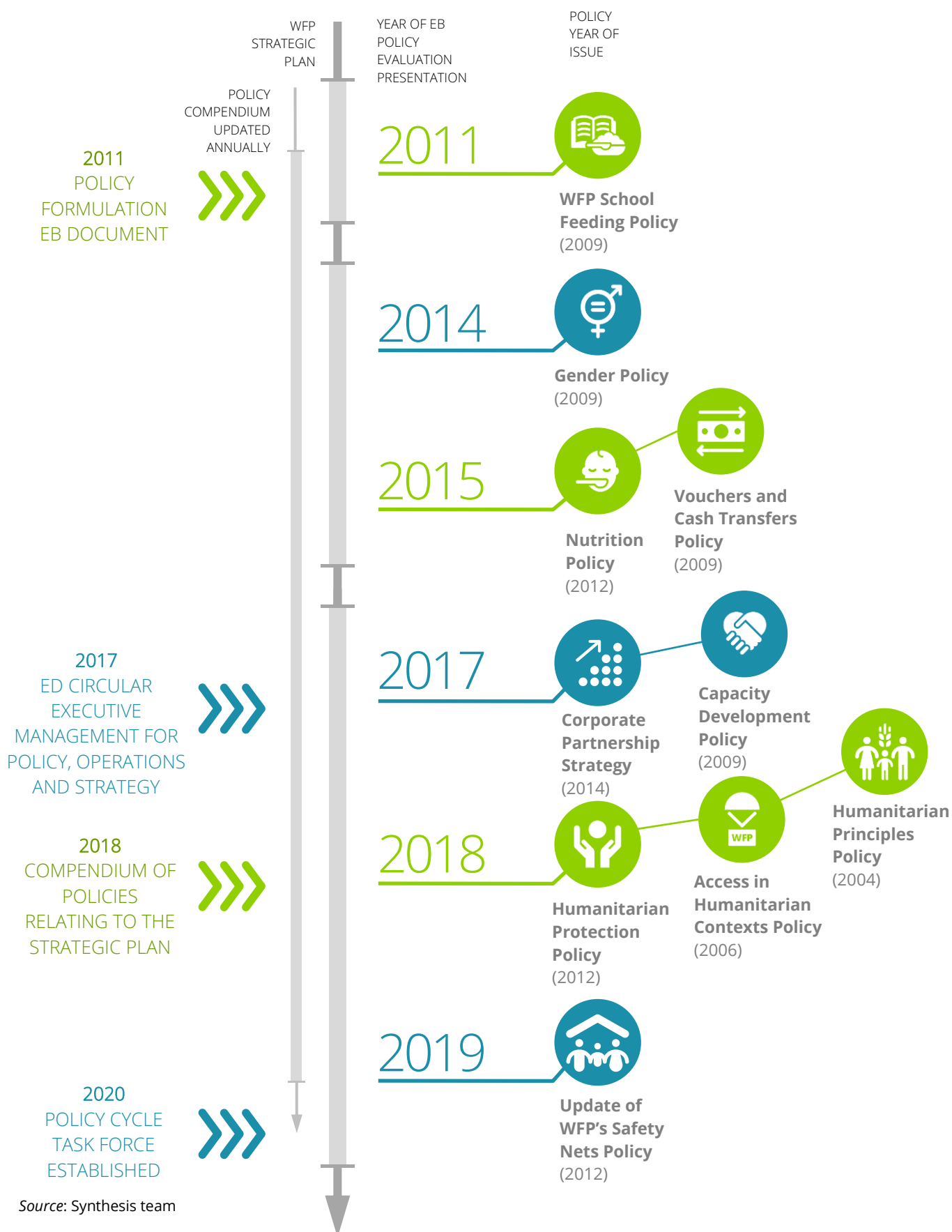


Figure 2 provides a summary over time of the nine policy evaluations included in this synthesis (which cover ten policies⁹) in relation to WFP’s policy cycle and strategic plans. The term “policy” is used in this document to cover the different categories of policy documents covered by the nine evaluations. It should also be note that, despite the the label of “strategy”, some evaluations, such as the one on the Corporate Partnership Strategy, was commissioned and managed as a policy evaluation (given its inclusion in WFP’s policy compendium).

FIGURE 2

WFP Policy Evaluations | TIMELINE 2011-2020



Source: Synthesis team

Methodology

This synthesis applied a structured analytical framework, building on previous work by the Office of Evaluation on assessing policy quality.¹⁰ Systematic data extraction was conducted and analytical fields adapted and adjusted as new themes emerged.¹¹ Datasets included the nine policy evaluations and their associated management responses; key corporate information including policy formulation guidance; strategic plans; annual performance reports; audit reports; updates on the implementation of evaluation recommendations; and other relevant information. Findings were triangulated through interviews with WFP headquarters and regional bureau staff and validated by an internal reference group comprising WFP policy and programme staff at the

headquarters and regional bureau levels. The term “policy” is applied to encompass all the various types of documents assessed by the policy evaluations (see [here](#) on designations).¹²

Limitations include variable results data and the inability to fully validate management information on the implementation of evaluation recommendations. These limitations were mitigated as far as feasible through triangulation across data sources, including through interviews. The synthesis does not address programmatic or operational issues in the various policy areas. It is also necessarily focused on corporate-level rather than field-level concerns. Findings of this synthesis reflect only the 10 policies evaluated; they do not cover WFP’s full range of policies in force.





FINDINGS

1

WHAT COMMON THEMES AND SYSTEMIC ISSUES ARISE IN POLICY EVALUATIONS REGARDING POLICY FORMULATION AND IMPLEMENTATION?

The nine policy evaluations identified common themes regarding policy formulation and implementation at WFP. These included diverse policy initiation “triggers” and no clear policy typology; inconsistency in the classification of policy documents as being for approval, consideration or information; variable approaches to policy scrutiny and approval; limited internal policy coherence; and limited corporate leadership and ownership across the organization.








Policy initiation, designation and classification

Diverse policy initiation triggers - Of the ten policies evaluated, five had no direct predecessor.¹³ Two of the three policy initiation triggers described in the 2011

policy formulation document were applicable to the evaluated policies (see [here](#)). However, the evaluations also recorded four additional triggers (table 1).



TABLE 1: POLICY INITIATION TRIGGERS

	TRIGGER	NO. OF EVALUATED POLICIES	POLICY
	WFP enters new areas of work	1	2008 Cash and Voucher Policy Discussion Paper
	A gap in existing policies is identified	0	
	A changing context or changing directives from governing bodies require a policy to be reviewed and reissued	2	2008 Cash and Voucher Policy Discussion Paper 2014 Corporate Partnership Strategy
	Perceived need to clarify and codify a particular issue for staff	6	2004 Policy Statement on Humanitarian Principles 2006 Policy Statement on Humanitarian Access 2008 Cash and Voucher Policy Discussion Paper 2009 School Feeding Policy 2012 Nutrition Policy 2012 Safety Nets Policy Update 2012 Humanitarian Protection Policy 2014 Corporate Partnership Strategy
	Request to formalize and communicate to partners expanding areas of WFP activity	5	2004 Policy Statement on Humanitarian Principles 2006 Policy Statement on Humanitarian Access 2008 Cash and Voucher Policy Discussion Paper 2009 School Feeding Policy 2012 Humanitarian Protection Policy 2014 Corporate Partnership Strategy
	Responding to growing international concerns (e.g. regarding protracted conflict-related crises)	3	2004 Policy Statement on Humanitarian Principles 2006 Policy Statement on Humanitarian Access 2012 Humanitarian Protection Policy
	Following an evaluation recommendation	3	2014 Corporate Partnership Strategy 2009 Capacity Development Policy Update 2012 Safety Nets Policy Update

Source: Synthesis team.

Diverse designations – The 2011 policy formulation document does not provide a list of categories or an explanation of the normative hierarchy. All 10 evaluated policies featured in the 2019 policy

compendium, yet only four, namely those for gender, nutrition, humanitarian protection and school feeding, were formally designated as WFP policies (table 2 below).

TABLE 2: POLICY DESIGNATIONS

DESIGNATION	POLICY
Policy	2009 School Feeding Policy 2009 Gender Policy 2012 Humanitarian Protection Policy 2012 Nutrition Policy
Policy update	2009 Capacity Development Policy Update 2012 Safety Nets Policy Update
Policy discussion paper	2008 Cash and Voucher Policy Discussion Paper
Policy statement	2004 Policy Statement on Humanitarian Principles 2006 Policy Statement on Humanitarian Access
Strategy (included in the policy compendium)	2014 Corporate Partnership Strategy

Source: Synthesis team.

Political sensitivities affected some choices; for example, the evaluation of the 2008 Cash and Voucher “policy discussion paper” found that its status arose from the delicate balance required to reach consensus among Executive Board members regarding expansion of WFP modality options.

No clear policy typology – Policies variously covered programmatic areas (school feeding, safety nets, nutrition); modalities (cash and vouchers, capacity development); cross-cutting issues (humanitarian protection, gender, humanitarian principles/access); and institutional concerns (corporate partnerships). However, no formalized policy typology was in place to support categorization or policy prioritization. This is evidenced by, for example, the fact that,

although policy updates do not formally replace prior policies in force, in some cases they have been treated organizationally as separate policy documents.

Varied use of Executive Board document classifications – Other than for the two policy updates, required to be submitted to the Executive Board for consideration, the three classifications for Executive Board submission (see [here](#)) were not upheld across the 10 policies (table 3). Only three of the four policies were submitted for approval, while the policy statements on humanitarian principles and humanitarian access (developed prior to the issuance of WFP Policy Formulation in 2011) were submitted for information and consideration, respectively.

TABLE 3: CLASSIFICATIONS USED AS A BASIS FOR SUBMISSION OF POLICY DOCUMENTS TO THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

CLASSIFICATION	POLICY
For approval	2009 Gender Policy 2012 Humanitarian Protection Policy 2012 Nutrition Policy
For consideration	2009 School Feeding Policy 2008 Cash and Voucher Policy Discussion Paper 2006 Policy Statement on Humanitarian Access 2009 Capacity Development Policy Update 2012 Safety Nets Policy Update 2014 Corporate Partnership Strategy
For information	2004 Policy Statement on Humanitarian Principles

Source: Synthesis team.

Inconsistent policy scrutiny – Evaluations found different degrees of Executive Board scrutiny in policy approval. For example, the evaluation of the 2009 Gender Policy found approval provided without adequate technical scrutiny, while that of the 2009 School Feeding Policy found intensive Executive Board review of the policy but insufficient consideration of resource requirements for implementation. A year later, a more robust approach was adopted with the 2012 Nutrition Policy approval, including Executive Board requests for a follow-up paper, a progress report and the subsequent 2015 policy evaluation.

Policy coherence¹⁴

Largely strong external alignment – All nine evaluations found WFP policies broadly consistent with international standards and commitments at the time. At least six policies reflected current themes in the prevailing global discourse and debate. WFP was the only agency among several assessed in evaluations to have formulated policies on capacity development and cash and vouchers.

However, three evaluations also found some disconnect with prevailing normative frameworks. Specifically, the 2012 Nutrition Policy did not consider the needs of certain vulnerable groups reflected in international concerns, and certain WFP definitions differed from those used by the cash and voucher community of practice in 2015. Some capacity development issues current in the prevailing international discourse, such as the need to ensure that systems endure and perform over time, were not reflected in the 2009 Capacity Development Policy Update.

Strong coherence with WFP strategic plans – Nine policies reflected the priorities of the prevailing strategic plans, although the limited presence of gender in the WFP Strategic Plan (2008–2013) constrained the alignment of the 2009 Gender Policy. The

2008 Cash and Voucher Policy Discussion Paper was viewed by some as more restrictive¹⁵ than the WFP Strategic Plan (2008–2013), which envisaged a more extended use of the modality.

Gaps in internal policy consistency – The lack of a corporate mechanism for ensuring consistency across policy areas, noted in the 2015 evaluation of the 2008 Cash and Voucher Policy Discussion Paper, was reflected in all nine evaluations. Eight evaluations found gaps and inconsistencies within and between policy areas. For example:

- ▶ The aspirations and guidance of the 2008 Cash and Voucher Policy Discussion Paper were not coherent with the nutrition and food security objectives present in other WFP policies and strategies at the time.
- ▶ The 2009 Capacity Development Policy Update and, to a lesser extent, the 2012 Nutrition Policy did not maximize the scope for cross-policy integration.
- ▶ The 2012 Safety Nets Policy Update was coherent with other WFP policies at the time of its adoption but the content of newer policies and guidance eclipsed this alignment.
- ▶ The 2009 School Feeding Policy had technical gaps in aligning coverage with other policy areas.

Unclear prioritization – At least three evaluations, all of cross-cutting policy issues, found uncertain policy prioritization within WFP. This risked overlap and at times competition across policy areas. For example, the evaluation of the 2012 Humanitarian Protection Policy found that several WFP policies and strategies – such as those on humanitarian principles, access in humanitarian contexts, gender, accountability to affected populations, peacebuilding and protection against sexual exploitation and abuse – contributed to protection outcomes. These interlinkages

were not clearly defined, however, creating unclear prioritization.

2

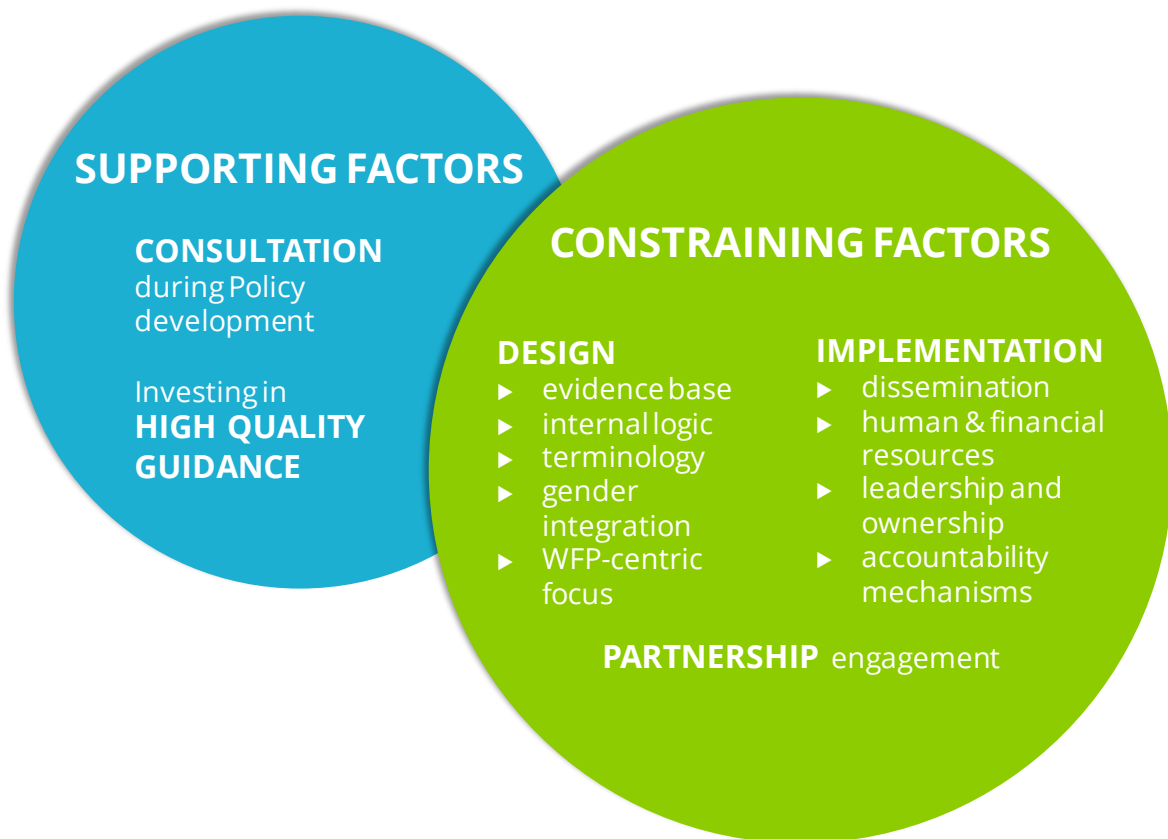
WHAT FACTORS HAVE SUPPORTED OR CONSTRAINED EFFECTIVE POLICYMAKING AND POLICY IMPLEMENTATION?

Factors that supported effective policymaking and policy implementation were primarily consultation during policy development and investment in high-quality guidance for staff. Many more factors constrained policy formulation and implementation, including several features of design quality (including weaknesses in the evidence base, internal logic, use of terminology, attention to gender and a WFP-centric focus); implementation challenges (specifically limited dissemination, insufficient human and financial resources for and weaknesses in accountability frameworks and limited leadership and ownership); and limited use of partnerships to support policy implementation.

Evaluations identified a range of factors that supported or – more frequently – constrained policymaking and policy implementation at WFP (figure 3 and Annex

1). These reflect the findings in the Office of Evaluation’s report on the top 10 lessons for policy quality at WFP.¹⁶

FIGURE 2: INTERNAL FACTORS SUPPORTING OR CONSTRAINING POLICYMAKING AND POLICY IMPLEMENTATION



Source: Synthesis team.

Supporting factors

Two key factors that supported policy implementation were extensive consultation during the design phase and the development of high-quality guidance for staff.

Extensive consultation – Comprehensive internal and external consultation processes, applied during the design of five policies, supported policy quality and endorsement (box 1):

BOX 1: BENEFITS OF CONSULTATION IN POLICY DEVELOPMENT

2009 School Feeding Policy: Intense collaboration with external partners (particularly the World Bank) led to an unprecedented degree of consensus at the Executive Board level.

2012 Nutrition Policy: Ownership among WFP's nutritionists and senior management was ensured by extensive consultations prior to policy adoption.

2012 Humanitarian Protection Policy: Significant in-house and external consultation among country offices and headquarters management helped build consensus prior to policy adoption.

However, extensive consultation did not automatically lead to strong ownership by staff during policy implementation, which only occurred for the 2012 policies on nutrition and humanitarian protection (see [here](#)).

High-quality guidance – The production of high-quality guidance also supported the implementation of four policies (box 2):

BOX 2: GUIDANCE SUPPORTING POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

2008 Cash and Voucher Policy Discussion Paper:

Policy approval was followed by the creation of detailed directives, guidance and tools, which were much further developed than those of other operational agencies.

2009 School Feeding Policy: An “impressive” volume of guidelines and tools was developed to support policy implementation.

2014 Corporate Partnership Strategy: A range of high-quality guidelines and tools on partnerships and partnership management was produced to support policy implementation.

2012 Safety Nets Policy Update: The production of guidance, an online training platform and knowledge products and the establishment of a community of practice all enhanced policy implementation.

Shortcomings were also identified, however. Evaluations found that supporting guidance for the 2009 Capacity Development Policy Update and the 2012 Humanitarian Protection Policy lacked utility for staff, while that for the humanitarian principles/access policy statements was too limited to adequately serve staff needs.

Constraining factors

Despite positive examples, evaluations identified a wider range of factors that constrained effective policymaking and policy implementation. These also reflect those identified in top 10 lessons for policy quality document. They include weaknesses in design quality; weak implementation planning, including limited dissemination, insufficient resources to support implementation and unclear accountabilities; limited leadership and ownership; and missed opportunities for partnerships.

Policy design

Uneven quality and use of evidence – At least four policies lacked adequate evidence bases, resulting in stakeholder scepticism with regard to three. Weaknesses included the use of dated evidence; biased use of evidence, with only positive findings cited; and missing evidence (e.g. on costs and cost-effectiveness in the 2009 School Feeding Policy and on overnutrition in the 2012 Nutrition Policy). The 2013 evaluation of the 2009 School Feeding Policy cautioned WFP on the need to make a clear distinction between analytical work and advocacy regarding WFP engagement on the issue (See also Annex 1).

Conversely, the 2012 Humanitarian Protection Policy adopted a thorough and incremental approach to evidence-building (box 3):

BOX 3: 2012 HUMANITARIAN PROTECTION POLICY EVIDENCE BASE

The development of the 2012 Humanitarian Protection Policy built on a preceding protection project (2005–2008) and focused on evidence building and learning. This “organic” process helped build policy ownership and make protection “visible” within WFP, overcoming some initial internal resistance.

Unclear goals and vision and uncertain internal logic – Only two policies (the 2012 Nutrition Policy and the 2014 Corporate Partnership Strategy) included clearly articulated visions and goals to which organizational strategies and capacities were geared. In contrast, the lack of such clear articulation in seven policies potentially hindered implementation. None of the nine policies included a formal theory of change, although more limited logic models¹⁷ were developed for the 2009 School Feeding Policy and the 2012 Humanitarian Protection Policy. Three evaluations found weak internal logic, including flawed assumptions regarding institutional change (2009 Gender Policy); a lack of linkages to established priorities (2012 Humanitarian Protection Policy) and

unrealistic policy outcomes (2008 Cash and Voucher Policy Discussion Paper).

Unclear and inconsistent terminology – Six evaluations found unclear or inconsistent use of policy terminology, preventing a shared understanding of the relevant policy issue across WFP. For example, the 2009 Gender Policy lacked a clear definition of “what gender means” for WFP – including a statement on “why gender matters” for the realization of the organizational mandate.

WFP-centric focus – Three evaluations found policy design centred solely on WFP concerns rather than embracing broader issues. For example, the 2009 School Feeding Policy did not consider the implications of a broader social protection approach, while the 2012 Nutrition Policy focused on food products alone rather than the breadth of factors needed for improved nutrition. The 2012 Humanitarian Protection Policy helped WFP define its role as a non-specialized protection agency, at the expense of considering broader protection concerns.

Gender insufficiently incorporated into design – Five evaluations found only superficial treatment of gender in policy content. Weaknesses included gender analysis that was insufficient to realistically inform programme design, implementation or evaluation in the policy area; and inadequate attention to identifying and measuring gender effects and implications. The 2014 evaluation of the 2009 Gender Policy found only superficial synergies with policies produced concurrently or later¹⁸ and diverse understandings of, and conceptual approaches to, gender.

Policy implementation

Limited dissemination – Evaluations found limited or shallow dissemination of seven policies, in three cases arising from limited resource availability. The 2008 Cash and Voucher Policy Discussion Paper, for example, aimed its communication upwards at WFP governance structures rather than at

field-based WFP staff and partners. Limited dissemination was a major factor in constraining policy ownership among staff (see [here](#)).

Inadequate human resources – As shown in the annex 1, eight evaluations found inadequate staffing levels for policy implementation at the headquarters, regional bureau and country office levels:

- ▶ **Headquarters:** Five policies benefited from a headquarters unit established to support implementation but lacked sufficient strength in two cases, with either low staffing and/or limited duration. A strong headquarters-level function was lacking in four other policy areas, with reliance on short-term consultants to implement the 2009 Gender Policy and insufficiently defined roles to support the implementation of the 2009 Capacity Development Policy Update. However, the creation of the Safety Nets and Social Protection Unit in 2016 reinvigorated implementation of the 2012 Safety Nets Policy Update.
- ▶ **Regional bureaux/country offices:** Despite positive findings on the commitment and capacities of field-level staff in three policy evaluations, insufficient human resources at the country and regional levels constrained the implementation of seven policies. Challenges include existing high staff workloads; limited use and capacity limitations of focal points; a lack of continuity due to staff rotation and deployments; and unsustainable use of short-term consultants.

Eight evaluations found insufficient staff skills and expertise were available to enable successful policy implementation. Reliance on outsourcing constrained implementation of the 2009 Gender Policy, the 2012 Humanitarian Protection Policy and the 2012 Safety Nets Policy Update. The exception was the implementation of the 2008 Cash and Voucher Policy

Discussion Paper, which benefited from the development and use of a corporate training platform.

Insufficient financial resources – Allocated financial resources were insufficient to support the implementation of all 10 evaluated policies, even though demands were kept at a deliberately low level to encourage mainstreaming in the 2014 Corporate Partnership Strategy and the 2004 Policy Statement on Humanitarian Principles. Short-term funding constrained implementation of six policies, notably those that required a medium- or long-term approach to policy issues.

Four evaluations found donor reluctance to provide funding for policy implementation, with reasons including scepticism about the underlying evidence base (2012 Nutrition Policy); concerns about the capacity of WFP to work on long-term issues (2012 Nutrition Policy and 2012 Safety Nets Policy Update); dissatisfaction with corporate reporting on capacity development (2009 Capacity Development Policy Update); and sensitivity about the use of new modalities (2008 Cash and Voucher Policy Discussion Paper).

Three evaluations, notably those covering programmatic areas (nutrition, school feeding and safety nets), questioned whether the relevant policies were realistic in the light of the financial and human resources required for implementation.

Gaps in corporate leadership – Seven evaluations found insufficient leadership or senior management policy ownership to enable successful policy implementation. Effects were significant, including a critical undermining of the institutional change needed to ensure adequate treatment of gender and humanitarian protection issues in WFP programming.

Low staff awareness and ownership – Linked to limited dissemination (see [here](#)), only the 2012 Nutrition Policy and the 2012 Humanitarian Protection Policy were widely known across the organization. Awareness of five policies was particularly low, resulting in a “serious gap” in the case of school

feeding. Four evaluations nevertheless found that corporate attention to, and appreciation of, the evaluated policies area had grown during policy implementation, although such growth could not be robustly linked to policy development or implementation. Evaluations found greater internal awareness of guidance associated with policies, such as that related to the 2008 Cash and Voucher Policy Discussion Paper and the 2014 Corporate Partnership Strategy (see [here](#)).

Weaknesses in corporate accountability –

All nine policy evaluations found weaknesses in aspects of corporate accountability. These included technical weaknesses in results frameworks, limitations in monitoring of policy implementation and gaps in management accountabilities and responsibilities.

- ▶ *Technical weaknesses in results frameworks* – Six of the evaluated policies lacked results frameworks. Where frameworks did exist or where intended results and indicators had been developed, technical weaknesses were noted (table 4).
- ▶ *Limitations in monitoring of policy implementation* – Six evaluations

found weaknesses in monitoring and reporting arrangements, leading to under-reporting of results from three policies.¹⁹ For example, monitoring targets under the 2009 Gender Policy were kept separate from WFP’s regular monitoring arrangements, weakening accountability for policy implementation across the organization. A lack of dedicated funding for monitoring and evaluation under the 2012 Nutrition Policy meant that new indicators could not be adequately measured (see [here](#)).

- ▶ *Gaps in management responsibilities and accountabilities* – Five evaluations also found weaknesses in corporate responsibility and accountability for policy implementation. Specific constraints included the absence of WFP-wide accountability frameworks, unassigned responsibilities for policy implementation and results, the lack of a corporate “home” for policies and, in the case of the 2008 Cash and Voucher Policy Discussion Paper, an initial (albeit subsequently amended) absence of cross-functional leadership.

TABLE 4: TECHNICAL WEAKNESSES IN RESULTS FRAMEWORKS

TECHNICAL WEAKNESS	POLICY
Relatively unambitious results for the policy issue	2009 Gender Policy
Technical weaknesses in outputs and outcomes	2009 School Feeding Policy 2009 Gender Policy 2009 Capacity Development Policy Update 2008 Cash and Voucher Policy Discussion Paper
Technical weaknesses in indicators	2009 Gender Policy 2009 Capacity Development Policy Update 2012 Nutrition Policy 2012 Humanitarian Protection Policy

Source: Synthesis team.

Missed opportunities for partnership

Eight evaluations found scope for improved partnership arrangements to support WFP policy implementation:

- ▶ Four evaluations found that WFP had missed opportunities for partnership potential during policy preparation or implementation. For example, WFP neglected relationships with traditional United Nations partners during implementation of the 2009 School Feeding Policy.
- ▶ Four evaluations also found that WFP had missed opportunities to transcend transactional relationships with non-governmental organization implementing partners. The 2014 evaluation of the 2009 Gender Policy noted that this had restricted non-governmental organizations' ability to

lobby WFP or hold it accountable regarding gender issues.

- ▶ Three evaluations²⁰ found insufficient partner capacity for implementation and limitations in the ability of WFP to enhance partner capacity, for example with regard to nutrition-sensitive actions.

Four evaluations – all of cross-cutting areas – found weaknesses in confirming cooperating partners' roles in policy implementation, despite at least partial standards being integrated into field-level agreements. The evaluation of the humanitarian principles/access policy statements noted that contracts with commercial suppliers did not include standards on humanitarian principles equivalent to those for non-governmental organizations, requiring WFP to strike a complex balance between selecting partners on the basis of their access to affected populations and upholding the principles.



WFP/Gabriela Vivacqua

3

TO WHAT EXTENT HAS WFP IMPLEMENTED THE ACTIONS AGREED TO IN THE MANAGEMENT RESPONSES TO EVALUATIONS?

Overall, a high proportion of evaluation recommendations were accepted by management, and there is evidence of progress in their implementation. However, WFP internal management data regarding actions taken to implement evaluation recommendations lacked reliability.

Common areas of recommendation – The nine policy evaluations resulted in a total of 56 recommendations (table 4). All nine evaluations recommended improved policy operationalization and enhanced staff capacity. Operationalization focused on organization-wide issues in many cases, such as integration of policy issues into WFP country planning, business processes and corporate strategizing and strengthening of internal coordination mechanisms. New or updated policies were recommended in four of the nine evaluations and improvements to knowledge management in seven.

The implementation of agreed actions in response to evaluation recommendations is well under way, but data validity concerns exist. In its responses, management agreed with 46 (or 82 percent) of the 56 recommendations and partially agreed with 10 (or 18 percent). It committed to a total of 125 actions aimed at implementing the recommendations.²¹

As of December 2019, internal management information recorded 84 of 125 actions (or 67 percent) as fully implemented, corresponding to evaluation timelines as follows:

- ▶ full implementation of all 74 actions identified in management responses to the three evaluations conducted during the period 2012–2015;
- ▶ partial implementation of eight agreed actions in response to evaluation recommendations from three evaluations conducted during the period 2017–2018, with the remainder either implemented (nine) or to start (three); and

- ▶ implementation still to start for all 31 agreed actions from two evaluations conducted in 2018 and 2019.

However, close analysis of internal management information, triangulated through interviews, indicated significant data validity concerns, specifically the justification of the “implemented” status for the 84 completed actions. Three main categories of concern were identified:

- ▶ description of existing systems in place rather than reporting on tangible completion of the required actions;
- ▶ expression of intentions and future plans rather than description of actions completed; and
- ▶ indication that only some of the steps necessary to implement the recommendations were taken rather than a demonstration of full achievement.

The justification of the “implemented” status ascribed was therefore in doubt, reflecting WFP’s lack of effective verification systems for internal reporting on the implementation status of evaluation recommendations.²²

Nonetheless, review of wider WFP documentation²³ and consultations with WFP staff provided qualitative evidence of progress against evaluation recommendations, albeit partial in some cases. Table 5 lists the most frequently occurring recommendations by area and the evidence of progress towards recommendation implementation.

TABLE 5: POLICY EVALUATION RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION

THEMES	FREQUENCY (N=9)	RECOMMENDATION AREAS	EVIDENCE/EXAMPLES OF IMPLEMENTATION
Improve policy operationalization through mainstreaming across WFP and preparing mechanisms for implementation	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrate the policy issue into WFP country planning, business processes and corporate strategizing Develop action plans for implementation Prepare guidance and tools to support implementation Strengthen coordination mechanisms across WFP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integration of policy areas into WFP programme planning (gender; cash and vouchers; humanitarian protection; nutrition; school feeding; safety nets) Guidance and toolkits developed in school feeding; gender; humanitarian protection; humanitarian principles and access; cash and vouchers; social protection and safety nets; nutrition; capacity strengthening; and corporate partnerships <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Cash and vouchers manual updated twice since the 2014 evaluation (2019)</i> <i>Gender integrated into WFP's programme cycle and country strategic plan guidance materials</i>
Staff capacity development	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop technical expertise for the policy issue through training Develop advocacy skills for the issue Increase staffing availability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training and capacity strengthening undertaken in school feeding; gender; humanitarian protection; humanitarian principles and access; cash and vouchers; social protection and safety nets; nutrition; capacity strengthening; and corporate partnerships <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Regional partnership workshops conducted to develop partnership and advocacy skills (2017)</i> <i>Learning modules developed for all staff on protection and on AAP (2019)</i> <i>Nutrition-sensitive programming guidance developed (2018)</i>
Policy review/updating/revision	7 ^a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a new policy Update the policy Revise or update the policy/policy update at a later date, once other institutional reforms are in place Do not update or replace the policy Develop an operational strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gender Policy 2015–2020 approved in 2015 (EB.A/2015/5-A) Revised Humanitarian protection policy currently being developed (first Board consultation May 2020) 2013 School Feeding Policy Update prepared in response to the 2012 evaluation of the 2009 School Feeding Policy Decision made to prepare a school feeding strategy prior to considering a revised policy (school feeding strategy endorsed by EMG January 2020) 2017 Nutrition Policy approved (EB.1/2017/4-C) Country Capacity Strengthening Policy under development (informal Board consultation April 2020) Cash and Voucher Policy Discussion Paper Safety nets Social protection strategy currently being developed School feeding

THEMES	FREQUENCY (N=9)	RECOMMENDATION AREAS	EVIDENCE/EXAMPLES OF IMPLEMENTATION
Policy dissemination/ communication and learning	7 ^b	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake dissemination activities Develop a comprehensive research strategy Generate relevant research and learning Capture internal and external lessons Embed the policy issue in internal and external communications Develop systems to capture and report information on the policy issue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research and learning strategies developed (cash and vouchers; school feeding; nutrition) <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Comprehensive research strategy developed and publications produced for school feeding (2017)</i> <i>Cash and vouchers corporate training platform developed and utilized (2017)</i> <i>A series of studies on protection produced (2019)</i> <i>Engagement with academic partners to improve the quality and credibility of nutrition research (2018)</i>
Accountability, including monitoring and evaluation	6 ^c	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarify roles and responsibilities for policy implementation Develop and apply robust monitoring and evaluation platforms for tracking policy implementation and addressing of the issue Improve/enhance existing corporate indicators Support WFP country offices in their use of corporate indicators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corporate indicators revised and updated with guidance provided to staff (nutrition; gender; humanitarian protection; cash and vouchers; school feeding) Headquarters units for policy implementation established and enhanced (safety nets; gender; capacity strengthening; cash and vouchers) <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Guidance provided to country offices and regional bureaux on methodology for nutrition indicators and supporting national nutrition monitoring systems (2017)</i> <i>Partnership data collected in WFP's internal management tool, COMET (2018)</i>
Financial resources	6 ^d	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dedicate corporate resources to the policy Establish dedicated internal financing mechanisms for the policy issue Improve financial monitoring for the policy Develop a strategic approach to resource mobilization and advocate the mobilization of resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resources provided for implementation of policies on gender, school feeding, nutrition and cash and vouchers <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Investment of approximately USD 2.7 million in implementing the partnership pillar of the Strategic Plan (2017–2021), through the Integrated Road Map (2017)</i> <i>Investment of USD 3.1 million from the programme support and administrative budget allocated to implementation of the WFP Gender Policy (2015–2020) (2017)</i>

THEMES	FREQUENCY (N=9)	RECOMMENDATION AREAS	EVIDENCE/EXAMPLES OF IMPLEMENTATION
Building partnerships	6 ^e	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop partnership agreements with external partners (United Nations, government, civil society, other) • Seek opportunities for joint planning and programming • Participate in relevant international networks • Raise awareness with partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of strategic partnerships developed in gender; nutrition; corporate partnerships; school feeding; nutrition; cash and vouchers; safety nets. <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Strategic and operational partnerships developed with the World Bank in school feeding, culminating in joint research publication (2018)</i> - <i>Participation in global nutrition mechanisms such as SUN, the cluster system, REACH, the Committee on World Food Security and other forums (2019)</i>

Abbreviations: AAP = accountability to affected populations; COMET = country office monitoring and evaluation tool; REACH = Renewed Efforts Against Child Hunger and undernutrition; SUN = Scaling Up Nutrition.

^a Capacity development, cash and vouchers, gender, humanitarian protection, nutrition, school feeding, safety nets.

^b Capacity development, cash and vouchers, humanitarian principles and access, protection, nutrition, school feeding, safety nets.

^c Capacity development, cash and vouchers, corporate partnerships, gender, nutrition, safety nets.

^d Cash and vouchers, gender, humanitarian principles and access, protection, nutrition, school feeding.

^e Cash and vouchers, corporate partnerships, gender, humanitarian principles and access, nutrition, school feeding.



WFP/Charlie Musoka

4

TO WHAT EXTENT HAS WFP APPLIED THE LEARNING GENERATED THROUGH POLICY EVALUATIONS?

Despite progress in evaluation recommendation implementation, gaps were noted in the take-up and use of learning from evaluations, particularly where more systemic or long-term change was advised.

Evidence of learning applied but hesitation on systemic change – The review of WFP corporate documentation and interviews with staff (see [here](#)) identified gaps in the comprehensive take-up and use of learning from policy evaluations.

In particular, gaps were noted where evaluations advised systemic change such as in creating comprehensive knowledge management systems and ensuring the sustained availability of required staff and predictable financial resources (table 6).

TABLE 6: GAPS IN THE TAKE-UP AND USE OF POLICY EVALUATION LEARNING

LEARNING FROM POLICY EVALUATIONS ^A	LEARNING TAKE-UP/GAPS ^B
There is a need for a systems-focused approach to policy implementation	The majority of effort focused on the integration of the policy issue into WFP business planning, staff training and capacity strengthening. There is less evidence of efforts to strengthen coordination mechanisms across WFP, as noted in policy evaluations
Policy intentions should be aligned with corporate capacities and/or such capacities can be developed	The bulk of effort undertaken related to staff training, including the conduct of workshops and training materials developed. There is little evidence of increased staffing availability in policy areas and/or ensuring that capacities are enhanced and sustained
The policy designations and classifications reflected in WFP Policy Formulation should be consistently applied	While revised policies were approved for gender and nutrition, a lack of clear policy designations and classifications in WFP meant that in other policy areas (e.g. school feeding, country capacity strengthening) strategies rather than formal policies were adopted, or being considered for adoption, resulting in unclear sequencing for future policy revision and updating
Knowledge management systems should be built to support and inform the policy cycle	There has been considerable effort to generate research and learning (see table 4) but little evidence of full knowledge management systems being developed, including those to capture and report on the relevant policy issues and ensure the full distillation and use of the learning generated
Predictable and sustained financial resources are needed to support policy implementation	Financial resources for dedicated policy areas have been provided at given points in time but there is no evidence of subsequent continued financial commitment or the establishment of dedicated internal financing mechanisms for policy issues or improved financial monitoring as recommended in policy evaluations
Corporate reporting should be supported by fully comprehensive accountability systems	Corporate indicators have been adapted in response to policy evaluation recommendations and support provided to country offices for their use but there is no evidence of clarified roles and responsibilities for policy implementation or development of robust monitoring and evaluation platforms for tracking policy implementation
WFP should move beyond partnership agreements alone to coordination in programming	While partnership agreements have been developed across policy areas and WFP has participated in relevant international forums, there was little tangible evidence of increased joint planning or programming

^a Summarized from policy evaluation findings, lessons and recommendations.

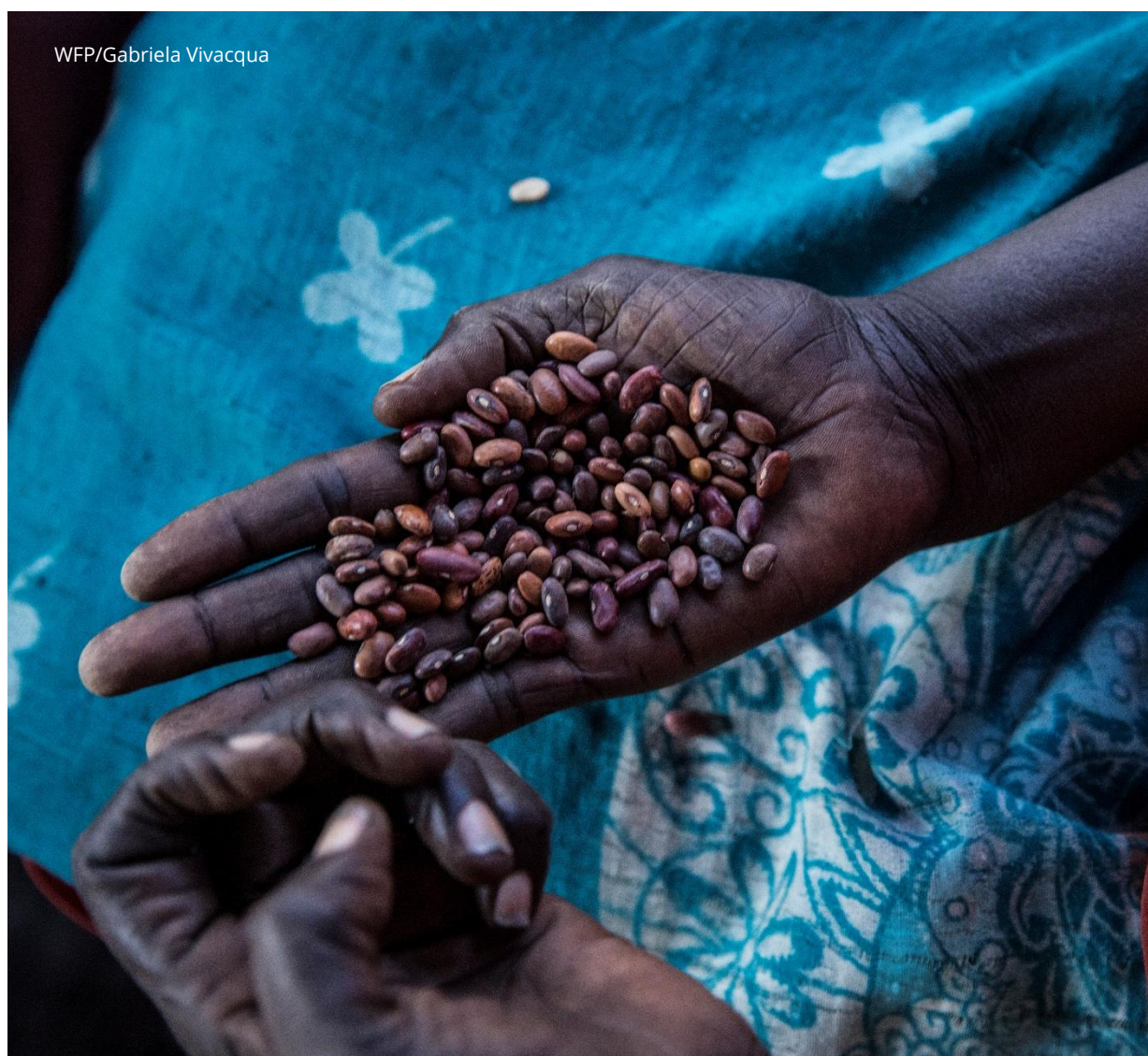
^b Identified from WFP internal management information on evaluation recommendation implementation, review of corporate documentation and interviews with staff and management.

Source: Synthesis team.

With the exception of findings on nutrition in the Strategic Plan (2017–2021), little explicit reflection of policy evaluation learning within WFP strategic plans. Neither of the WFP strategic plans in effect during the period contained explicit references to policy evaluations. Only findings from the 2015 evaluation of the 2011 Nutrition Policy were explicitly reflected in the WFP Strategic Plan (2017–2021), with Strategic Objective 2 (improve nutrition) including commitments to work in global and country-level partnerships for nutrition, strengthen nutrition-sensitive approaches and strengthen the links between nutrition and gender.

Adjustment of corporate indicators reflecting learning from evaluations –

The recommendations of all four relevant evaluations in relation to corporate indicators²⁴ were taken forward in the development of the Corporate Results Framework (2017–2021). Examples include an outcome-level metric for planning and assessing progress in country capacity strengthening (a direct recommendation of the evaluation of the 2009 Capacity Development Policy Update); new indicators to capture nutrition-sensitive interventions (as recommended by the 2015 evaluation of the 2012 Nutrition Policy); adapted gender indicators (proposed by the 2014 evaluation of the 2009 Gender Policy); and revised indicators on protection, included as a direct result of the 2018 evaluation of the 2012 Humanitarian Protection Policy.





CONCLUSIONS



Overall, the evidence from this synthesis shows a **currently diffuse and complex policy environment** at WFP. Policy evaluations since 2011 have identified a series of systemic challenges in the WFP policy function that have given rise to this situation.



The nine policy evaluations analysed for this synthesis revealed a range of **diverse policy initiation triggers** and **unsystematized policy designations**. No clear policy typology for categorizing policies covering different areas of work exists. Policy classifications for submissions to the Executive Board were not applied according to the rationale set out in 2011, and the policies submitted were subject to inconsistent degrees of oversight and scrutiny.



Despite efforts to ensure consultative approaches to policy design and to increase policy relevance for staff through the production of operationally-gearred guidance, policies suffered **common limitations in the quality of their design**. These included limited or weak evidence bases; gaps in internal logic; inconsistent or unclear use of terminology; and weaknesses in gender mainstreaming. A WFP-centric focus was maintained in some policies. Overall, few common standards or expectations for policy content were required or applied.



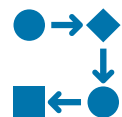
These gaps are more than simply technical shortcomings; their absence **constrains policy relevance and successful implementation**, particularly at the field level. They were compounded by shortcomings in policy implementation, including limited dissemination (constraining the staff awareness so essential for ownership in a highly decentralized organization) and limited corporate commitment, reflected in insufficient human and financial resources, inconsistent leadership by senior management and weaknesses in accountability frameworks. Partnerships were not always fully utilized to support policy delivery.



The result of this unstructured approach is a currently prolific and complex policy universe whose **lack of policy coherence, coordination and prioritization** is reflected in the linear “menu” of policies listed in the annual policy compendiums. Amid such diffusion, individual policies struggle to define their roles and confirm their priority. This risk both coverage gaps with regard to cross-cutting key issues and confusion and competition between conceptually and operationally overlapping policy areas. It also compounds the difficulties for WFP staff on the ground – for example when faced with decision making in complex humanitarian operating environments²⁵ – for whom the benefit of clear policy guidance is furthermore lacking, which may have important implications for affected populations.



Despite shortcomings in the validity of internal management information, there is evidence that **policy evaluation recommendations are taken seriously** and acted upon by WFP management, although not always consistently or comprehensively. Recommendations on policy revision and updating, implementation mechanisms, staff capacity building, research generation and partnership formation have all been addressed to at least some degree.



Similarly, despite evidence that at least some learning generated by policy evaluations is taken up in dedicated policy areas, advice on **more systemically-oriented requirements** – such as adopting a systems-focused approach to policy implementation, building knowledge management systems²⁶ and ensuring that accountability systems comprise fully comprehensive cycles – have received less attention and treatment within the corporate system.



Overall, therefore, this synthesis finds that WFP's internal guidance and systems for policy formulation and implementation would benefit from a **revised approach** if they are to fully support the development of successor strategic plans and the second generation of country strategic plans. The following lessons and recommendations aim to help support the necessary change.



WFP/Gabriela Vivacqua

KEY LESSONS

Six lessons arise from the evidence

1 Nomenclature matters – There is a lack of clarity regarding “what is” a policy, strategy, action plan, update or policy statement that is far from semantic; designations determine procedures such as consultation and approval, content, accountability and internal status and therefore have consequences for programming, particularly at the field level. Clarity of designation provides staff with clear parameters and also a defense against ad hoc policy requests, as designations are linked with (and integral to) policy initiation triggers.

2 Alignment with WFP absorptive capacity is key – Even for a large-scale organization such as WFP, the use and application of 33 separate policies is challenging. For overstretched staff working under difficult operating conditions at the regional and country levels absorptive capacity is even more restricted. The range and breadth of WFP policies need to correspond to its ability to absorb them, mindful of the organization’s heavy burden of emergency response work.

3 Policies need common standards and expectations for content – Policies for different issues necessarily vary in their approaches and strategies. Nonetheless (and depending on policy designation) there must be common minimum requirements if policy quality is to be assured. These include a sound evidence base, robust accountability arrangements, adequately assessed and committed human and financial resources and a sound and realistic implementation plan that includes dissemination.

4 Policy accountability is the foundation – The risks of uncertain or dispersed accountability are clearly highlighted in the policy evaluations examined here. As well as strong technical and political scrutiny, policies require full accountability systems, which range from the firm assignment of responsibilities to dedicated managers at different levels of the organization, with associated reporting requirements, to Executive Board oversight.

5 Policy coherence helps avoid confusion and competition – Policy overlaps create at best opportunities and at worst confusion and competition. Generalized statements of “coherence with” other policies do not provide sufficient rigour, nor do they help clarify the normative hierarchy. A foundational approach to coherence and coordination that considers synergies to be not merely desirable but rather a fundamental part of policy development and implementation reduces these risks.

6 Policies require more than standalone documents – Policies should not exist in a vacuum. As forward-looking statements of durable organizational commitment, they require full and visible corporate leadership, momentum and resources. They require reinforcement through implementation-level guidance and requirements, supported by comprehensive accountability systems



WFP/Michael Tewelde

RECOMMENDATIONS

The six recommendations below are aimed at supporting the rebuilding of an enabling policy environment within WFP

They build on [Office of Evaluations' top 10 Lessons for policy quality](#). All are pending the findings of the ongoing mid-term review of the strategic plan and informal consultations

with the Executive Board on the Strategic Plan (2022–2026). The recommendations are presented in two groups:

A The first group includes **strategic recommendations** with a focus on the policy cycle, with a view to their implementation in a way that supports the development and execution of the next strategic plan.

B The second group consists of **operational recommendations** for more immediate and short-term action.

A. STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

TO CONTRIBUTE TO, AND SUPPORT, THE STRATEGIC PLAN (2022–2026)

1. Clarify and confirm the policy cycle procedure

Update the 2011 policy formulation document to include:

- i. a set of definitions that differentiate between WFP rules and regulations, strategies, policies, guidance notes, etc. and includes definitions for each item;
- ii. a clear policy typology that clarifies the normative hierarchy and differentiates between (at a minimum) programmatic, cross-cutting and corporate thematic documents;
- iii. updated classifications of policies for submission to the Executive Board, whether for approval, consideration or information;
- iv. defined criteria for when a policy (as opposed to another document type) will be triggered;
- v. a revised policy cycle, including the accountability lines for different types of documents (see recommendation 2, below); and
- vi. requirement for a policy timespan of five years, at which point approval – following an evaluation – should be required for its revision, updating or decommissioning (see recommendation 2).

RESPONSIBLE

Director, Policy and Programmes Division
(as chair of the policy cycle task force)

Executive Board Secretariat

TIMING

By June 2021

2. Clarify policy governance and accountability procedures

(I) Confirm responsibility for:

- i. activating a policy for any given issue (rather than leaving the responsibility with individual units);
- ii. ensuring policy coherence through the policy framework (see recommendation 3, below); and
- iii. approving strategies and providing provisional approval for policies prior to Executive Board approval (for all policies).

(II) Require a regular interface – through the Policy and Programme Division and the Executive Board Secretariat – with the Executive Board in relation to policy approvals and updates on implementation.

(III) Confirm the process for policy decommissioning.

RESPONSIBLE

Director, Policy and Programmes Division
(as chair of the policy cycle task force);

Executive Management Group;

Executive Board Secretariat

TIMING

By February 2021

3. Define the policy universe through an updated WFP policy framework, applying coherence as a key principle

(I) Applying the typology within the updated policy formulation document above, rationalize (including decommissioning/merging where appropriate) the range of WFP policies.^a

(II) Reflect the resulting streamlined set of policies in a WFP policy framework aligned with the current strategic plan that:

- i. determines substantive coverage of key issues by policy, strategy etc.;
- ii. identifies thematic intersections (e.g. between school feeding, social protection and capacity strengthening) and fills relevant policy gaps;
- iii. identifies the coverage (and gaps) of cross-cutting themes such as gender, protection and the humanitarian principles; and
- iv. clearly specifies areas of internal and external policy coherence.

RESPONSIBLE

Director, Policy and Programmes Division (as chair of the policy cycle task force)

TIMING

By June 2021

^a For example, a set of approximately 20 policies would be within the range of the policy frameworks of other United Nations agencies.

B. OPERATIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

FOR IMMEDIATE SHORT-TERM ACTION

4. Adopt a “policy building” approach with clarified standards for staff

(I) Require all new policies being developed to adopt a “policy-building” approach that draws together a comprehensive evidence base and consultation with employees at all levels.

(II) Include in the revised policy formulation document (or an Executive Director circular) mandatory requirements for all policies, such as an analytical basis, a vision and theory of change, positioning in relation to other actors, accountabilities and reporting mechanisms, a results framework and financial requirements.^a

(III) Require peer review of new policies coming on stream by technical experts and the policy cycle task force.

(IV) Clarify the essential “implementation package” required by policies, such as:

- i. an agreed roll-out plan reflecting the various levels of implementation (headquarters, regional, country-specific);
- ii. a dissemination and communication strategy, internal and external;
- iii. guidance documents;
- iv. a funding and human resources strategy; and
- v. a monitoring and evaluation plan.

RESPONSIBLE

Director, Policy and Programme Division (as chair of the policy cycle task force)

TIMING

By February 2021

5. Overhaul the current policy compendium

Replace the current policy compendium presented to the Board each year with annual updates to the policy framework, also to be presented to the Board. These should comprise:

- i. qualitative insights into areas of progress, outstanding gaps, etc., with a particular focus on systemic issues; and
- ii. updated information on progress against evaluation recommendation implementation.

RESPONSIBLE

Director, Policy and Programme Division (as chair of the policy cycle task force)

TIMING

By November 2020

6. Review the processes for developing high quality management responses to evaluations and ensuring follow-up actions on evaluation recommendations

- (I) Conduct business process mapping of the steps required to prepare management responses to evaluations, including:
- i. providing mechanisms for quality checking the relevance and feasibility of proposed follow-up actions;
 - ii. ensuring cross-functional responsibilities for issues requiring systemic change;
 - iii. ensuring that management responses to individual policy evaluations are reviewed for internal coherence; and
 - iv. establishing appropriate timelines for developing management responses.

(II) For follow-up on actions agreed to in response to evaluation recommendations, and taking account of the existing commitment to revamp the corporate management response system, consider including:

- i. standards for reporting on progress against evaluation recommendations;
- ii. provision and verification of supporting evidence;
- iii. formal review of progress by the EMG (including systems for escalation where agreed actions are insufficiently addressed); and
- iv. progress reporting, including quantitative assessment and qualitative analysis of performance and gaps.

RESPONSIBLE

Director, Corporate Planning and Performance

TIMING

By June 2021

^aThe Office of Evaluation's top 10 lessons for policy quality documents will be revised to incorporate new learning from this synthesis and could be used as a reference for policy quality requirements.






WFP/Simon Pierre Diouf





































ANNEXES































Annex 1: Features present in WFP policies 2011-2019













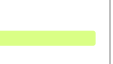

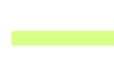


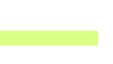

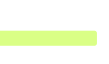

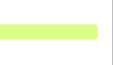


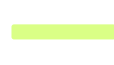

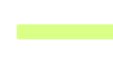
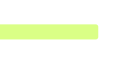
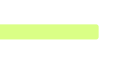

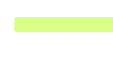
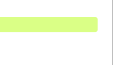
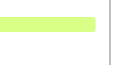
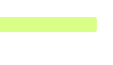

















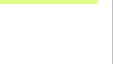

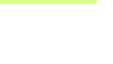
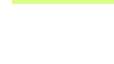

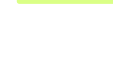


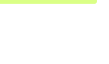










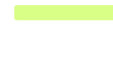
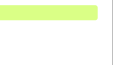
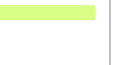

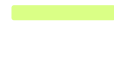
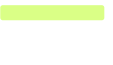

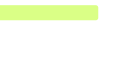
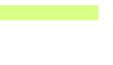





















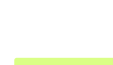
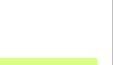
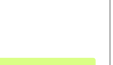
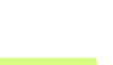
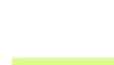
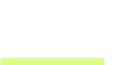
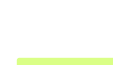
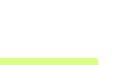
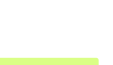
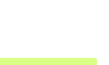
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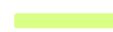
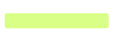
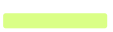
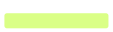
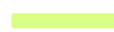
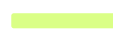
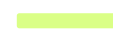
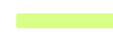
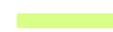
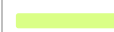










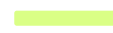
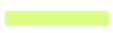

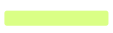
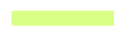
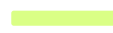



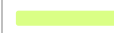
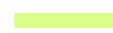
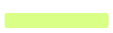
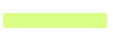
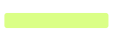



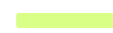
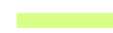











	Feature fully present in policy
	Feature partially present in policy
	Feature not present in policy or present to only a limited degree
--	Blank: No evidence

POLICY AND YEAR OF ISSUE

Area	Specific feature										
		SCHOOL FEEDING 2009	GENDER 2008	CASH AND VOUCHERS 2008	NUTRITION 2012	CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT 2009	CORPORATE PARTNERSHIPS 2014	HUMANITARIAN PROTECTION 2012	HUMANITARIAN PRINCIPLES 2004	HUMANITARIAN ACCESS 2006	SAFETY NETS 2012
Policy coherence	Reflecting prevailing trends and debate										
	Coherence with current strategic plan										
	Internal consistency with other policy areas										

Area	Specific feature										
		School feeding 2009	Gender 2008	Cash and vouchers 2008	Nutrition 2012	Capacity development 2009	Corporate partnerships 2014	Humanitarian protection 2012	Humanitarian principles 2004	Humanitarian access 2006	Safety nets 2012
Corporate leadership and ownership	Sufficient corporate leadership and management ownership										
	Sufficient staff awareness and ownership										

											
Area	Specific feature	School feeding 2009	Gender 2008	Cash and vouchers 2008	Nutrition 2012	Capacity development 2009	Corporate partnerships 2014	Humanitarian protection 2012	Humanitarian principles 2004	Humanitarian access 2006	Safety nets 2012
Policy design and implementation	Consultation during design										
	Production of high-quality guidance										
	Presence and use of evidence										
	Clear goals and vision										
	Clear and consistent use of terminology										
	Incorporation of gender into design										
	Adequate policy dissemination										
	Inclusion of action or implementation plan										
	Adequate human resources										
	Sufficient staff skills and expertise										

											
Area	Specific feature	School feeding 2009	Gender 2008	Cash and vouchers 2008	Nutrition 2012	Capacity development 2009	Corporate partnerships 2014	Humanitarian protection 2012	Humanitarian principles 2004	Humanitarian access 2006	Safety nets 2012
Policy design and implementation	Adequate financial resources										
	Presence of robust results framework										
	Robust monitoring and reporting systems in place										
	Clear corporate responsibilities and accountabilities assigned										
	Partnership arrangements in place to support policy implementation										

Annex 2: Terms of Reference

TERMS OF REFERENCE: SYNTHESIS OF EVIDENCE AND LESSONS FROM WFP'S POLICY EVALUATIONS (2011 - 2019)

1. Background

The purpose of these terms of reference (TOR) is to guide the conduct of the proposed Synthesis of Evidence and Lessons from WFP's Policy Evaluations (2011 to 2019). There is a growing body of evidence generated through WFP policy evaluations on the conception, implementation, uptake, and results associated with WFP policies in different areas ranging from school feeding and safety nets, to gender and capacity development.

This synthesis aims to bring together findings from WFP policy evaluations conducted since 2011 to shed a light on learning and uptake from policy evaluations and generate further evidence on the programming in a range of policy areas, as well as on policy processes to inform current thinking on the policy cycle in WFP.

1.1 Introduction

At WFP, policy evaluations focus on specific policies and the systems, guidance, initiatives, and programmes that were established to implement them. Collectively, the evaluation questions aim to generate insights and evidence that will help policy makers to improve future policies and assist programme staff in policy implementation. Policy evaluations also seek to facilitate understanding by diverse stakeholders of the assumptions, expectations and objectives that the policy should meet. Consistently, they all ask high-level questions²⁷ around the quality of the policy, its results, and seek to explain why and how these results occurred.

The norm governing the evaluation of WFP's policies is set by the WFP Policy Formulation document approved by the Board in April 2011²⁸. It requires that policies approved after 2011 are evaluated between 4 to 6 years²⁹ following the start of implementation to assess their effectiveness and feed into WFP's policy cycle.³⁰

The prioritisation of policy evaluations³¹ is based on an analysis of WFP's Policy Compendium and information on future policy developments. Specifically, policy evaluations are a requirement prior to new policy development, and together with synthesis products they can be used as one of the sources for identifying policy gaps or highlighting the need to update existing policies.

Evaluation syntheses are an approach used to highlight issues that cut across different evaluations, and to address questions using an existing evidence base³². Syntheses bring together existing evaluation evidence and findings, assess them against a conceptual framework and develop an analysis to answer specific policy, programme, or system-related questions.³³

This synthesis of evidence from policy evaluations has been initiated in response to a growing interest of WFP stakeholders to: **i)** enhance the knowledge base on WFP policy development and policy effectiveness; **ii)** identify recurrent findings useful to derive lessons across different policy areas; and **iii)** reflect on how effectively WFP has responded to and used policy evaluations to improve results. This synthesis will be presented for consideration to the WFP Executive Board in June 2020.

Context

The broader context within WFP is characterised by growing demands for evidence generation and a commitment for more systematic use of evidence to inform strategic directions, policies and programmes. The Policy on Country Strategic Plans (CSP) for example includes a provision for mandatory evaluations, thereby embedding evaluative planning, budgeting and thinking into the country-level programming framework.³⁴ Moreover, OEV has reviewed each CSP-related Concept Note to ensure a strong use of evaluative evidence and emphasised the need to plan and budget for the mandatory CSP evaluations and at least one decentralized evaluation during each CSP cycle. Regional Evaluation Officers are also

increasingly supporting the use of evidence by Country Offices (COs) by preparing summaries of evaluative evidence to contribute to CSP planning processes.

The value of evaluative evidence for learning and accountability was also recognised in latest Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network (MOPAN) that highlighted how "[o]ne of WFP's strengths is its ability to rely on a strong evaluation system; and while there are still some gaps in the system, a culture of using evaluation evidence in planning and programming is emerging."³⁵

Most recently, at the 2019 Global Evaluation Meeting, the Office of Evaluation (OEV) brought together colleagues from different parts of WFP to discuss the generation and use of evidence generated not only through evaluations, but also through other functions in WFP such as monitoring, operational research as well as through other oversight functions. The discussion underscored not only the need for strengthened knowledge management systems to support evidence use and uptake, but also that more can be done to synthesise evidence and lessons from the existing (and growing) body of evaluations systematically carried out in WFP.³⁶

Evaluation synthesis are one of the products issued by the OEV to respond to such growing interest in and demand for succinct and actionable analysis drawing from completed evaluations.

Until 2016, the annual evaluation report included a high-level synthesis of finding and lessons emerging from the evaluations conducted within the previous year³⁷. OEV also carried out an annual synthesis of Operations Evaluations from 2014 to 2017 and prepared syntheses of other series, such as the Impact Evaluation series on moderate-acute malnutrition.³⁸

In 2017, OEV changed its approach to be more responsive to specific demands for synthesis products. The first exercise was the Synthesis of WFP's Country Portfolio Evaluations in the Sahel and Horn of Africa from 2016 to 2018, which was presented to the Executive Board for consideration in June 2019.³⁹

The present synthesis aims to expand the learning from Policy Evaluations⁴⁰ further and strengthen OEV's efforts to provide synthesis products of interest to different target audiences within WFP, including Executive Board Members.

Considering the growing body of evidence generated through different types of evaluations in WFP, a greater investment by OEV to commission synthesis products can also be seen as an effort to create greater efficiencies within the evaluation function. This can be done through **i)** further analysing and interrogating existing evaluative evidence without extensive plans for field-based data collection activities; **ii)** developing and refining over time an approach and methodology to produce succinct and user-oriented analytical products that bring together findings and lessons from different evaluations; and, **iii)** maximising the learning from a broad sample of evaluative work by applying different analytical and thematic lenses.

2. Purpose of the Synthesis

2.1 Rationale and Objectives

This synthesis has been initiated in response to a perceived gap in policy learning and uptake in WFP, and a demand for succinct and actionable analysis that builds on existing evaluative evidence.

Balancing learning and accountability purposes, this synthesis aims to:

- Identify recurrent findings within and across different policy areas and highlight key themes of strategic relevance for WFP;
- Contribute new learning on policy formulation and uptake in WFP highlighting the factors that enable or hamper **(a)** the quality of policy-making; and **(b)** the chances of uptake and effective roll-out of new or updated policy directions by WFP Divisions, Bureaux and Offices;⁴¹
- Explore issues around learning and uptake from policy evaluations; and
- Serve an accountability purpose through exploring the extent of management response to recommendations from policy evaluations.

Four high-level questions relating to the objectives above, key scoping details and a proposed approach to the synthesis are outlined in section 3.

2.2 Stakeholders and Users

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 policy-makers, WFP Senior Management, Regional Bureaux (RB) and Country Offices (COs) and the Executive Board members.

As secondary audience, the synthesis will be of interest to all United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) members part of the Evaluating Policy Support group⁴², as a platform for peer learning and exchange across the UNEG membership on methodologies and approaches to improve the quality and uptake of policy evaluations.

3. Synthesis questions, scope and proposed approach

3.1 Synthesis questions

This synthesis will try to answer four main questions listed below.

In the set of policy evaluations completed by WFP since the issuance of the Policy Formulation note in 2011:

- What are common themes, systemic issues, and potential opportunities most recurrently highlighted within and across policy domains in WFP? Have these elements been reflected in the WFP Strategic Plans (SPs)⁴³ and, if so, how and to what extent? What implications does this have for policy coherence in WFP, and the delivery of the current SP?
- What elements appear to have enabled effective policy-making and policy implementation in order to contribute to achieve the expected results in the different policy areas?
- What is the extent of implementation of the actions agreed in the final management response by the targeted responsible entities?
- What is the evidence of WFP applying the learning generated through policy evaluations?

A number of sub-questions will be developed by the synthesis team, to be discussed, refined and agreed with OEV in the inception stage of the synthesis.

3.2 Scope

This synthesis will include all policy evaluations conducted by OEV between April 2011 when the WFP Note on Policy Formulation was issued, and August 2019 as listed below.

Table 1: Policy evaluations completed between 2011 and 2019

Evaluation report	Evaluation presented to the Board session	Related WFP policy issued in
WFP's School Feeding Policy	EB.1.2012	2009
Evaluation of WFP's 2009 Gender Policy. This Time Around?	EB.1.2014	2008
WFP's 2008 Cash and Voucher Policy	EB.1.2015	2008
Nutrition Policy	EB.2.2015	2012
WFP's Policy on Capacity Development (2009): An Update on Implementation	EB.1.2017	2009
Evaluation of the WFP Corporate Partnership Strategy (2014-2017) **	EB.A.2017	2014
WFP Humanitarian Protection Policy	EB.A.2018	2012
WFP Policies on Humanitarian Principles (2004) and Access in Humanitarian Contexts	EB.A.2018	2006
Update of WFP's Safety Nets Policy: The Role of Food Assistance in Social Protection	EB.A.2019	2012

NOTES: (*) It is noteworthy to highlight some inconsistencies in the categorisation and use of terminology for WFP normative documents particularly in relation to the use of the terms 'strategy' and 'policies'. On this point see also the WFP OEV note on Top 10 Lessons for Policy Quality in WFP.

()** Despite the label of 'strategy' this evaluation has been commissioned and managed as a Policy Evaluation (i.e. following all WFP EQAS provisions for policy evaluations) as this Strategy was included in the Policy Compendium.

The synthesis is also expected to explore how learning and uptake from policy evaluations has been translated in other strategic and normative work in the organisation.⁴⁴ Hence the need to include in the desk review some of the main WFP strategies as they relate to the policies included in this synthesis.⁴⁵

The synthesis is expected to draw from a broad and diverse body of information, evaluative evidence, primary and secondary data. Main secondary data sources include:

- the full set of policy documents that have been evaluated, coupled with any other type of normative work that specifically relate to the policies;
- the full spectrum of information related to the management response following the completion of a policy evaluation in WFP – including information on management responses and relevant excerpts from the ACE database⁴⁶;
- all the WFP strategic plans that span across the 2011-2019 period;
- Annual Performance Reports for the period under consideration;
- Relevant excerpts from the assessments in the Corporate Risk Register;
- Relevant excerpts from Audit recommendations in thematic areas similar to those included in the synthesis;
- all OEV Annual Evaluation Reports since 2011;
- Different synthesis reports issued by OEV⁴⁷ including background research done to inform that analysis.

Primary data gathered for the synthesis will mainly come from interviews with WFP stakeholders as outlined with more details in table 2 below.

The overall design of the synthesis is expected to be inductive in nature – without pre-empting specific programmatic areas or themes to be included in the synthesis. 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 topics of interest.

Moreover, to the extent needed in order to probe and corroborate emerging insights from the synthesis, the team may also need to refer to recent WFP Strategic Evaluations, other types of assessments and reviews, and other Policy Evaluations issued prior to 2011.

The synthesis team is not expected to carry out a new set of evidence quality reviews for all the policy evaluations included in the synthesis, but to take into account and rely on the results of the post-hoc evaluation quality assurance systems consistently used by OEV.⁴⁸ 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.

3.3 Proposed approach and methodology

While a fully-fledged synthesis methodology will be developed and refined at the inception stage, Table 2 contains some suggested approaches and data analysis strategies for the four areas of inquiry relating to the main questions of the synthesis.

Table 2: Overview on proposed approach to the synthesis

Areas of inquiry	Type of analysis	Possible data collection methods
Coverage of key themes in relation to the WFP SPs and other normative documents	Recurring themes within and across policy areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content mapping / content analysis • Interviews with a cross section of 'policy owners' in WFP, evaluation managers, evaluation team leaders and internal reference group (IRG) members (*) to understand and probe how depth and breadth of coverage of key themes for each evaluation has been negotiated and evolved during each evaluation. • Key Informants Interview (KIIs) with Regional Programme Policy Advisors.
Quality and effectiveness of policy-making and policy implementation	Relationship between factors affecting quality of policy-making and policy implementation and uptake.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content analysis of the policy evaluations and related normative work and guidance. (**) • Content analysis of other reviews and strategic evaluations that covered the themes emerging from the first area of inquiry. • Pattern matching • Data analysis on the WFP database of evaluation recommendations and management response information. • Individual and small group interviews with a cross-section of policy internal reference groups members and Senior Regional Programme Advisors to understand learning from policy evaluations, and probe how support to implement new or revised policy directions unfolds. • KIIs with Regional Programme /Policy Advisors. • Individual and small group interviews with a cross-section of WFP Staff in management positions to understand and probe the nature of policy decision making and support to implementation of policy directions.
Extent of management response	Extent of management response to recommendations from policy evaluations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data analysis on the WFP database of evaluation recommendations and management response information. • Pattern matching building on the findings from the second and third areas of inquiry. • Individual /small group interviews to understand the extent of change and uptake associated with policy evaluations.
Learning from evaluations	Relationship between management response and learning and uptake from policy evaluations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data mining and data analysis on the WFP database of evaluation recommendations and management response information. • Pattern matching building on the findings from the first and second areas of inquiry. • Individual /small group interviews to understand the type of learning and the extent of change and uptake associated with policy evaluations. • KIIs with Regional Programme/ Policy Advisors.

NOTES: (*) Depending on the topic of the evaluation, Internal Reference Group members (IRG) comprise WFP staff from different Divisions and technical units in Headquarters, Regional Bureaux and Country Offices.

()** Three of the 11 policy evaluation reports considered for this synthesis have already been coded for prior synthesis work by OEV. All information related to the coding will be shared with the synthesis team.

Based on the analyses from the desk review and additional primary information, this synthesis report is expected to: **a)** introduce new, or corroborate existing insights into WFP policy-making, including aspects related to policy coherence, and the policy implementation processes; **b)** introduce new, or corroborate existing, insights into how WFP learns and drives changes that are also informed by policy evaluation results; and, **c)** put forward recommendations to OEV strengthen policy evaluations in WFP to enhance uptake and use.

An additional deliverable of this synthesis will be a short method note (to be featured in annex) to describe not only the methodology followed to carry out the synthesis, but also put forward some recommendations to OEV as it moves forward to commission synthesis work more systematically.

4. Organization of the Synthesis

4.1. Policy Synthesis Team, Roles and Responsibilities

This synthesis will be managed by WFP OEV. Francesca Bonino has been appointed as the synthesis manager. Her responsibilities include: drafting the synthesis TOR; conducting the 1st level quality assurance; setting up the internal reference group; liaising with the consultants who will carry out the synthesis; organizing the feedback workshop and other presentations; soliciting stakeholders' feedback on the draft report. Second level quality assurance will be carried out by Deborah McWhinney, Senior Evaluation Officer in OEV. Evaluation Officer, Ramona Desole, will provide additional research support.

The synthesis manager will work closely with an external evaluator who, as the team leader (TL), will team up for this assignment with a senior researcher and a data analyst.

Under overall guidance from the TL, the research team's responsibilities include: finalise 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 policy evaluations (2011-19), their related management response matrices and recommendations database; carry out key informants interviews; draft the synthesis report for feedback and discussion at an internal stakeholder workshop; submit the revised draft synthesis to OEV and address WFP comments before finalisation.

The Director of Evaluation will approve the draft synthesis report on satisfactorily meeting of WFP evaluation quality standards, which are expected to be systematically applied throughout the synthesis process.

The main body of the final report is expected not to exceed 20 pages or 7,000 words.

4.2. Communication

The synthesis product will be in English. A communication plan will be set out including details about how to communicate the synthesis report within and outside WFP. The use of a workshop and videos will be considered.

The internal reference group will serve as an important point for communication. The synthesis along with the management response to the recommendations will be presented to the WFP Executive Board in June 2020. The final synthesis report will be posted on the public WFP website and OEV will ensure dissemination of lessons through its inclusion in the annual evaluation report. All relevant Headquarter divisions will be encouraged to circulate the final synthesis report with their staff and WFP external stakeholders.

Timeline

	WFP Synthesis of Policy Evaluations (2011-2019) Key actions	Dates
A	Phase 2 Inception	
	A1 Start up and team orientation	
	1) Mobilize synthesis team	4-Nov 7-Nov 2019
	2) Introductory calls - synthesis team and OEV	8-Nov
	A2 Desk review of documents	
	3) Initial review of documents and e-library	11-Nov 13-Nov
	A4 Prepare draft synthesis method note	
	4) Draft synthesis method note	14-Nov 18-Nov
	A5 Revise draft method note based on QA feedback	
	5) OEV review of draft synthesis method note	19-Nov 20-Nov
	6) Synthesis Team revises draft method note based on QA2 comments	21-Nov 22-Nov
	A6 Finalize draft method note based on DoE comments	
	7) DoE review and comment on synthesis method note	23-Nov 24-Nov
	8) Synthesis Team revises and finalizes synthesis method note	25-Nov 26-Nov
B	Phase 3 - Desk review, content analysis and interviews	25 Nov 20 Dec
	B1 In-depth review of relevant information across evaluations	25-Nov 20-Dec
	9) In-depth review of relevant information across evaluations	
	B2 Conduct content analysis and desk reviews	25-Nov 20-Dec
	10) Conduct content analysis and desk reviews	
	B3 Conduct interviews with IRG and other stakeholders	25-Nov 20-Dec
	11) Conduct interviews with IRG and other stakeholders	
C	Phase 4 - Reporting	
Draft zero	12) Synthesis Team Prepares draft synthesis report (D0)	6-Jan 31-Jan 2020
	13) EM 1st round review of draft zero synthesis report	1 – 2 Feb
	14) QA2 review of the zero draft	3-Feb 4-Feb
	15) EM compiles comments (EM + QA2 comments) and send it back to TL	4 Feb
D1	16) Synthesis Team revise draft synthesis report based on EM+QA2 feedback (D1)	5-Feb 11-Feb
	17) EM sends D1 for DOE review with recommendation memo from QA2	DoE comment window 12-17 Feb
D2	18) Synthesis team revises and submits draft synthesis report reflecting DoE's comments (D2)	18 Feb – 24 Feb
	19) EM checks and shares draft synthesis report with IRG	25-Feb
	20) IRG comment window to review of draft 2 synthesis report	IRG comment window 26-Feb 5 Mar
	21) Stakeholder workshop in Rome	3-Mar
	22) Deadline for stakeholder comments	5-Mar
	23) OEV consolidates comments matrix and sends it to the Synthesis Team	5 Mar
D3	24) Synthesis Team revises and submit synthesis report (D3) and response to comments	6-Mar 11-Mar
	25) EM check feedback addressed and share with QA2	12-Mar
	26) QA2 review and comment on D3 synthesis report	12 Mar
	27) Synthesis team revises and submits draft synthesis report based on QA2 comments	13-Mar
	28) EM submits D3 to DoE with recommendation memo on approval/DoE comment on D3 of Synthesis	DoE comment window 16-Mar 19-Mar

	WFP Synthesis of Policy Evaluations (2011-2019) Key actions	Dates
D4	29) Revise and submit draft synthesis report (D4)	20-Mar 23-Mar
	30) DoE shares D4 synthesis report with EMG for comment	EMG comment window 25-Mar 3-Apr
	31) EM consolidates comments and shares with TL	4-5 Apr
Final report	32) Revise and submit final synthesis report	6-Apr 8-Apr
	33) DoE review of final synthesis report	DoE final review 9-10 Apr
	34) DoE final submission of the synthesis report	10-Apr deadline EB Secretariat

Legend: DoE: 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; RMP: WFP Performance Management and Monitoring Division; TL: Team Leader (independent consultant/from independent evaluation firm)

ANNEXES to the Synthesis Terms of Reference

Annex 2.1: WFP Internal Reference Group (IRG) composition

Expected coverage of policy themes based on past policy evaluations	
HQ-level IRG member	
C&V / CBT	Tahir Nour
Capacity strengthening	Maria Lukyanova
Gender	Jacqueline Paul
Humanitarian policy and humanitarian principles	Rebecca Richards Annelaure Duval Jesse Wood
Nutrition	Jennifer Rosenzweig
Partnerships	Frederick Ranitzsch
Performance measurement	Elise Benoit
Programme – Humanitarian and Development	Deborah Yohendran
Protection	Samir Wanmali
School-based Programmes	Edward Lloydevans
Social Protection	Sarah Loughton
RB-level membership in the IRG	
RB membership of the IRG includes Colleagues in the Policy / Programme Advisors role	
RBB	Ellen Kramer, Regional Programme Advisor
RBC	Rebecca Lamade, DRD a.i. Programme, Strategy and Performance and Siemon Hollema (Head of Programme)
RBD	William Affif - Sr Regional Policy & Programme Advisor
RBJ	Brian Bogart – Regional Programme Officer
RBN	Ross Smith – Snr. Regional Programme Advisor and Francis Opiyo – Programme Policy Officer
RBP	Giorgia Testolin – Snr. Programme Advisor

Annex 2.2: Suggested Reporting Format

Executive Summary

SECTION 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Context

1.2 Purpose

1.3 Methodology

SECTION 2. FINDINGS

2.1 Analysis of recurrent findings from policy evaluation

2.2 Contribution to learning on WFP policy processes

2.3 Learning and uptake from policy evaluations

2.4 Analysis of management responses to policy evaluation recommendations

SECTION 3. CONCLUSIONS

SECTION 4. LESSONS

SECTION 5. RECOMMENDATIONS

ANNEXES

Annex 1. Suggestions for OEV on conducting policy evaluation synthesis

Acronyms and Abbreviations

Figures and Tables

Annex 2.3: E-library

Bibliographic entries	Year
EVALUATIONS INCLUDED IN THE SYNTHESIS SCOPE	
Extract from the ACE database - Follow up actions to recs from PEs 30 Sep 2019	2011-2019
Implementation status of evaluation recommendations	2019
CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT	
Capacity Development Policy - An Update on Implementation 2009	2009
Capacity Development Policy 2009 _Evaluation, Annexes and Management Response	2017
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	
2004 WFP Humanitarian Principles	2004
Policies on Humanitarian Principles and Access, Evaluation, Annexes and Management Response	2018
NUTRITION	
Nutrition Policy	2012 & 2017
Nutrition Policy 2012, Evaluation, Annexes and Management Response	2015
PROTECTION	
WFP Humanitarian Protection policy & Update	2012 & 2014
WFP Humanitarian Protection Policy, Evaluation, Annexes and Management Response	2018
SAFETY NETS	
Update of WFP's Safety Nets Policy	2012
Evaluation of the Update of WFP's Safety Nets Policy	2019

WFP EVALUATION SYNTHESSES AND MANAGEMENT RESPONSES	
Annual and Regional Operation Evaluations Series	
Annual Synthesis of OpeEval 2013-2014	2014
Annual Synthesis of OpeEval 2014-2015	2015
Annual Synthesis of OpeEval 2015-2016	2016
Annual Synthesis of OpeEval 2016-2017	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
CPEs in Africa	
Synthesis report of WFP's country portfolio evaluations in Africa (2016-2018) and Management response	2019
Impact evaluations of WFP programmes in the Sahel	
Synthesis report on four evaluations of the impact of WFP programmes and Management response	2017
ANNUAL EVALUATION REPORTS	
Annual evaluation reports	2011-2017
AUDIT REPORTS	
Capacity development	
Internal Audit of WFP's Country capacity strengthening, Desk review and Management comment	2016
Cash and voucher	
Internal Audit of Financial Service Providers for Cash Based Transfers and Management comment	2017
2015 Internal Audit of Cash and Voucher Modalities in the Field - Project Design and Set Up and Management comment	2015
WFP POLICY FORMULATION DOCS	
WFP Policy Formulation	2011
Compendium of policies relating to the Strategic Plan	2018
ED Circular Executive management for policy, operations and strategy	2017
Top 10 Lessons for Policy Quality in WFP	2018
Top 10 Lessons for Policy Quality in WFP_In Brief	2018
WFP STRATEGIC PLANS AND RELATED DOCS	
WFP Strategic Plan 2008-2013 and related docs	2008-2013
WFP Strategic Plan (2014-2017) and related docs	2014-2017
WFP Strategic Plan (2017-2021) (IRM) and related docs	2017-2021
ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORTS	
Annual Performance Reports	2011-2018
WFP RISK MANAGEMENT	
Enterprise Risk Management Policy	2015
Internal Audit of Operationalization of WFP's Enterprise Risk Management and Management comment	2017
Corporate Risk Register Circular	2012
Corporate Risk Register	June 2019
Risk Appetite Statement	2016
MOPAN	
MOPAN WFP Report	2019
MOPAN WFP Brief	2019

Annex 2.4: 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 Deborah McWhinney, QA2 Francesca Bonino, ESM Ramona Desole, EA	Consultations, meetings, emails	Sep-19	Review/feedback For information
TOR	Draft ToR Final ToR	HQ	Strategic	Andrea Cook, DoE Deborah McWhinney, QA2 Francesca Bonino, ESM Ramona Desole, EA	Emails, Web	Sep. 2019	Review / feedback For information
Desk review/ Analysis/ Synthesis	Aide-memoire/ PPT	OEV	Operational	Francesca Bonino, ESM Ramona Desole, EA	Emails, Meetings at HQ	Oct / Nov 2019	Sharing preliminary findings. Opportunity for verbal clarifications
Synthesis Report	D1	HQ	Operational & Strategic	Francesca Bonino, ESM Deborah McWhinney, QA2	email	Feb / March 2020	Review / feedback
	Final Report	HQ, RB and CO (as needed)	Strategic	Andrea Cook, DoE Deborah McWhinney, QA2 Francesca Bonino, ESM Ramona Desole, EA	email	Feb / April 2020	Review / feedback (EMG on SR)
Post-report/EB	2-page synthesis brief	HQ, RB and CO	Informative	Andrea Cook, DoE Deborah McWhinney, QA2 Francesca Bonino, ESM Ramona Desole, EA	email	Jun-20	Dissemination of evaluation findings and conclusions
Throughout	Sections in brief/PPT or other briefing materials	HQ, RB and CO (as needed)	Informative & Strategic		Email, in-person interactions	As opportunities arise (roughly every 1.5 month)	Information about linkage to Strategy Evaluations and other new / ongoing Policy Evaluations

External Communications

When	What	To whom	From whom	How	Why
Phase of the synthesis plus planned month/year	Communication product/ information	Target organization or individual	Evaluation management, evaluation team, etc.	Communication means	Purpose of communication
TOR, Sept 2019	Final ToR	Public	OEV	Website	Public information
Reporting, edited version March 2020	Final report and Management Response	Public	OEV and RMP	Website	Public information
Evaluation Brief, April 2020	2-page evaluation brief	Board members and wider Public	OEV	Website	Public information
EB Annual Session, May 2020	Synthesis report	Board members	OEV & RMP	Formal presentation	For EB consideration

Annex 3: Methodology

This Annex describes the methodology adopted for the Synthesis. It also provides as requested some suggestions for Office of Evaluation as it continues to develop its synthesis approach.

Approach

As required by the Terms of Reference (ToR) (Annex 1), the primary two approaches adopted for the synthesis exercise were **systematic** and **inductive**. These were operationalised in practice as follows (Table 1):

Table 3: Approaches applied

SYSTEMATIC	Developing a structured analytical framework for the study, which helped ensure consistent and transparent extraction of evidence, and enabled findings to be fully traceable back to the body of evidence.
INDUCTIVE	Pre-defining an initial set of categories for analysis which corresponded to the analytical framework, but which allowed other important categories and themes to emerge as the evidence base consolidates. During the analytical process, categories were merged, adapted or adjusted in response to higher- or aggregate-level themes emerging (see para. 8)

1. Data sources

The primary data sources for the Synthesis exercise were the nine policy evaluations, their management responses, and relevant WFP policies and Strategic Plans. Additional information applied included Annual Performance Reports, Audits, Annual Evaluation Reports, other WFP evaluations, policy formulation and implementation guidance, and other items of WFP corporate information. The synthesis also applied data extracted from WFP's internal database of the implementation of evaluation recommendations and from 29 key informant interviews with stakeholders such as the study's Reference Group, the Policy Cycle Task Force and Senior Regional Programme/Policy Advisers from four Regional Bureaux (Panama, Cairo, Nairobi and Bangkok) (see Annex 3 for list of names).

2. Analytical framework

A structured analytical framework was prepared for data extraction. The framework was constructed around the four main questions for the synthesis, as outlined in the ToR, namely:

- i) What are the common themes, systemic issues, and potential opportunities most recurrently highlighted within and across policy domains in WFP? Have these elements been reflected in the WFP Strategic Plans (SP) and other normative and strategic documents? What implications does this have for the delivery of the current Strategic Plan?
- ii) What is the evidence on the relationship between the quality of policy-making, support to policy implementation and uptake of new or updated policy directions by WFP Divisions, Bureaux and Offices?
- iii) What is the evidence on the relationship between learning and uptake from policy evaluations?
- iv) What is the evidence on the extent of the response by management to policy evaluations' recommendations?

The fields within the synthesis framework (Table 2) were developed from:

- Early review of the nine policy evaluations included in the synthesis, the WFP 2011 Policy Formulation (and the Office of Evaluation-issued Top 10 Lessons for Policy Quality);
- Early review of other key documentation, including relevant Strategic Plans for the 2011-2019 period, management responses, Annual Evaluation Reports and other sources;
- An initial call with OEV to clarify intended emphases, important themes etc.

Table 4: Initial set of analytical fields

Q1: Common themes, systemic issues, and potential opportunities in WFP policy domains in relation to WFP Strategic Plans and other normative and strategic documents
Coherence of policies with key external normative frameworks
Coherence with/key themes in relation to relevant WFP Strategic Plans, considering coverage periods
Contributions to SDGs 2 and 17, and to other SDGs where feasible
Approval and scrutiny process, including WFP Executive Board
Interlinkage across policy areas in WFP (policy coherence)
Aggregate performance in relation to results achieved and any consistent areas of underperformance in results
Attention to gender in policy formulation and implementation
Attention to the humanitarian principles in policy formulation and implementation
Attention to AAP in policy formulation and implementation
Other key theme, issue, systemic concern or opportunity
Q2: Quality of policy-making, policy implementation and uptake of policy directions by WFP Divisions, Bureaux and Offices
Trigger/rationale for policy development
Evidence/research base of policy - Use of relevant analyses and evaluation findings
Clear vision and theory of change articulated
Clearly defined scope and priorities
Consultation basis for policy development
Senior management/Executive Board engagement in Policy development
Results orientation of Policy (presence and use of results framework)
Financial and human resource commitment to policy implementation
Accountability frameworks for Policy implementation
Presence and use of action plan or implementation strategy
Availability of guidance and tools to support implementation
Use of communication and dissemination strategy
Ownership of policy across WFP
Take-up of Policy directions in HQ, Regional Bureau and Country Office strategies and plans
Other (as emerging)
Q3: Learning and uptake from policy evaluations
Reflection of policy evaluation findings in corporate reports, strategies and plans
Use of evaluation recommendations/management responses in corporate reports, strategies and plans
Factors in policy uptake – internal
Factors in policy uptake – external
Other (as emerging)
Q4: Extent of the response by management to policy evaluations recommendations
Acceptance of evaluation recommendations in management responses (number of accepted/partially accepted/not accepted)
Extent of implementation of recommendations (database/interviews)
Other (as emerging)

3. Data extraction

Data was accordingly plotted in systematically from the nine evaluations against the analytical fields, helped by the common structure and approach employed by OEV to its policy evaluations. An inclusive approach was adopted, integrating data that was in some cases only tangentially applicable to the analytical field, but which might help nuance/refine analytical categories, as analysis progressed (see para. 7 below)

The synthesis team considered the potential use of electronic data gathering tools for data extraction. However, given **a)** a comparatively short timeline for Synthesis preparation (with the full document due at the end of January 2020), **b)** the comparatively limited nature of the evidence base (nine policy evaluations, associated management responses and additional relevant data sources) and **c)** the inductive approach to be adopted, opted to apply standard 'manual' approaches to data extraction. This approach proved appropriate for the scale of the exercise, also allowing the Synthesis team in-depth knowledge of each evaluation, following manual data extraction.

4. Refinement/adaptation of analytical fields

As analysis progressed, and as data from the evaluations themselves was complemented by that of other evidence streams (see Table 2 below), analytical categories were gradually refined. This did not involve the deletion/merging/adaptation of any categories, on the rationale that a comprehensive approach would reduce the risk of excluding data, and since the original categories held their relevance in terms of data extraction.

5. Additional analytical fields

Analytical fields added to the original set (in Table 2) were as follows:

Table 5: Additional analytical fields

Q1: Common themes, systemic issues, and potential opportunities in WFP policy domains in relation to WFP Strategic Plans and other normative and strategic documents
Conceptual basis
Function/role of policy for WFP
Nature of policy document for WFP
Evolution of policy/relevant issues over time
Encouragement of CPs/partners to deliver policies
Q2: Quality of policy-making, policy implementation and uptake of policy directions by WFP Divisions, Bureaux and Offices
Role of leadership in policy implementation
Context analysis (as part of policy implementation)
Evidence generation as part of policy implementation
Innovation
Influence of policy on programming tools
Capacity development for staff as part of policy implementation
Synergies with other policies' implementation
Q4: Learning and uptake from policy evaluations
Policy architecture in WFP broadly

6. Collation and categorising of recommendations

Additionally, the policy evaluation recommendations were extracted and collated into a separate spreadsheet, to identify areas of common 'density' of recommendations, if these occurred (see section 2.3 of the main report), noting from Management Responses whether these had been accepted or not.

7. Analysis of other documentation

Relevant data from range of other documents was reviewed, as listed in paragraph 3. Findings were integrated into the analysis to shape the analytical themes emerging, and to substantiate or challenge as appropriate.

8. Implementation of recommendations

In order to assess the extent of evaluation recommendations, the synthesis reviewed data from WFP's internal ACE databases from December 2019, triangulated with WFP reports to the Executive Board. The number of actions implemented, in progress or still to start were recorded and the narratives against each action reviewed.

9. Interviews

A round of initial interviews took place in December. A subsequent mission to WFP Headquarters in Rome was conducted January 13th – 15th 2020 in order to interview key stakeholders in person. Other stakeholders were interviewed by phone during the period and subsequently between 15 January and 30th February 2020.

Table 3 below sets out the methods applied for each of the synthesis questions outlined above, along with data sources and methods and forms of analysis:

Table 5: Data sources, methods and forms of analysis

Synthesis questions	Data sources and methods	Forms of analysis
<p>1. Common themes, systemic issues, and potential opportunities in WFP policy domains in relation to WFP Strategic Plans and other normative and strategic documents</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Systematic data extraction (manually) from/content analysis of the nine policy evaluations, relevant policy documents and associated documentation against pre-defined and additional emergent analytical categories • Structured analysis of WFP Strategic Plans, Annual Evaluation Reports, Annual Performance Reports and associated documentation for the period, also against pre-defined and additional emergent analytical categories • Key informant interviews with WFP staff and management covering the key themes across policy areas and how these relate to WFP Strategic Plans and other corporate priorities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of common/recurring themes from policy evaluations/supporting evidence including interviews, and their mapping against key corporate priorities as articulated in Strategic Plans and other relevant corporate documents.
<p>2. Quality of policy-making, policy implementation and uptake of policy directions by WFP Divisions, Bureaux and Offices</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structured analysis of WFP policy formulation documentation, Strategic Plans, OEV paper on Top 10 Lessons for policy quality, Policy Formulation circular and other key corporate/external documentation, against pre-defined and additional emergent analytical categories • Systematic data extraction from/content analysis of the nine policy evaluations and associated documentation, also against pre-defined and additional emergent analytical categories • Key informant interviews with WFP staff and management covering the nature of policy formulation, implementation, monitoring and reporting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of factors affecting quality of policy-making (internal and external) and their influence on policy implementation and uptake at WFP HQ, Regional Bureau and Country Office levels.
<p>3. Learning and uptake from policy evaluations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content mapping of the recommendations of the nine policy evaluations • Systematic data extraction from/content analysis of management responses to the nine policy evaluations • Key informant interviews with WFP staff and management covering key areas of learning from policy evaluations and the implementation of learning across WFP strategizing and planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of common areas of recommendations across evaluations • Identification of common areas of learning from the nine policy evaluations • Mapping of areas of policy evaluation learning and uptake in WFP strategizing and operational planning • Mapping of findings on uptake and learning against areas 1. and 2. above
<p>4. Extent of management response to policy evaluations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Systematic data extraction from/content analysis of management responses to the nine policy evaluations • Data mining on evaluation uptake and use from WFP database of evaluation recommendations • Key informant interviews with WFP staff and management covering the utility/implementation of evaluation recommendations and progress against these; preparation of management responses. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of common areas of management response to recommendations from policy evaluations • Analysis of common areas of implementation and use of learning in WFP strategizing and operational planning.

Analytical processes: Data within the completed analytical framework, alongside data from interviews and documentary sources, was analysed according to density across the nine Policy evaluations and management responses. Qualitative content analysis was conducted to identify patterns, including similarities, divergences and contradictions in the findings.

The resulting higher-level themes under each of the four questions were identified, and data from the completed analytical framework mapped against it. This higher level analysis allowed for the identification and triangulation of higher level findings across the evidence sources, with a focus on systemic and strategic issues surrounding policy formulation and implementation of WFP. In particular, a corporate-level view was needed, given interview data on the policy cycle reform underway.

Validation of findings: The Synthesis report underwent several rounds of validation and feedback process to ensure both its substantive validity and its coherence with the WFP institutional environment. Following comment and revision by OEV, its content will be presented at a workshop attended by the WFP stakeholders, including the Internal Reference Group for the synthesis on 3 March 2020.⁴⁹ A final Draft 4 will be circulated to the Executive Management Group before its presentation to WFP’s Executive Board in June 2020.

Suggestions for Synthesis processes

OEV states in its ToR for this exercise that it has adopted a responsive approach since 2017 to synthesis selection. In order to provide stakeholders across WFP with starting points for consideration, the following issues are presented for consideration.

DEFINING 'SYNTHESIS'	Academic literature proposes a highly diverse range of 'synthesis' products (Barnett-Page and Thomas, 2009; Soilemezi and Linceviciute 2018). It may be worthwhile to define for WFP either a single definition of a 'synthesis' product, or prepare a typology, to provide WFP staff with clear parameters.
DEFINE 'WHEN SYNTHESIS'	Since synthesis approaches are not consistently useful in all circumstances, it may be useful to define for staff 'when a synthesis may add value' to WFP work. Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To summarise the evidence base in support of programmatic choices/ Country Strategic Plan preparation • To support a wider-ranging review or evaluation across a strategic, thematic or policy area • As products in themselves, to inform internal and external stakeholders on evidence within a given area
DEFINING THE CONDITIONS FOR SYNTHESIS	It may also be beneficial to clarify the conditions for synthesis for staff, since certain parameters need to be reliably in place before synthesis can be conducted. Specifically, a core 'set' of evidence with sufficient consistency to support analysis e.g. asking similar questions, applying similar methods, should be available.
METHODOLOGIES	Defining the methodological toolkit for syntheses according to 'type' and scale of Synthesis products may help WFP staff in undertaking them. Examples may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For smaller datasets, manual coding and data extraction may be appropriate • For larger datasets, electronic means of data coding e.g. ATLAS, Dedoose and others may be valuable • A combination of methods is often helpful, with electronic tools extracting data by applying predefined code, and higher-level analysis conducted manually
TYPES OF SYNTHESIS PRODUCT	Syntheses may respond to diverse needs. Potential products for WFP may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSP synthesis by region or theme (similar to the Regional syntheses of Operations Evaluations previously) • Strategic evaluation syntheses, which focus on particular areas of corporate functions e.g. human resourcing, capacity strengthening • Thematic syntheses which address areas of strategic importance e.g. Partnerships; SDG 17 contributions; • Areas of emerging strategic significant e.g. WFP's work on the triple nexus including peacebuilding/its engagement in food security and nutrition aspects of the development space

Annex 4: List stakeholders consulted and interviewed

Division/Unit/Bureau	Surname	Name	Functional role
CBT	Crossley	Kenn	Director
CBT	Nour	Tahir	Chief
CO Kenya	Conte	Annalisa	Country Director / Representative Kenya
GEN	Muiu	Kawinzi	Director
GEN	Paul	Jacqueline	Senior Gender Advisor
NUT	Rosenzweig	Jennifer	Chief, Knowledge Management
OEV	Cook	Andrea	Director of Evaluation
OEV	Duffy	Gaby	Senior Evaluation Officer
OEV	Luzot	Anne-Claire	Deputy Director
OEV	McWhinney	Deborah	Senior Evaluation Officer
OEV	Thoulozan	Julie	Senior Evaluation Officer
Office of AED-PD	Martino	Chad	Executive Manager
PG	Feeney	Catherine	Senior Executive Manager
PG	Ranitzsch	Frederick	Special Advisor to the Assistant Executive Director
PGR	Hochstetter	Stephanie	Director, Rome-based Agencies & CFS
PRO	Kaatrud	David	Director
PRO	Yohendran	Deborah	Policy and Programme Officer
PRO/OSZI	Lukyanova	Maria	Senior Programme Officer
PRO/OSZI	De Margerie	Jean-Pierre	Deputy Director
PRO/OSZIS	Laughton	Sarah	Chief
PRO/OSZPH	Richards	Rebecca	Chief
PRO/OSZPH	Wood	Jesse	Chief
PRO/OSZPH	Davies	Owen	Operational Access Team Leader
PRO/OSZPH	Duval	Annelaure	Protection Programme Policy Officer
RBB	Kramer	Ellen	Regional Programme Adviser
RBC	Hollema	Siemon	Senior Programme Adviser
RBC	Lamade	Rebecca	Regional Programme Adviser
RBD	Affif	William	Senior Regional Policy & Programme Adviser
RBJ	Craigue	Rose	Senior Regional Nutrition Adviser
RBN	Smith	Ross	Senior Regional Programme Adviser
RBP	Testolin	Giorgia	Senior Programme Adviser
RMP	Pearce	Jane	Director
RMPS	Benoit	Elise	Chief
SBP	Burbano	Carmen	Director
SBP	Lloyd-Evans	Edward	Policy and Research Officer

ACRONYMS

AAP	Accountability to affected populations
APR	Annual Performance Reports
CBT	Cash-based transfers
CP	Cooperating Partner
CRF	Corporate Results Framework
FLA	Field Level Agreements
GEN	Gender Office
HQ	Headquarter
IRG	Internal Reference Group
IRM	Integrated Roadmap
KIIs	Key informant interviews
NGO	Non-governmental organization
OEV	Office of Evaluation
OSF	School Feeding Office
OSZIS	Safety Nets and Social Protection Unit
PSEA	Protection from sexual exploitation and abuse
SP	Strategic Plan

ENDNOTES

¹ “Compendium of policies relating to the Strategic Plan” (WFP/EB.2/2019/4-H), para. 4.

² Ibid.

³ “WFP Policy Formulation” (WFP/EB.A/2011/5-B).

⁴ WFP. 2018. [Top 10 Lessons for Policy Quality in WFP](#).

⁵ The policy cycle task force is intended to become a working group by June 2020.

⁶ Chaired by the Director, Programme – Humanitarian and Development Division, overseen by the Assistant Executive Director, Programme and Policy Development.

⁷ “WFP Policy Formulation” (WFP/EB.A/2011/5-B); see also WFP. 2016. *Evaluation Policy (2016–2021)*.

⁸ WFP. 2020. [Terms of Reference, Synthesis of Evidence and Lessons from WFP’s Policy Evaluations \(2011–2019\)](#).

⁹ The policies on humanitarian principles and humanitarian access were evaluated jointly. Also to note that throughout the synthesis report:

- the Vouchers and Cash Transfers Policy is also referred to as the 2008 Cash and Voucher Policy Discussion Paper;
- the Capacity Development Policy is also referred to as the 2009 Capacity Development Policy Update;
- the Humanitarian Principles Policy and the Access in Humanitarian Contexts Policy are also referred to as the 2004 Policy Statement on Humanitarian Principles and the 2006 Policy Statement on Humanitarian Access; and
- the Update of WFP’s Safety Nets Policy is also referred to as the 2012 Safety Nets Policy Update.

¹⁰ WFP. 2018. [Top 10 Lessons for Policy Quality in WFP](#).

¹¹ The Annex 1 gives an overview of some of the analytical fields that emerged and were used to analyse the policy documents included in the synthesis.

¹² Despite being designated as something other than a policy (e.g. a “strategy” or “update”), documents such as the WFP Corporate Partnership Strategy (2014–2017) were included in the WFP policy compendium and, as a result, underwent policy evaluation.

¹³ Cash and vouchers, corporate partnerships, humanitarian principles/access, school feeding.

¹⁴ All the main synthesis findings relating to policy coherence; corporate leadership and ownership; and policy design and implementation are also presented in the annex 1.

¹⁵ In that it did not expand on the 2007 directive authorizing pilots for cash and vouchers up to USD 3 million in value.

¹⁶ WFP. 2018. [Top 10 Lessons for Policy Quality in WFP](#).

¹⁷ Key distinctions include the “big picture” level of a theory of change, including external processes that influence change, while a logic model focuses on specific change at the programme (implementation) level, often one element of the wider theory of change. See Ann Murray Brown. 2016). [What is this thing called Theory of Change?](#)

²⁰ WFP’s policies on nutrition, HIV and AIDS and humanitarian protection, as well as the strategy “Pro-Smallholder Food Assistance: A Strategy for Boosting Smallholder Resilience and Market Access Worldwide”, were all produced after the 2009 gender policy. The 2009 school feeding policy was developed concurrently.

¹⁹ Capacity development, corporate partnerships, safety nets.

²⁰ Gender, humanitarian protection, nutrition.

²¹ In interviews, several WFP key informants expressed specific concerns about the current process for preparing management responses, including limited cross-functional engagement in preparing them; lack of coordination in the preparation process, particularly with regard to cross-cutting topics; and limited dissemination of responses once prepared.

²² Weaknesses in follow-up on evaluation recommendations were also identified by the United Nations Evaluation Group’s 2015 peer review of the WFP evaluation function. Currently, work is under way, led by the Resource Management Department, to develop a consolidated platform for documenting and tracking all audit and evaluation management responses and implementation of follow-up actions, with the system planned to become operational in September 2020.

²³ Drawing on data from the WFP annual consultation on evaluation (ACE) database; evaluation management responses; subsequent evaluations; and a 2019 report on the implementation status of evaluation recommendations (WFP/EB.A/2019/7-D).

²⁴ Capacity development, cash and vouchers, gender, nutrition.

²⁵ See, for example: WFP. 2018. "Summary evaluation report on WFP's policies on humanitarian principles and access in humanitarian contexts during the period 2004–2017." (WFP/EB.A/2018/7-C).

²⁶ Noted also in Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network. 2019. [MOPAN 2017–18 assessments: World Food Programme](#).

²⁷ The high-level evaluation questions are: 1) What is the quality of the Policy? 2) What were the results of the Policy? 3) What were the factors that affected the implementation and results of the policy?

²⁸ WFP/EB.A/2011/5-B

²⁹ Ibid. para 14.

³⁰ The Compendium of policies relating to the Strategic Plan is intended to guide the work of the Secretariat and the Board; it is updated annually to reflect any changes in the policies listed in it.

³¹ Policies approved before 2010 are progressively included in OEV's workplan based on assessment of their continued relevance to WFP's work or potential to contribute to new policy development

³² This also entails that evaluation syntheses generally do not include extensive field-based primary data collection activities.

³³ Canadian Evaluation Society (2009), and US GAO (1992).

³⁴ For example, it is worth noting the commitment reflected in the WFP Policy on Country Strategic Plans to evaluate all CSPs to generate evidence on results and lessons to inform subsequent country-level support. See WFP/EB.2/2016/4-C/1/Rev.1, para 94.

³⁵ MOPAN 2017-2018 Organisational Performance brief, page 4.

³⁶ See for example the 2017 Annual Evaluation Report.

³⁷ See for example WFP Annual Evaluation Report 2015, pp.8-11.

³⁸ WFP/EB.1/2018/5-C/Add.1

³⁹ The synthesis was presented to the Executive Board in June 2019. WFP/EB.A/2019/7-C Synthesis of WFP's country portfolio evaluations in Africa (2016-2018).

⁴⁰ In 2017, OEV engaged in a lessons learning exercise focusing on Policy Evaluations, and produced a guidance note on *Top 10 lessons for Policy Quality in WFP*, which has recently been updated to include evidence from policy evaluations until 2018. This Note is meant to provide WFP stakeholders with a set of practical tips on ensuring high-quality policy design, and to increase the likelihood of policy successful implementation. The note is available at:

<https://www.wfp.org/publications/top-10-lessons-policy-quality-wfp>

⁴¹ This will also be done expanding and adding nuances to the analysis contained in the note on Top 10 Lessons for Policy Quality in WFP issued by OEV in 2018 and revised in 2019.

⁴² The group also includes the Evaluation Offices of the other Rome Based Agencies.

⁴³ The synthesis can also look at other normative documents beyond the SP. Given the timeframe of the synthesis from 2011 to 2019, the following strategic plans should be looked at: WFP Strategic Plan 2008-2013; WFP Strategic Plan 2014-2017 ; WFP Strategic Plan 2017-2021.

⁴⁴ Some preliminary analysis on the the hierarchy of normative work in WFP was already included in the OEV note on the Top 10 Lessons for policy work in WFP. This synthesis is expected to update, expand and add nuances to that analysis.

⁴⁵ This is with the understanding that not all policies in WFP have strategies relating to them.

⁴⁶ The WFP database currently in use to upload and track evaluation recommendations and their related management response.

⁴⁷ As outlined in the Section 1.2.

⁴⁸ The assumption being that each policy evaluation text and related content of the management response underwent multiple rounds of reviews, inputs, stakeholder feedback and quality assurance during the drafting and finalisation stage before submission to the Executive Board.

⁴⁹ In light of travel limitations, all IRG members from the Regional Bureaux did not attend in person the stakeholders' feedback workshop on March 3rd 2020 in Rome. Rather, they were consulted to share feedback and inputs to be considered during the finalisation process of the synthesis, through an e-meeting with the participation of the synthesis Team Leader.