

Evaluation for evidence-based decision making | WFP Office of Evaluation

Evaluation Quality Assurance System (EQAS)

## Management Response from WFP Malawi Country Office to the recommendations of the decentralized evaluation of the Food Assistance for Assets (FFA) in the Context of Malawi from [https://docs.wfp.org/api/documents/WFP-0000132505/download/] December 2014 to June 2019

- 1. This document, finalized in November 2021, presents the management response to the recommendations of the evaluation of the Food Assistance for Assets (FFA) in the Context of Malawi.
- 2. The evaluation, which was commissioned by WFP Country Office (CO) Malawi, covers the period December 2014–June 2019. FFA has been a core intervention in WFP support for those recovering from, or at risk of, dry spells, flooding, and natural resource deterioration, to build resilience and support graduation from food insecurity. The evaluation is important at this point for several key reasons. It contributes to identifying inclusive and effective scaling-up strategies to inform implementation of the CSP and ensure strategic shifts in programming where necessary. The results will also help refine WFP programming and enable donors, development, and international partners to be better informed and more supportive of integrated approaches to resilience programming, including within the context of COVID-19. The evaluation therefore has both accountability and learning objectives, with greater emphasis on the learning function. The main internal (WFP) stakeholders and users of the evaluation include: the WFP Malawi Country Office (CO); the WFP Regional Bureau (RB), Johannesburg; WFP Headquarters (HQ); WFP HQ-based Office of Evaluation (OEV); and the WFP Executive Board.

- 3. The evaluation was designed to assess FFA against the following Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's Development Assistance Committee (OECD DAC) evaluation criteria: Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Impact and Sustainability. The evaluation answers five main evaluation questions, as indicated in the Terms of Reference (ToR). The evaluation was designed to ensure gender mainstreaming across all evaluation objectives and evaluation questions (EQs), as well as ensure the ability to analyse differences within and between districts, to try to tease out some of these potentially incorrect assumptions as well as discern potential pathways for addressing them in future FFA programming. Gender issues are very closely linked to resilience, not only because shocks and crises affect men and women differently, but also because women's roles in family life and household nutrition, and frequently in essential aspects of household food security, contribute to the resilience of the whole family.
- 4. The evaluation made nine key recommendations. The target group for each recommendation is clearly identified. The recommendations are structured by type: operational or strategic. The matrix sets out whether WFP agrees, partially agrees or disagrees with the recommendations and sub-recommendations. It presents the planned (or taken) actions, responsibilities and timelines.

Recommendations and related Sub-recommendations (Deadline) [as per evaluation report – one (sub-) recommendation per row, deadline in brackets.]	Recommendation and Sub- Recommendation Lead (Supporting Offices/Divisions) [Name of responsible WFP office/division (/possibly external stakeholder in the case of Joint Evaluation). Names of supporting WFP offices/divisions and/or external stakeholders if any in brackets.]	Management Response [Is (sub-) recommendation Agreed, Partially agreed or Not agreed? If Partially agreed or Not agreed, provide a brief reason for this.]	Actions to be taken [Briefly state what action(s) will be taken to address each sub- recommendation – one action per row.]	Action Lead (Supporting Offices/Divisions) [Name of responsible WFP office/division/unit. Names of supporting WFP offices/divisions and/or external stakeholders if any in brackets.]	Action Deadline [Month and year – not to exceed related (sub- )recommendation deadline.]
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Operational recommendations to be addressed in the short term by WFP

Recommendation 1 (Medium priority): Given the mismatch between the FFA programme schedule and the timing of the 'hungry gap', WFP should explore possibilities for extending payment schedules to cover the critical lean months of January-March, making any decisions to shift payments in collaboration with participants. WFP needs to weigh up the trade-offs inherent in meeting food needs later at the expense of providing funds for the timely purchase of productive inputs, such as improved seeds and fertiliser. They should also bear in mind the feasibility of deferring payments before the roll-out digital transfers, and the potential knock-on effects on VSL. Expanding irrigation coverage may also help to close the hunger gap and put the beneficiaries on a path of real transformation, notwithstanding the need to first address land ownership issues.	WFP Malawi Integrated Resilience Unit, Food for Assets (FFA) Team (Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping (VAM) Unit; Head of Programmes; Government of Malawi's Adaptation Fund; Ministry of Agriculture)	Partially agreed WFP Malawi partially agrees with this recommendation because it is subject to available financial resources as well as the ability to shift our programmatic approach; while an excellent recommendation, it may be easier to implement in-line with the second iteration of our CSP	1.1 The CO will continue to explore the optimal times to intervene as well as the questions of cash frequency (more regularly versus in cycles) and adjust its programming accordingly. This will involve engaging with participants vis-à-vis deferring payments in part or whole to align with the lean season period.	WFP Malawi integrated Resilience Unit [WFP Malawi VAM, CBT and M&E Units; RBJ Resilience and VAM Units; Ministry of Agriculture; Government of Malawi's Adaptation Fund, Ministry of Land]	June 2022
			1.2 The CO will engage participants on the possibility of	WFP Malawi Integrated Resilience Unit	July 2022

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			deferring payment in part or whole to align with the lean season. This is based on WFP's onging assessment of the feasibility of using electronic transfers and making this a more viable option for the 2022 FFA cycle. In parallel WFP will be engaging with financial stakeholders on suitable digital solutions for deferring payments. 1.3 The CO will work with the Malawi Government and	[WFP Malawi VAM and CBT Units, WFP's Cooperating Partners] WFP Malawi integrated Resilience Unit	December 2023

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			addressing challenges around scaling up irrigation for smallholder farmers throughout the remainder of the CSP	[RBJ Resilience Unit, Ministry of Agriculture]	
Recommendation 2 (Medium priority): FFA should explore additional ways for dealing with new threats and/or shocks, such as fall armyworm, posing a significant threat to the sustainability of agricultural interventions working with UN and other development partners. WFP should continue linking with other programmes providing support and training in effective and accessible solutions/treatments, including extra work on prevention and treatment in the fields and continuing to include coverage in the area yield index insurance.	WFP Malawi Integrated Resilience Unit, Food for Assets (FFA) Team; Head of Programmes [Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping (VAM) Unit; Head of Programmes; Government of Malawi's Adaptation Fund; Ministry of Agriculture]	Agreed	2.1 WFP will explore partnership opportunities with actors including the Min. of Agriculture, FAO, Extension Officers/District Councils, and other stakeholders in the field to advocate for the promotion of integrated pest management measures. Specifically, for Fall Army Worm (FAW)	WFP Malawi Integrated Resilience Unit [WFP Malawi Head of Programmes; WFP Malawi VAM Unit; Government of Malawi's Adaptation Fund; Ministry of Agriculture; RBJ Resilience Unit; FAO; Government Extension Officers/District Councils]	June 2022

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			<ul> <li>WFP will be advocating with the stakeholders for the roll-out of early detection (including hotlines for reporting incidents of FAW) and the, development of improved control and treatment measures for FAW.</li> <li>2.2 WFP will continue to promotion the area yield index insurance, which includes multiple threats including FAW, beyond WFPs direct beneficiary caseloads to non-targeted farmers within the 8 targeted districts and</li> </ul>	WFP Malawi Resilience Unit [RBJ Resilience Unit; Ministry of Agriculture; Government of Malawi's Adaptation Fund]	June 2022

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			will continue to advocate for the full integrated risk management package with relevant ministries, donors, I/NNGOs, academia and the private sector.		
Recommendation 3 (High priority): There is a need for an agency to be an intermediary in implementing weather insurance in communities. WFP should play this role – as underwriter and 'honest broker', linked to implementation of the R4 insurance component – given the context of barriers to market access and lack of experience, knowledge or understanding by participants of insurance as a mechanism to manage risk.	WFP Malawi Integrated Resilience Unit; Head of Programmes; Government of Malawi's Adaptation Fund; Ministry of Agriculture; DCCMS; African Risk Capacity (guidance only) [Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping (VAM) Unit; Head of	Agreed	3.1 WFP will continue to work closely with the Insurance Association of Malawi members, PULA and the different re- insurers to improve the ownership of all mobilization, registration and management processes for the Area Yield Insurance	WFP Malawi Resilience Unit [WFP Malawi CBT team; WFP's Cooperating Partners responsible for insurance products; Insurance companies; RBJ Resilience Unit; African Risk Capacity; Insurance Team at HQ; Ministry of Agriculture; DCCMS; Government of	December 2022

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	Programmes; Government of Malawi's Adaptation Fund; Ministry of Agriculture; DCCMS; African Risk Capacity] (guidance only)		<ul> <li>(AYI) -product to improve overall access for all farmers and to increase for long-term sustainability of crop insurance beyond</li> <li>WFPs CSP. This will also involve better definition of the roles and responsibilities of</li> <li>WFP in crop insurance to the private sector entities.</li> <li>3.2 WFP will provide technical support to the insurance sector and all stakeholders to develop standardized messaging (tailored to the targeted</li> </ul>	Malawi's Adaptation Fund] WFP Malawi Resilience Unit [WFP Malawi CBT team; WFP's Cooperating Partners responsible for	March 2022

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			community leaders and small holder farmers), including the joint development of clear guidelines for the Management of AYII or equivalent insurance products.	insurance products; insurance companies]	
			3.3 WFP in collaboration with Cooperating Partners and selected insurance providers will conduct robust insurance trainings to ensure that beneficiaries understand the packages, trigger mechanisms, and the overall functionality	WFP Malawi Resilience Unit [WFP Malawi CBT team; WFP's Cooperating Partners responsible for insurance products; Insurance companie; RBJ Resilience Unit; African Risk Capacity; Insurance Team at HQ; Ministry of Agriculture; DCCMS;	March 2022

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	WED Malauti Integrated		of the insurance products.	Government of Malawi's Adaptation Fund]	lung 2022
Recommendation 4 (High priority): WFP needs to address unequal power relations between participants and programme staff and other stakeholders, such as private sector actors, that may result in programme participants acting in ways they believe to be to their detriment, for example purchasing too-expensive equipment and inputs. This can be achieved through careful monitoring of partners (COVID- 19 restrictions permitting), establishing, and communicating an efficient and effective grievance mechanism system, and clear communication of	WFP Malawi Integrated Resilience Unit, SAMS Unit, Gender and Protection Unit, Cash- Based Transfers Team, VAM/M&E Units; Head of Programmes; RBJ Gender Advisor	Agreed	4.1 WFP will update the tools for process monitoring prior to the 2022 FFA cycle to address power dynamics and guide staff to identify issues as they arise.	WFP Malawi M&E Unit; [WFP Malawi Resilience Unit; CBT team; WFP's Cooperating Partners; WFP Malawi Gender, Protection, and Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP) Unit, RBJ Resilience Unit; African	June 2022

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participants' obligations under the programme. Faster transition to e- payments and promoting financial and digital inclusions would help to address this, as well as problems such as delays in cash payments, resulting in more impactful FFA implementation	(Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping (VAM) Unit; Head of Programmes; Government of Malawi's Adaptation Fund; Ministry of Local			Risk Capacity; Insurance Team at HQ; Ministry of Agriculture; DCCMS; Government of Malawi's Adaptation Fund]	
	Government; Extension Officers; District Councils)		4.2 WFP—via its Field Staff and Cooperating Partners—will conduct rigorous process and output- level monitoring throughout all FFA activities.	WFP Malawi M&E Unit [WFP Malawi Resilience Unit; Gender, Protection, and Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP) Unit; CBT team; WFP's Cooperating Partners; Malawi [RB] Resilience Unit, RBJ Gender; African Risk Capacity; Insurance Team at HQ; Ministry of Agriculture; DCCMS;	June 2022

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			4.3 WFP to implement a series of mitigating measures to address issues of power dynamics within communities including contracts with village chiefs, case follow-up led by District Councils and WFP field staff, trainings with beneficiaries on protection and PSEA, and collaboration with the Ministry of Local Government to address issues of unbalanced power	Government of Malawi's Adaptation Fund] WFP Malawi Gender, Protection, and Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP) Unit [WFP Malawi Resilience Unit; WFP Malawi M&E Unit; RBJ Resilience Unit; Ministry of Local Government; Extension Officers; District Councils; Government of Malawi's Adaptation Fund]	December 2022

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			dynamics within the communities		
			4.4 WFP to continue to endeavor to use electronic transfers to the extent possible to mitigate payment delays, conducting financial literacy trainings with WFP beneficiaries as a key component as well as exploring the provision of mobile phones in areas with low cell phone penetration	WFP Malawi CBT team [WFP Malawi Integrated Resilience Unit; RBJ Resilience Unit; WFP Malawi VAM Unit; Standard Bank; Other financial service providers]	December 2022

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			4.4 WFP Malawi to implement a comprehensive community feedback and response mechanism (CFRM) that integrates call center services, suggestion boxes, and help desks + case resolution to ensure maximum accountability to beneficiaries	WFP Malawi Gender, Protection, and Accountability to Affected Populations Unit [Head of Programmes; Regional Gender/AAP Advisor; Call Center service provider; WFP Malawi M&E Unit]	June 2022

Strategic Recommendations (refer to longer-term engagement in effecting structural change in the broader landscape on Malawi, working with national government and other stakeholders, including donors, development partners, district government and private sector)

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The evaluation shows that households headed by women continue to lag behind male-headed households in terms of outcomes. Addressing strategic and structural barriers to Gender Equality and Women Empowerment (GEWE) requires challenging the social, cultural, and power relations in both patriarchal and matrilineal communities in which the social and economic status of women remains subordinate to that of men at household and community levels. As a long-term stakeholder in Malawi's development, WFP needs to continue to embed gender equity and women's empowerment throughout its programming.	Programmes; RBJ Gender Advisor [Government of Malawi's Ministry of Local Government; Extension Officers; District Councils; Ministry of Gender; Ministry of Economic Development; Ministry of Lands]		understand the nuanced differences between men, women, boys, and girls and how activities can be best adapted to meet their needs as well as enhance VSLAs, business and financial management trainings, particularly amongst women 5.2 WFP will continue jointly with UNDP to support Department of Climate Change and Meteorological (DCCMS) to improve the coverage of Participatory	[WFP Malawi Integrated Resilience Unit; Head of Programmes; RBJ Gender Advisor] WFP Malawi Integrated Resilience Unit [WFP Malawi Gender and Protection Unit; Head of Programmes; UNDP, RBJ Gender Advisor]	

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			Intergrated Climate Services for Agriculture (PICSA) (which includes intra household workload mapping and investment/budget management sessions)		
			5.3 Participate in gender- transformative approaches (GTA) programme, leveraging the strategic advantage of each organization to best address challenges faced by households headed by women and youths. Beyond the JP	WFP Malawi Gender and Protection Unit; [WFP Malawi Integrated Resilience Unit; Head of Programmes; RBJ Gender Advisor	December 2022

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			GTA, WFP will explore further ways in which to participate in and scale-up gender transformative approaches.		
Recommendation 6 (Medium Priority): WFP should work with appropriate government departments and other key stakeholders in Malawi in relation to land tenure arrangements, given the importance of communal land for successful community asset creation and the challenges posed by using private land for public goods. This entails, over the longer term, exploring opportunities to contribute to debates and national policy fora.	WFP Malawi Integrated Resilience Unit; Gender and Protection Unit; Head of Programmes; Country Office Senior Management [Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping (VAM) Unit; Head of Programmes; Government of Malawi's Ministry of Local	Partially agreed While this recommendation is excellent, it is largely beyond WFP's control. That said, WFP will endeavor to flag the issues and conduct advocacy at all levels to address this issue.	6.1 WFP Malawi— through the UN Resident Coordinator's Office and in collaboration with other UN Agencies—will advocate with the Ministry of Lands to conduct comprehensive land reform to the benefit of smallholder households.	WFP Malawi Senior Management [WFP Malawi Integrated Resilience Unit; Government of Malawi's Adaptation Fund; RBJ Senior Management Team; RBJ Integrated Resilience Unit; Malawi Resident Coordinators Office; other UN agencies and key donors]	December 2023

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	Government; Extension Officers; District Councils; Ministry of Gender; Ministry of Economic Development; Ministry of Lands; UN Resident Coordinator's Office]		6.2 WFP Malawi will also continue to engage with the technical working group and National Planning Commission (NPC) under the Malawi 2063 – under enabler 7: Environmental Sustainability, on land tenure and access for smallholder farmers.	WFP Malawi Integrated Resilience Unit [WFP Malawi Head of Programmes; WFP Malawi management]	December 2023
Recommendation 7 (Medium priority): Barriers to market access and lack of market development pose threats to longer-term resilience of FFA participants. WFP should continue to work in an integrated way with programmes such as R4 and SAMS to enhance market engagement and support. FFA should align with resilience building programmes with a strong market focus, working towards market system	WFP Malawi Integrated Resilience Unit, SAMS Unit, Gender and Protection Unit, Cash- Based Transfers Team, VAM/M&E Units; Head of Programmes; RBJ	Agreed	7.1 WFP Malawi SAMS Unit will link with home-grown school meals to ensure that smallholder farmers have access to markets for their crop produce both in raw form and/or after	WFP Malawi Integrated Resilience Unit, specifically the SAMS team; [WFP Malawi Head of Programmes; WFP Malawi School Feeding Unit; WFP Malawi VAM	December 2023

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change both to allow for increased competition in input markets, to offer choice to smallholder farmers, and to develop potential markets for outputs (farm and non-farm). This could also entail partnering at different levels with the private sector (both SMEs and large enterprises), for example playing an intermediary role with agro-dealers and private sector inputs/PHL solution providers. This may also include further alignment to programmes that provide adaptation support: sustainable solar-powered irrigation systems, agricultural value chains and market access, as well as early warning systems for protection against future shocks and new threats such as the fall armyworm.	Resilience Technical Advisor(s) [Head of Programmes; Government of Malawi's Adaptation Fund; Ministry of Local Government; Supply Chain Unit—Food Systems Team]		value addition processes, this at nearby or within the communities.	Unit,RBJ Integrated Resilience Unit; WFP Malawi Supply Chain Unit; Ministry of Agriculture; private sector companies in agriculture]	
			7.2 WFP's Integrated Resilience Programme to cultivate linkages to agro-dealers to ensure provision of agro-inputs to allow for greater crop diversity.	WFP Malawi Integrated Resilience Unit [WFP Malawi Supply Chain Unit, Agro-dealers within Malawi; other stakeholders operating in agro-affairs]	December 2023
			7.3 WFP's Integrated Resilience Programme to cultivate linkages with non-traditional	WFP Malawi Integrated Resilience Unit [WFP Malawi Supply Chain Unit]	December 2023

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			government partners like the Malawi Ministry of Trade and the Malawi Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development to establish alternative markets for small holder framers.		
			7.4 WFP, via its Supply Chain Unit, to work with the Agricultural Development and Marketing Corporation (ADMARC) and National Food Reserve Agency (NFRA) on revitalization of markets to assist	WFP Malawi Supply Chain Unit, specifically the Food Systems Team [WFP Malawi's Integrated Resilience Unit,WFP Senior Management; ADMARC; NFRA; Ministry of Agriculture]	December 2023

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			smallholder farmers with buying and selling constraints.		
Recommendation 8 (High Priority): Integrating with other resilience building programmes appears to be a fruitful strategy, building off the foundational role played by FFA acting as a springboard for participants into other resilience-strengthening activities. WFP should continue to integrate with other programmes, strengthening and building synergies, as this increases the impact of FFA.	WFP Malawi Integrated Resilience Unit; RBJ Resilience Technical Advisor(s); Country Office Head of Programmes; Country Office Senior Management [Head of Programmes; Government of Malawi's Adaptation Fund;	Agreed	8.1 WFP to explore partnership opportunities for joint programmes including the expansion of PROPSER, the EU- funded school meals programme, and new opportunities.	WFP Malawi Integrated Resilience Unit [WFP Malawi Donor Relations Unit; WFP Malawi Senior Management,RBJ and HQ Donor Relations and Integrated Resilience Units; donors]	December 2023
	Munistry of Local Government; RBJ Country Capacity Strengthening Regional Advisor; PROSPER; NGOs/other stakeholders working in		8.2 WFP will explore ways of strengthening collaboration with Government departments responsible for resilience programmes in	WFP Malawi Integrated Resilience Unit [WFP Malawi Donor Relations Unit; WFP Malawi Senior Management; various Government ministries	December 2023

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	integrated resilience sphere]		Malawi, building upon pre-existing iniaitives/agendas.	including the Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Land, etc.]	
<b>Recommendation 9 (Medium Priority:</b> FFA offers a number of key lessons learned in implementing programmes to contribute towards strengthening adaptation and resilience that can be shared, not only across WFP programming in Malawi at CO level but also nationally and regionally:	WFP Malawi Integrated Resilience Unit, RBJ Resilience Technical Advisor(s); Country Office Head of Programmes; Country Office Strategic Objective (SO) Managers; Country Office	Not agreed; this is not a recommendation but rather guidance on how to share lessons learned.	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable

Recommendations and related Sub-recommendations (Deadline) [as per evaluation report – one (sub-) recommendation per row, deadline in brackets.]	Recommendation and Sub- Recommendation Lead (Supporting Offices/Divisions) [Name of responsible WFP office/division (/possibly external stakeholder in the case of Joint Evaluation). Names of supporting WFP offices/divisions and/or external stakeholders if any in brackets.]	Management Response [Is (sub-) recommendation Agreed, Partially agreed or Not agreed? If Partially agreed or Not agreed, provide a brief reason for this.]	Actions to be taken [Briefly state what action(s) will be taken to address each sub- recommendation – one action per row.]	Action Lead (Supporting Offices/Divisions) [Name of responsible WFP office/division/unit. Names of supporting WFP offices/divisions and/or external stakeholders if any in brackets.]	Action Deadline [Month and year – not to exceed related (sub- )recommendation deadline.]
	Gender and Protection Officer; RBJ Gender Advisor; RBJ Resilience Technical Advisor(s) [Head of Programmes; Government of Malawi's Adaptation Fund; Ministry of Local Government; RBJ Country Capacity Strengthening				

Recommendations and related Sub-recommendations (Deadline) [as per evaluation report – one (sub-) recommendation per row, deadline in brackets.]	Recommendation and Sub- Recommendation Lead (Supporting Offices/Divisions) [Name of responsible WFP office/division (/possibly external stakeholder in the case of Joint Evaluation). Names of supporting WFP offices/divisions and/or external stakeholders if any in brackets.]	Management Response [Is (sub-) recommendation Agreed, Partially agreed or Not agreed? If Partially agreed or Not agreed, provide a brief reason for this.]	Actions to be taken [Briefly state what action(s) will be taken to address each sub- recommendation – one action per row.]	Action Lead (Supporting Offices/Divisions) [Name of responsible WFP office/division/unit. Names of supporting WFP offices/divisions and/or external stakeholders if any in brackets.]	Action Deadline [Month and year – not to exceed related (sub- )recommendation deadline.]
	Regional Advisor; Country Office Senior Management]				