

Evaluation of Tajikistan WFP Country Strategic Plan 2019-2024

Summary Terms of Reference



SAVING
LIVES
CHANGING
LIVES

Country Strategic Plan Evaluations (CSPEs) encompass the entirety of WFP activities during a specific period. Their purpose is twofold: 1) to provide evaluation evidence and learning on WFP's performance for country-level strategic decisions, specifically for developing the next Country Strategic Plan and 2) to provide accountability for results to WFP stakeholders

Subject and focus of the evaluation

WFP has been present in Tajikistan since 1993, shifting from emergency response initiated during the civil war to development activities which are evolving from direct delivery to supporting the Government's efforts to address food insecurity and malnutrition.

Between January 2018 and June 2019, WFP operated in Tajikistan through a transitional interim Country Strategic Plan (T-ICSP). The T-ICSP had a total budget of USD 28,463,468 and aimed at reaching 539,550 direct beneficiaries through food and cash-based transfers.

The current CSP (July 2019 - June 2024), was designed around four strategic outcomes and five activities providing school meals, treatment of malnutrition, asset creation and livelihood activities, and capacity strengthening for social protection programmes and emergency preparedness. In order to better respond to the Covid-19 pandemic, the CSP was revised to include a new crisis response strategic outcome (SO5) together with a new activity. The overall budget of the Tajikistan CSP was increased to USD 84.92 million aiming at reaching 963,400 beneficiaries through food and cash-based transfers over a period of five years. While originally foreseen to end in 2024, the CSP is expected to end in 2022 in order to align the CSP cycle with the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework.

The evaluation will assess WFP contributions to strategic outcomes of the T-ICSP and the ongoing CSP, establishing plausible causal relations between the outputs of WFP activities, the implementation process, the operational environment and changes observed at the outcome level, including any unintended consequences.

It will also focus on adherence to humanitarian principles, gender equality, protection and accountability to affected populations.

The evaluation will adopt standard UNEG and OECD/DAC evaluation criteria, namely: relevance, coherence, efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability as well as connectedness, and coverage as applicable.

Objectives and stakeholders of the evaluation

WFP evaluations serve the dual objectives of accountability and learning.

The evaluation will seek the views of, and be useful to, a range of WFP's internal and external stakeholders and presents an opportunity for national, regional and corporate learning. The primary user of the evaluation findings and recommendations will be the WFP Country Office and its stakeholders to inform the design of the new Country Strategic Plan.

The evaluation report will be presented at the Executive Board session in November 2022.

Key evaluation questions

The evaluation will address the following four key questions:

QUESTION 1: To what extent is WFP's strategic position, role and specific contribution based on country priorities and people's needs as well as WFP's strengths?

The evaluation will assess the extent to which the T-ICSP and CSP are relevant to national policies, plans, strategies and goals, including achievement of the national Sustainable Development Goals. It will further assess the extent to which the T-ICSP and CSP address the needs of the most vulnerable people in the country to ensure that no one is left behind; whether WFP's strategic positioning has remained relevant throughout the implementation of the T-ICSP and CSP in light of changing context, national capacities and needs; and to what extent the T-ICSP and CSP are coherent and aligned with the wider UN cooperation framework and include appropriate strategic partnerships based on the comparative advantage of WFP in the country.

QUESTION 2: What is the extent and quality of WFP's specific contribution to T-ICSP and CSP strategic outcomes in Tajikistan?

The evaluation will assess the extent to which WFP delivered the expected outputs and contributed to the expected strategic outcomes of the T-ICSP and CSP, including the achievement of cross-cutting aims (humanitarian principles, protection, accountability to affected populations, gender equality and other equity considerations). It will also assess the extent to which the achievements of the T-ICSP and CSP

are likely to be sustainable; and whether the T-ICSP and CSP facilitated more strategic linkages between humanitarian, development and, where appropriate, peace work.

QUESTION 3: To what extent has WFP's used its resources efficiently in contributing to T-ICSP and CSP outputs and strategic outcomes in Tajikistan?

The evaluation will assess whether outputs were delivered within the intended timeframe; the appropriateness of coverage and targeting of interventions; cost-efficient delivery of assistance; and whether alternative, more cost-effective measures were considered.

QUESTION 4: What are the factors that explain WFP performance and the extent to which it has made the strategic shift expected through the T-ICSP and CSP?

The evaluation will assess the extent to which WFP analyzed and used existing evidence on hunger challenges, food security and nutrition issues in the country to develop the T-ICSP and CSP. It will also assess the extent to which the T-ICSP and CSP led to: the mobilization of adequate, predictable and flexible resources; to the development of appropriate partnerships and collaboration with other actors; greater flexibility in dynamic operational contexts; and how these factors affect results. Finally, the evaluation will seek to identify any other organizational and contextual factors influencing WFP performance and the strategic shift expected by the T-ICSP and CSP.

Scope, methodology and ethical considerations

The unit of analysis is the T-ICSP, approved by the Executive Director in August 2017 and the CSP, approved by the WFP Executive Board in May 2019, as well as any subsequent approved budget revisions.

The evaluation covers all WFP activities (including cross-cutting results) from January 2018 until August 2021.

The evaluation will adopt a mixed methods approach and a variety of primary and secondary sources, including desk review, key informant interviews, surveys, and focus groups discussions. Systematic triangulation across different sources and methods will be carried out to validate findings and avoid bias in the evaluative judgement.

In light of recent developments related to the COVID19 pandemic, the evaluation will be conducted partially remotely. Depending on how the situation evolves, the data collection phase will be conducted through either fully or partially in-country fieldwork. Should the contextual and security situation allow it, a final stakeholder workshop will be held in Dushanbe.

The evaluation conforms to WFP and 2020 UNEG ethical guidelines. This includes, but is not limited to, ensuring informed consent, protecting privacy, confidentiality and

anonymity of participants, ensuring cultural sensitivity, respecting the autonomy of participants, ensuring fair recruitment of participants (including women and socially excluded groups) and ensuring that the evaluation results in no harm to participants or their communities.

Roles and responsibilities

EVALUATION TEAM: The evaluation will be conducted by a team of independent consultants with a mix of relevant expertise related to the Tajikistan CSPE (i.e. school meals and nutrition, institutional capacity strengthening, climate change and resilience building, as well as gender equality and empowerment of women and accountability to affected populations).

OEV EVALUATION MANAGER: The evaluation will be managed by Soo Mee Baumann, Evaluation Officer in the WFP Office of Evaluation. She will be the main interlocutor between the evaluation team, represented by the team leader, and WFP counterparts, to ensure a smooth implementation process and compliance with OEV quality standards for process and content. Second level quality assurance will be provided by Sergio Lenci, Senior Evaluation Officer.

An **Internal Reference Group** of a cross-section of WFP stakeholders from relevant business areas at different WFP levels will be consulted throughout the evaluation process to review and provide feedback on evaluation products.

The Deputy Director of Evaluation will approve the final versions of all evaluation products.

STAKEHOLDERS: WFP stakeholders at country, regional and HQ level are expected to engage throughout the evaluation process to ensure a high degree of utility and transparency. External stakeholders, such as beneficiaries, government, donors, implementing partners and other UN agencies will be consulted during the evaluation process.

Communication

Preliminary findings will be shared with WFP stakeholders in the Country Office, the Regional Bureau and Headquarters during a debriefing session at the end of the data collection phase. A more in-depth debrief will be organized in September 2021 to inform the new CSP design process. A country stakeholder workshop will be held in November 2021 to inform the new CSP design and to ensure a transparent evaluation process and promote ownership of the findings and preliminary recommendations by country stakeholders.

Evaluation findings will be actively disseminated, and the final evaluation report will be publicly available on WFP's website.

Timing and key milestones

Inception Phase: May – August 2021

Data collection: August – September 2021

Debriefing: September 2021

Reports: September 2021 – March 2022

Stakeholder Workshop: November 2021

Executive Board: November 2022