

Evaluation of Sri Lanka WFP Country Strategic Plan 2018-2022

Summary Terms of Reference



World Food
Programme

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

The WFP Country Strategic Plan (CSP) for Sri Lanka was approved by the Executive Board in November 2017 for five years (2018-2022). The CSP pursues four strategic outcomes (SOs) as follows: SO1: Crisis-affected people have access to food all year round; SO2: school-age children in food-insecure areas have access to food all year round; SO3: children under 5, adolescent girls and women of reproductive age have improved nutrition by 2025; and, SO4: vulnerable communities and smallholder farmers have strengthened livelihoods and resilience in the face of shocks and stresses all year round.

Through this CSP, WFP planned to shift from direct implementation to policy engagement and capacity strengthening, including progressively moving from in-kind/cash food assistance to transitioning into the national school meals programme and increasing technical assistance. This is reflected in the gradual decrease of planned beneficiary numbers from 188,000 in 2018 to 114,000 in 2020.

The overall CSP budget as approved by the Executive Board amounts to USD 46.8 million.

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 CSP is 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 CSP addresses 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 CSP in light of changing context, national capacities and needs; and to what extent the CSP is coherent and aligned with the wider UN cooperation framework and includes 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 CSP strategic outcomes in Sri Lanka?

The evaluation will assess the extent to which WFP delivered the expected outputs and contributed to the expected strategic outcomes of the 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 CSP are likely to be sustainable; and whether the 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 CSP outputs and strategic outcomes? 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 by the 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 CSP. It will also assess the extent to which the 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 CSP.

Scope, methodology and ethical considerations

The unit of analysis is the Country Strategic Plan. The evaluation will cover all of WFP activities (including cross-cutting results) for the period 2018 to mid-2021. The evaluation will also take into consideration activities of the CO in the year immediately preceding the CSP; this will help understand whether the current CSP builds on or departs from the previous activities, and thus help better explain and assess the strategic shifts, if any, manifested in the design of the current CSP.

The evaluation will also cover adherence to humanitarian principles, gender and protection issues and accountability to affected populations.

The evaluation will adopt the norms and standards of the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) and the evaluation criteria of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD/DAC), namely: relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability and coherence.

The evaluation will adopt a mixed methods approach using 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 the developments related to the COVID19 pandemic, the inception mission will be conducted remotely. Depending on how the situation evolves, data collection and the final Stakeholder Workshop will be held remotely or in Colombo.

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 Sri Lanka CSPE (i.e. nutrition, school feeding, resilience, livelihoods, climate change and capacity strengthening).

OEV EVALUATION MANAGER: The evaluation will be managed by Hansdeep Khaira, Evaluation Officer, in the WFP Office of Evaluation. He 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 Julie Thoulouzan, 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, NGO 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 November 2021 to inform the new CSP design process. A country stakeholder workshop will be held in March 2022 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: July-September 2021

Data collection: October-November 2021

Remote Debriefing: November 2021

Reports: November 2021-April 2022

Stakeholder Workshop: March 2022

Executive Board: November 2022