



World Food Programme

SAVING
LIVES
CHANGING
LIVES

WFP EVALUATION POLICY 2022

Foreword



Millions of the world's poorest families are being driven closer to starvation as levels of acute hunger soar in dozens of countries. For many of these people, WFP assistance is literally the difference between life and death.

As we go all-out to deliver emergency food aid, work with communities to build resilience, and strengthen global food systems, it is critical that we learn what is most effective and apply these successes across our operations.

We could not do our vital work without the support of our many donors and partners, and ensuring we are fully accountable and transparent is the key to maintaining their trust. Consequently, the evaluation function is an integral part of WFP's oversight framework.

Independent evaluations provide vital information about the effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability of our work. They offer lessons for improvement and shine a light on approaches that work well and demand to be scaled up.

The Executive Board's approval of the updated Evaluation Policy is welcome. In a world of crisis and conflict, it underlines the importance of evidence-based decisions and reminds us that our commitment to learning lessons and to continued performance improvement lies at the heart of our success.

The new policy will help ensure that WFP continues to be a high-performing organization. It offers a route map for strengthening WFP's culture of learning and accountability, and builds on the program of independent evaluations being implemented across WFP. Above all, it will ensure our dedicated people are equipped to save lives and change lives even more effectively in this time of unprecedented global need.

David Beasley
Executive Director, WFP



The Members of the WFP Executive Board bestow the highest importance to strengthening accountability to the people we serve and promoting continuous learning and improvement across the organization's work. In this regard, independent evaluation plays a critical role for WFP in assessing the organization's progress, presenting findings and recommendations to better direct resources, improve performance and steer a truer path to Zero Hunger.

WFP Evaluations are invaluable to ensure that WFP policies, programmes, strategies and partnerships demonstrate efficiency and effectiveness, and scale up best practices. I commend the independent Office of Evaluation for leading a comprehensive and consultative process to update the WFP Evaluation Policy, building on the external peer review of the evaluation function.

The updated Evaluation Policy 2022, approved by the Executive Board at the first regular session of 2022, will continue work to strengthen the evaluation function at WFP. Building on the previous policy, it outlines broad coverage across WFP's programme of work, is aligned with WFP's strategic plan 2022-2025 and commits to generate the evidence needed by WFP to contribute to the 2030 Agenda and leave no one behind.

Together with centralized evaluations of policies, strategies, country strategic plans, and emergency operations, this policy continues the trajectory in delivering decentralized and impact evaluation to provide a stronger body of evaluation evidence especially at country level. There is a renewed focus on joint and system-wide evaluations, together with greater emphasis on strengthening national evaluation capacities and working in partnership. The addition of a new outcome on evidence use responds to demand for a greater range of evaluation products and innovation in the way evidence is presented and used.

H.E. Md. Shameem Ahsan
President, Executive Board, WFP

Preface



Much has changed since the approval of the WFP Evaluation Policy in 2016. Our planet is experiencing a period of deep crisis with the COVID-19 pandemic, the climate emergency and protracted conflicts devastating lives and livelihoods, deepening inequalities and threatening progress across the world. Little more than six years since their launch, the ambition of achieving Zero Hunger and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals by 2030 appears to be no closer.

It has become increasingly apparent that to build a sustainable and peaceful future, evidence must play a prominent role to inform future actions. Evaluation evidence shines a light on root causes and champions best practices to use vital resources effectively. Evaluation evidence helps to steer a truer course towards our collective objectives and global goals, contributing to greater accountability, improved learning and enlightened decision making.

This is well recognized in the World Food Programme. The WFP Strategic Plan for 2022–2025 identifies evidence as one of six enablers that will support the organization’s ability to achieve results.

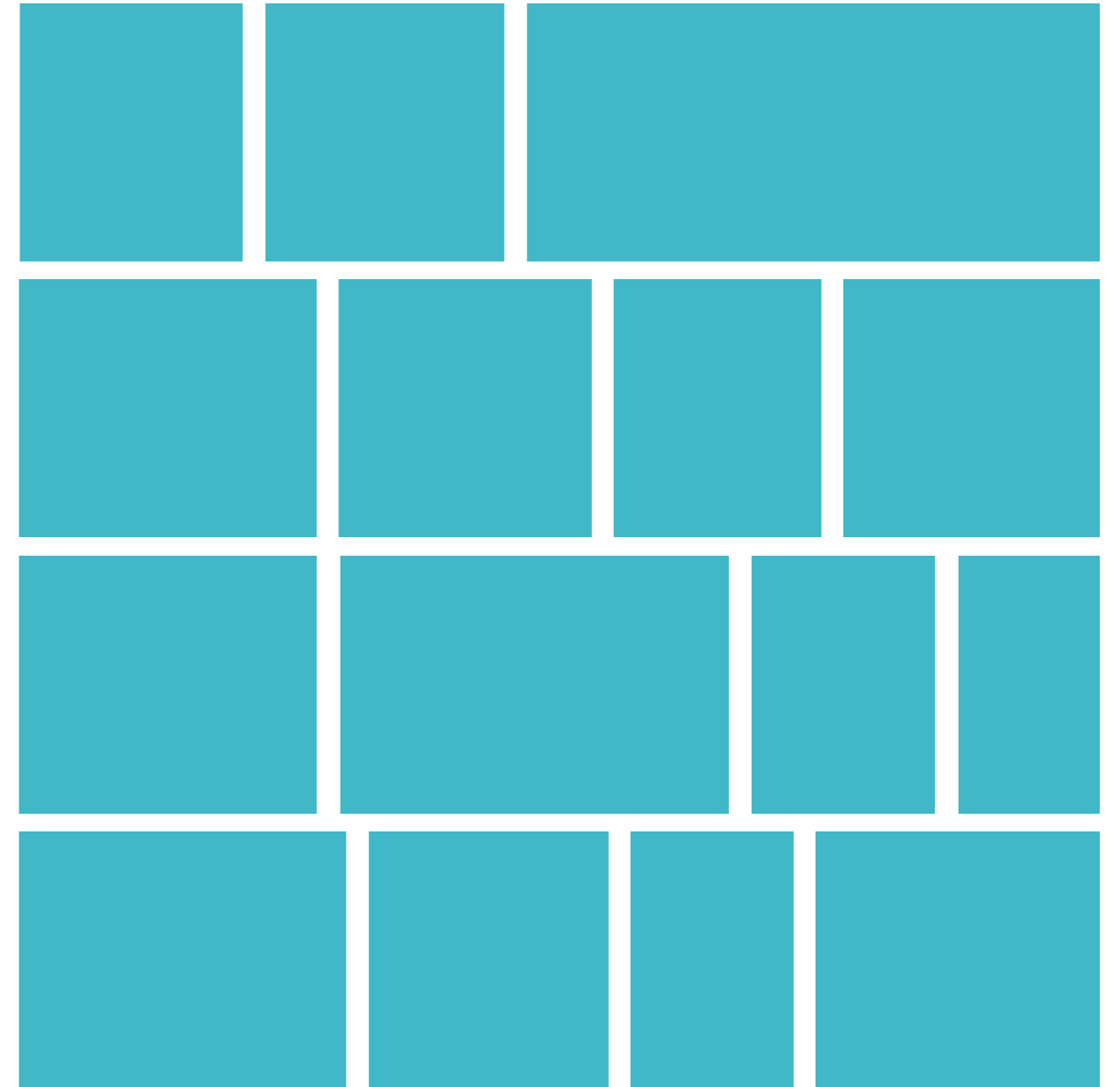
The WFP Evaluation Policy responds to this growing demand for evidence as the evaluation function continues to mature, particularly at the decentralized level. The updates to the policy answer the call for strengthened capacities, for increased work in partnerships, and for timely, targeted and tailored delivery of evidence. The policy continues the commitment to ensure that an evaluation culture is embedded in the work of WFP and promoted across the international community to further advance evidence-based implementation of the SDGs at all levels and to accelerate progress in the Decade of Action.

This updated policy has been informed by an independent peer review under the aegis of the United Nations Evaluation Group and the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. I wish to thank all colleagues and partners who contributed to the updating of the policy through a transparent and consultative process led by the Office of Evaluation. I would like to call on collective support to deliver on the vision to strengthen evaluative thinking in the pursuit of Zero Hunger and achievement of the SDGs.

Andrea E. Cook

Director of Evaluation, WFP

Contents



Executive summary

In 2020, the WFP evaluation function underwent peer review under the aegis of the United Nations Evaluation Group and the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. The peer review is positive, concluding that WFP's independent evaluation function produces high-quality evaluations and that since the previous peer review in 2014 real progress has been made towards the vision of a WFP culture of accountability and learning supported by evaluative thinking, behaviour and systems. The peer review acknowledges that there is still scope for further progress towards this vision and makes recommendations accordingly. This updated WFP evaluation policy responds to those recommendations, and to changes in circumstances since the last evaluation policy was approved, to ensure that WFP profits from a well-balanced, utility-focused evaluation function that supports a culture of accountability and learning.

The updated WFP evaluation policy is introduced at a time when WFP's strategic plan for 2022-2025 has made clear the organization's commitment to becoming evidence-driven in delivering its results. Evaluation evidence makes a key contribution to organizational learning and to ensuring that programmes, plans, policies and strategies are evidence-based.

The updated WFP evaluation policy is rooted in the most recent international norms and standards for evaluation. It builds on the previous policy to ensure that the evaluation function continues to mature, particularly at the decentralized level, that the use of evaluations and evaluation evidence is enhanced within WFP and that the evaluation function can further its partnerships with others to support global decision making and achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Introduction

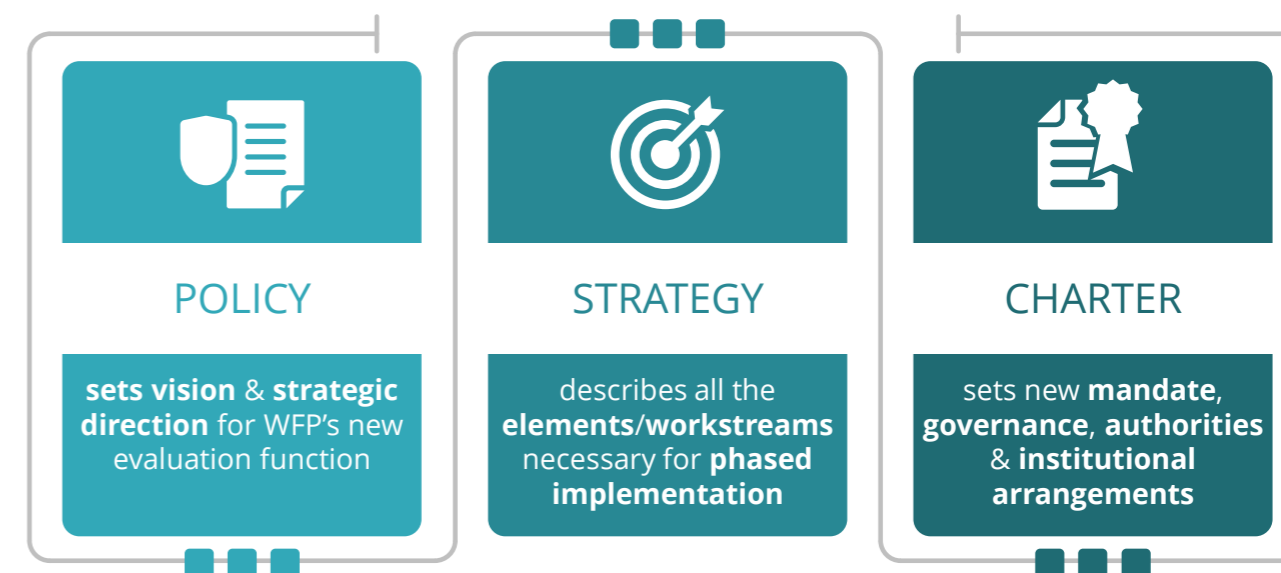
This document presents the updated WFP evaluation policy, which supersedes all previous evaluation policies. It has been prepared following a decision by the Executive Board¹ on the WFP response to the recommendations resulting from the 2021 peer review of the WFP evaluation function conducted by the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD-DAC) and the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG).

This updated policy reaffirms the organization's commitment to benefiting fully from evaluation in its performance management, accountability and learning² systems and to complying with United Nations evaluation principles, norms and standards.³ It informs WFP employees and stakeholders of the purpose of the evaluation function; its conceptual and normative

framework; and the roles, accountabilities and standards for evaluation across WFP. It also outlines coverage norms, efforts to enhance the use of evaluation evidence and human and financial resource requirements. Aligned with the principles and aims of the United Nations, this policy supports WFP in achieving its mandate and strategic priorities.⁴

The policy will be accompanied by an updated evaluation charter.⁵ Together, these two documents will constitute the governance framework for the WFP evaluation function within the wider oversight arrangements established by the Board. A new corporate evaluation strategy will set out a phased plan for implementing this policy, the costing of which will be provided in the regular three-year evaluation function workplan presented as an annex to the WFP management plan submitted to the Board every year.

EVALUATION FRAMEWORK



Context and rationale for an updated evaluation policy

The world has undergone significant change since the approval of the previous policy in 2016. The coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic has thrown the global economy into turmoil and sparked a devastating increase in hunger among the world's most vulnerable. Recent years have also seen a rise in the number of people affected by conflicts and crises, including the climate crisis. Because of these trends, the need to drive progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is more pressing than ever. Governments, civil society and United Nations agencies including WFP are looking for new ways of partnering to address these interrelated challenges through the lens of the humanitarian-development-peace nexus.⁶

Further reform proposed by the United Nations Secretary-General and adopted by Member States in 2017 is repositioning the United Nations development system to make it more strategic, accountable, collaborative and responsive to national development needs and priorities. WFP participates in inter-agency coordination mechanisms at the global and regional levels, as well as in regional collaboration platforms. At the country level, United Nations sustainable development cooperation frameworks (UNSDCFs)

will be the main vehicle for planning, resourcing, delivering and evaluating the contribution of the United Nations to national development results. These reforms and the commitment by WFP to a more cohesive and collaborative approach to humanitarian action signal that more joint working and greater United Nations coherence will influence and guide WFP work, including the evaluation function.

The critical role of evaluation in development is acknowledged in the SDGs⁷ and in the 2014 United Nations resolution on capacity building for the evaluation of development activities at the country level.⁸

The Decade of Action (2020–2030) to deliver the SDGs emphasizes the need for decisions to be informed by evidence, including from evaluation. It also emphasizes the importance of learning, of tracking progress and of identifying what does and does not work to achieve the SDGs. The Global Evaluation Agenda 2016–2020,⁹ endorsed by governments, United Nations agencies, civil society and evaluation associations, promotes national evaluation capacity and advocates the use of evidence to inform the implementation of the SDGs.

Since 2016, the UNEG norms and standards for evaluation and the OECD-DAC Network on Development Evaluation evaluation criteria have been updated. The revised criteria provide a normative framework for making evaluative judgements and are widely used in development assistance evaluation.

Within WFP, new policies and strategies adopted since 2016 have guided the evaluation function, including the 2016 policy on country strategic plans (CSPs), which introduced the systematic evaluation of CSPs; the 2020 WFP protection and accountability policy; the 2021 WFP people policy; the 2022 WFP gender policy (to be presented for approval by the Board at its 2022 first regular session) and the WFP strategic plan for 2022–2025.

With the 2016 evaluation policy, WFP established an evaluation function that encompassed centralized evaluations and demand-led decentralized evaluations. In addition to the corporate evaluation strategy, regional evaluation strategies have also been developed, and strategies on evaluation capacity development, evaluation communication and knowledge management and impact evaluation are all now being implemented.

The OECD-DAC/UNEG peer review of the evaluation function in 2021¹⁰ concluded that at WFP a “highly strategic independent corporate evaluation function oversees the production of high-quality centralized and decentralized evaluations”. The peer review noted that the Office of Evaluation (OEV) has adapted the evaluation function to keep it aligned with WFP priorities and organizational changes. The peer review recommended ways to enhance the utility and added value of the evaluation function through adequate and sustained financing; the development of appropriate skills and capacity within the evaluation cadre; the implementation of a more rigorous approach to organizational learning from evaluation; and the strengthening of evaluation partnerships in support of national evaluation capacity and joint and system-wide evaluations in pursuit of nationally owned SDGs.¹¹

Given the changes in the external and internal environment and the guidance of the peer review, this is an opportune moment to update the evaluation policy to ensure that WFP benefits from a well-balanced, utility-focused evaluation function that is in harmony with the 2022–2025 strategic plan.

Concepts and definitions

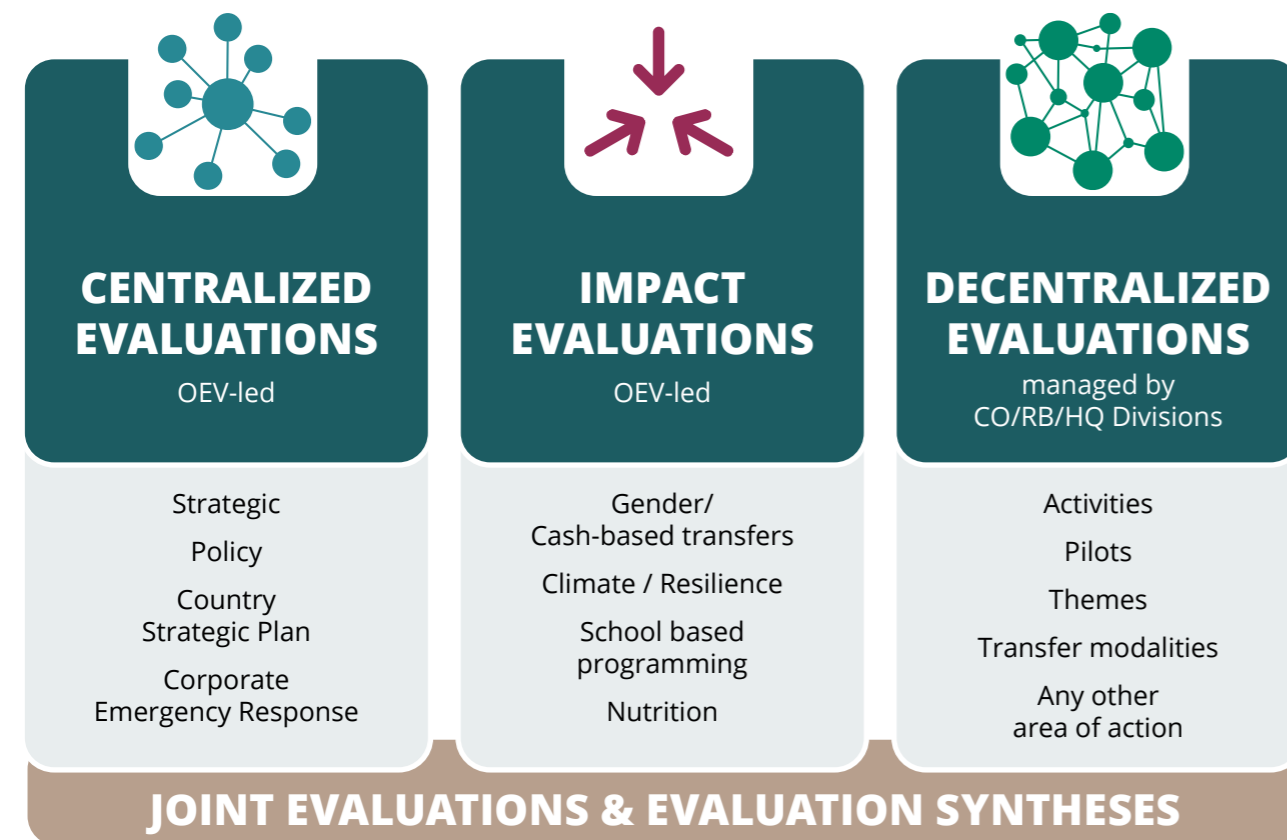
An evaluation policy sets the framework of norms and standards, accountabilities, coverage and capacities for the effective management of evaluations. At WFP, it facilitates evidence based decision making and strengthens the culture of learning. The evaluation function is integrated throughout WFP and its implementation is shared across the organization.

WFP adheres to the United Nations definition¹² of evaluation, which states:

“An evaluation is an assessment, conducted as systematically and impartially as possible, of an activity, project, programme, strategy, policy, topic, theme, sector, operational area or institutional

performance. It analyses the level of achievement of both expected and unexpected results by examining the results chain, processes, contextual factors and causality using appropriate criteria such as relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability.¹³ An evaluation should provide credible, useful, evidence-based information that enables the timely incorporation of its findings, recommendations and lessons into the decision making processes of organizations and stakeholders”.

Evaluations are commissioned and managed by various parts of the organization. There are three categories of evaluation at WFP:



Centralized evaluations are commissioned and managed by OEV and presented to the Executive Board for consideration. They focus on corporate strategies and policies, global programmes, strategic issues and themes, corporate emergencies and CSPs.



Impact evaluations are managed by OEV at the request of country offices. They measure changes in development outcomes of interest for a target population that can be attributed to a specific programme or policy through a credible counterfactual. They are usually undertaken during programme implementation over a multi-year period. Impact evaluations are not presented to the Executive Board.



Decentralized evaluations are commissioned and managed by country offices, regional bureaux and headquarters-based divisions other than OEV and are designed to meet the needs of the commissioning units. They are not presented to the Board. They can cover activities, pilots, themes, transfer modalities or any other area of action at the subnational, national or multi-country level.

Centralized, decentralized and impact evaluations may be conducted jointly with other United Nations entities, governments, funders or other partners such as research institutions. All categories of evaluation may be synthesized in order to draw evidence from many evaluations.

No matter which offices commission and manage evaluations, all follow the norms set out in this policy and conform to the WFP evaluation quality assurance system (EQAS),¹⁴ which includes impartiality safeguards.

The WFP oversight framework sets out expectations regarding the promotion of accountability and transparency within the organization.¹⁵ Within the three lines model, OEV

sits in the third line alongside the Inspector General and Oversight Office, providing independent assurance and advice to the Executive Board and to senior management. Evaluation also contributes to the second line through the evidence generated by decentralized evaluations.

Evaluation is also an integral, complementary yet distinct element of the WFP performance management system. It uses findings from mechanisms such as appraisal, monitoring, reviews, audits and research as part of the evidence base when assessing WFP performance and results in order to support accountability and learning.

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF RELATED PERFORMANCE, ACCOUNTABILITY AND LEARNING MECHANISMS



APPRAISAL

Appraisal is a critical assessment of the potential value of an undertaking before a decision is taken to implement it.¹⁶ It assesses the relevance, feasibility and potential sustainability of an intervention to establish whether the activity is likely to respond adequately to beneficiary needs and whether it represents an appropriate use of resources. An effective appraisal should assess the quality and soundness of the monitoring and evaluation framework proposed for the intervention.



MONITORING

Process, output and outcome monitoring inform operational decision making, including that related to CSP activity design, implementation and revision. Output and outcome monitoring facilitates the assessment of effectiveness. Process monitoring supports the assessment of efficiency and implementation quality. Monitoring generates data for accountability to beneficiaries and partners, both for evaluative purposes and for corporate reporting and evidence building at all levels.



REVIEW¹⁷

A review is the periodic or ad hoc assessment of the performance of a programmatic intervention, or a specific aspect of it. Reviews inform operational decision making and support learning and accountability. Reviews do not have to conform to specified external reporting or publication requirements or to the international standards applicable to evaluation, but they must abide by the standards of the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women.



AUDIT¹⁸

Internal auditing is an independent, objective assurance and consulting activity designed to add value and improve an organization's operations. It is central to an organization's internal control and risk management frameworks and its organizational culture.



RESEARCH¹⁹

Research is a systematic enquiry to develop or contribute to knowledge.

The WFP strategic plan for 2022–2025 sets out six “enablers” that will increase the organization's ability to achieve results. One of these enablers is “evidence”. The evaluation function is one source of evidence for WFP and is closely linked to another source, namely the monitoring function. OEV will continue to work with relevant divisions to enhance the synergies between monitoring and evaluation and strengthen capacity, particularly at the country level where the two functions are often carried out by the same employees.

Vision, goals and outcomes

The evaluation function helps to make WFP fit for purpose by providing its decision makers and all stakeholders with independent assessment of the results and effects of its work.

Accordingly, the vision of the theory of change for the evaluation function (see figure page 14) is that by 2030 the WFP contribution to achieving zero hunger will be strengthened by a culture of accountability and learning supported by evaluative thinking, behaviour and systems.

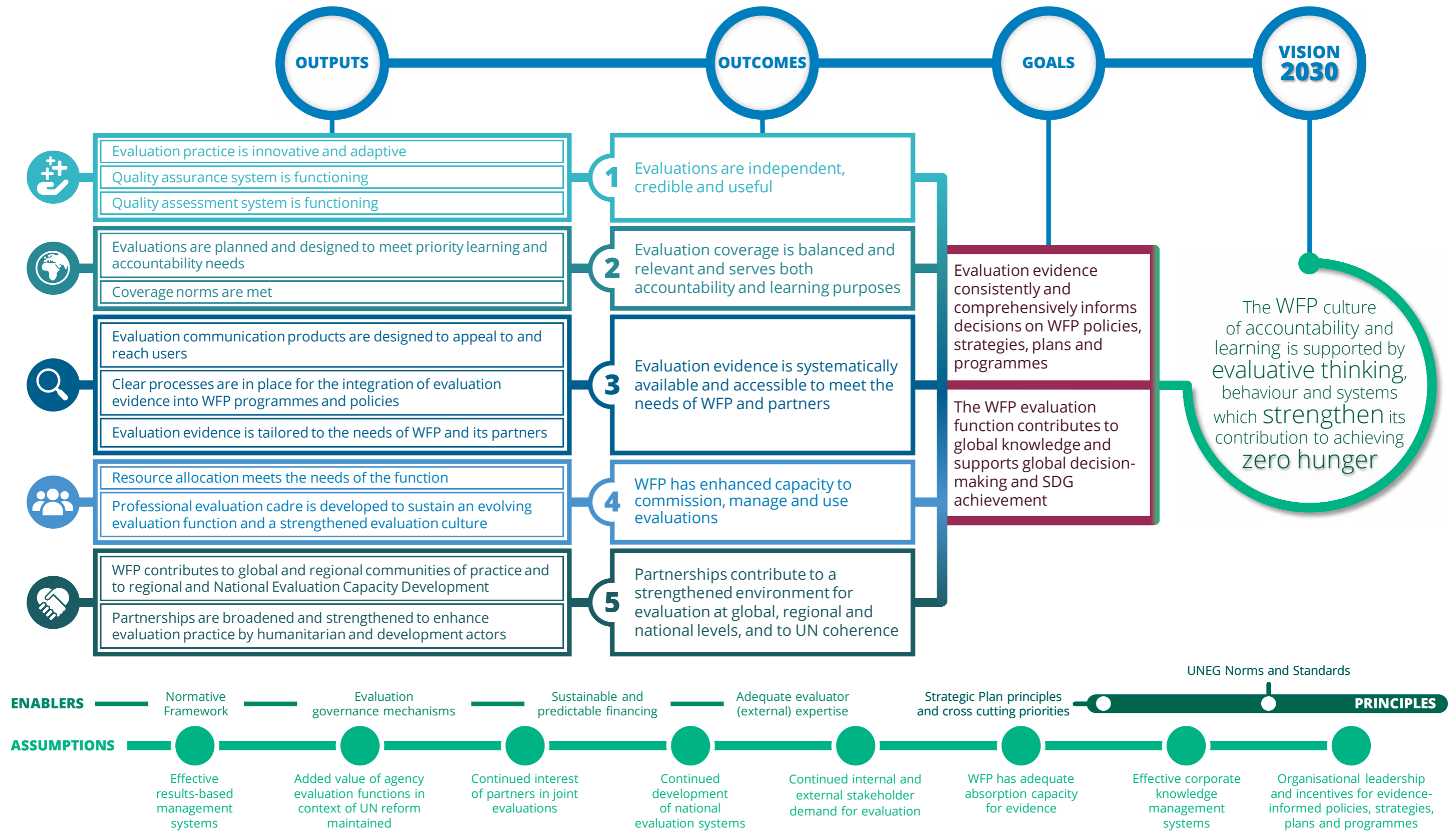
Contributing to this vision, the goals are to ensure that evaluation evidence consistently and comprehensively informs decisions on WFP policies, strategies, plans and programmes and that the WFP evaluation function contributes to global knowledge and supports decision making and SDG achievement at the global, regional and national levels.

These goals will be achieved through attaining the following outcomes:

- 1 Evaluations are independent, credible and useful**
 Evaluations are embedded in the policy and programme cycle, with all evaluations managed in accordance with United Nations norms and standards and EQAS. This ensures that evaluations are timely, of good quality, publicly available and conducted with systematic internal and external stakeholder involvement, thereby delivering balanced and accurate findings that support recommendations for optimal use in evidence-based decision making.
- 2 Evaluation coverage is balanced and relevant and supports both accountability and learning**
 This policy sets out coverage norms for evaluations and evaluations should be planned to meet those norms.
- 3 Evaluation evidence is systematically accessible and available to meet the needs of WFP and its partners**
 Evaluation evidence needs to be available at the right time in an appropriate form if it is to inform decision making.
- 4 WFP has enhanced capacity to commission, manage and use evaluations**
 Evaluation capacity is strengthened throughout WFP, with management arrangements that meet UNEG norms and standards.
- 5 Partnerships contribute to a strengthened environment for evaluation at the global, regional and national levels and to United Nations coherence**
 Best practices are developed and modelled in partnerships with actors relevant to the work of WFP. Partnerships with governments and civil society support countries in developing their national evaluation capacity.

These outcomes will be achieved through delivery of several outputs that require investment and organizational support. The policy rests on several enablers and assumptions, and progress will be compromised if they are not fully realized.

EVALUATION FUNCTION THEORY OF CHANGE

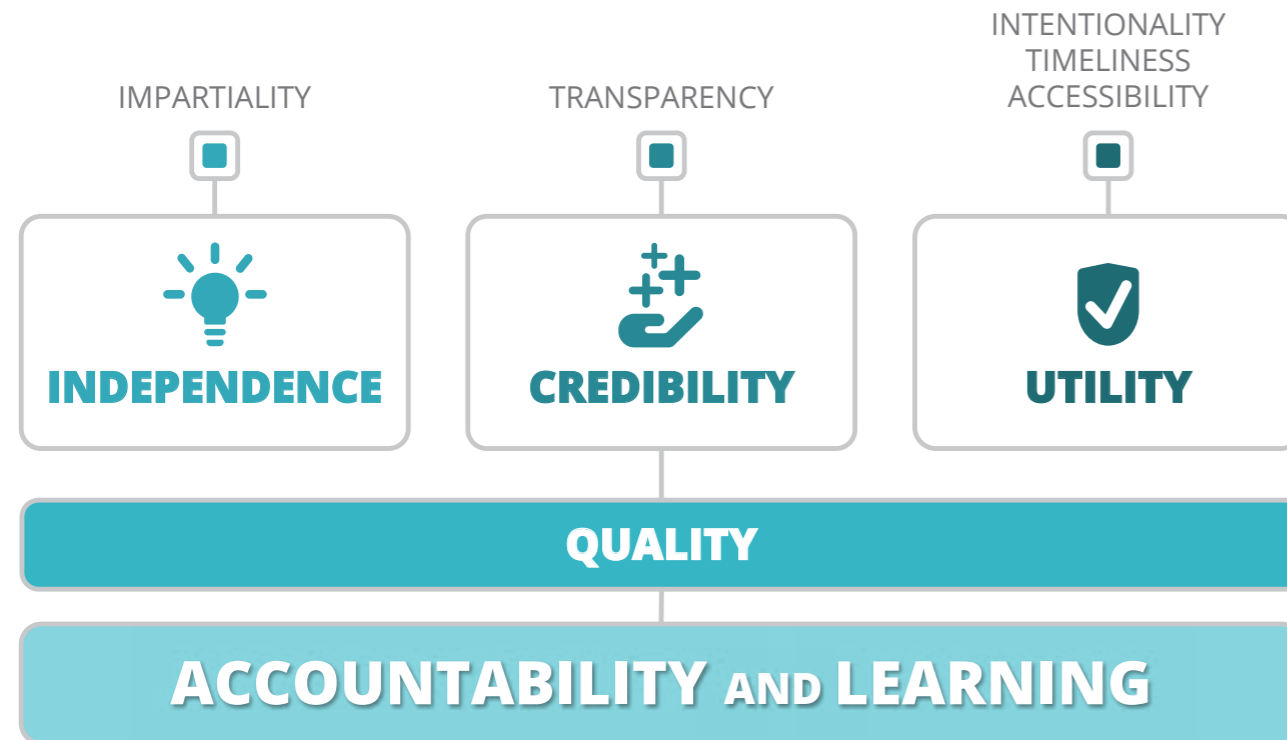


Guiding principles

EVALUATION PRINCIPLES

The WFP evaluation function is based on the UNEG evaluation principles²⁰ of independence, credibility and utility. Application of these

principles ensures evaluation quality, enhancing accountability and learning throughout WFP to improve performance and results.



INDEPENDENCE

of evaluation is necessary for credibility. It influences the ways in which an evaluation is used and is underpinned by the impartiality of evaluators. Independence requires impartiality so that evaluations are free from influences that may bias their selection, conduct, findings, conclusions, recommendations and reporting. WFP is committed to safeguarding the independence and impartiality of all its evaluations through the provisions specified in table 1 and the roles, accountabilities and institutional arrangements outlined in it.

CREDIBILITY

is grounded in independence, impartiality and a rigorous methodology. Key elements of credibility include transparent evaluation processes, inclusive approaches involving relevant stakeholders and robust quality assurance and assessment systems. Quality assurance and assessment procedures are outlined in page 26.

UTILITY

is essential in an evaluation. In commissioning and conducting an evaluation there should be a clear intention to use the resulting analysis and conclusions or recommendations to inform decisions and actions. Evaluation is useful because it provides relevant and timely contributions to organizational learning, informing decision making and promoting accountability for results. Evaluations can also yield benefits outside the organization by generating knowledge and empowering stakeholders. WFP is committed to enhancing utility by planning and conducting evaluations with the firm intent to use their results; by undertaking evaluations in a timely way to inform decision making processes; and by ensuring that evaluation reports and management responses are publicly available.

TABLE 1: INDEPENDENCE AND IMPARTIALITY

UNEG NORM 4: INDEPENDENCE

<p>The evaluation function is independent of other management functions.</p>	<p>The Director of Evaluation heads an independent evaluation function within the WFP secretariat.</p> <p>Decision making* on evaluations commissioned outside OEV is made by management rather than employees directly responsible for implementing evaluated interventions.</p> <p>All evaluations are subject to independent post-hoc quality assessment.</p>
<p>The evaluation function sets the evaluation agenda.</p>	<p>The Director of Evaluation has full discretion over OEV commissioned evaluation selection and approval and issuance of evaluation reports to the Board.</p> <p>Mechanisms are in place to ensure that evaluations commissioned outside OEV are free from undue influence and that reporting is unbiased and transparent – e.g. external review of draft terms of reference, inception and evaluation reports.</p> <p>All evaluations are publicly available.</p>
<p>The evaluation function is provided with adequate resources for conducting its work.</p>	<p>The budgetary framework for evaluation is approved by the Board in the context of the WFP management plan; the Director of Evaluation has full discretion and control over resources allocated to OEV.</p>
<p>The independence of the evaluation function underpins the free access to information on the subject of an evaluation that evaluators should have.</p>	<p>Formal instruments – the evaluation charter and the directive on information disclosure – ensure that employees provide evaluators with access to information.</p>
<p>Behavioural independence and impartiality in connection with evaluations must not have negative repercussions, including for career advancement.</p>	<p>All evaluations are conducted by independent evaluators.**</p> <p>The Director of Evaluation provides assurance on compliance with evaluation norms and standards for OEV commissioned evaluations.</p> <p>Assurance statements issued by the Executive Director based on the statements of division directors, regional directors and country directors include commitments to ensuring the impartial conduct of decentralized evaluations.</p>

UNEG NORM 5: IMPARTIALITY

<p>Evaluators need to be impartial and must not have been (or expect to be in the near future) directly responsible for setting policy in respect of the subject of the evaluation or for its design or management.</p>	<p>Potential conflicts of interest are assessed before evaluation teams are hired.</p> <p>All evaluation managers and evaluators sign the UNEG Pledge of Commitment to Ethical Conduct in Evaluation.</p>
<p>Impartiality exists at all stages of the evaluation process, including the planning of the evaluation, the formulation of its mandate and scope, the selection of the evaluation team, the provision of access to stakeholders, the conduct of the evaluation and the formulation of findings and recommendations.</p>	<p>Evaluation quality assurance systems support transparent evaluation management.</p> <p>With due regard for confidentiality, evaluation design, process and reporting systematically take into account the views of key stakeholders.</p> <p>Analytical transparency is built into evaluation design, conduct and reporting.</p> <p>Coverage norms are applied.</p>
<p>Impartiality exists at all stages of the evaluation process, including the planning of the evaluation, the formulation of its mandate and scope, the selection of the evaluation team, the provision of access to stakeholders, the conduct of the evaluation and the formulation of findings and recommendations.</p>	<p>Mechanisms for assessing conflict of interest are used.</p> <p>A help desk is available to assist country offices, regional bureaux and headquarters divisions in the management of decentralized evaluations.</p> <p>Regional evaluation units support country offices in the management of evaluations.</p> <p>Roles and accountabilities for evaluation are integrated into the WFP staff performance management system and the internal control assurance statements issued by directors.</p>

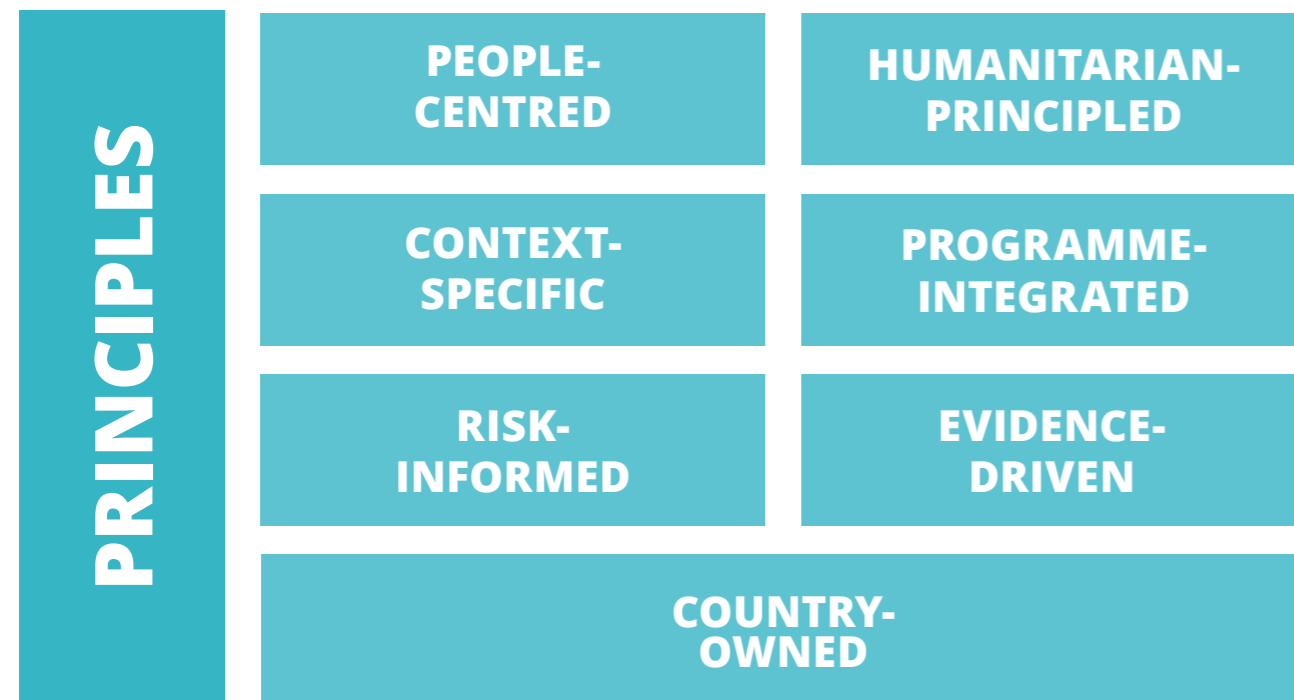
* Decision making (informed by regional evaluation officers for evaluations at the country and regional levels) includes the following aspects: evaluation selection, design, team selection, budgeting, terms of reference, inception and evaluation report approval. Adjustments will be made for small country offices such as by assigning a greater role for regional bureaux.

** In the main, evaluators are external consultants; there may be instances when, with the approval of the Director of Evaluation, an OEV evaluation manager plays a more significant role in an evaluation, such as team leader.

EVALUATION PRINCIPLES

The strategic plan for 2022–2025 sets out seven principles that will guide WFP’s work. The strategic plan also identifies four cross-cutting priorities that represent commitments that WFP

has made to maximize programme effectiveness. Enshrined in WFP’s policy framework, these cross-cutting priorities will be applied across the board.



The evaluation function is also guided by these principles and priorities, as well as principles that are rooted in the UNEG norms and standards for evaluation. These principles, priorities and norms

inform the conduct of evaluations. They also inform decisions on what is evaluated and the identification of evaluation questions.



Elements of the evaluation function

The evaluation function comprises the normative framework and the evaluation responsibilities that must be fulfilled in order to meet the objectives of the evaluation policy. Responsibility for evaluation is shared across WFP and overseen by OEV (see

section below for details of roles, accountabilities and institutional arrangements). The main elements of the normative framework are described next.

PLANNING AND SELECTION

This policy integrates evaluation more closely into the WFP policy and programme management cycle than did the previous policy, with planning reflecting the three categories of evaluation:



Centralized evaluations are commissioned by OEV in line with the annual evaluation function workplan.²¹ To ensure impartiality, the programme of work is drawn up independently by the Director of Evaluation in consultation with the Board (through the annual consultation on evaluation), WFP senior management and other major stakeholders.



Impact evaluations are commissioned by OEV in line with corporate evidence priorities through impact evaluation “windows”. These windows are portfolios of impact evaluations in specific priority evidence areas, agreed with WFP management, that will be updated over time as the organization’s evidence priorities change.



Decentralized evaluations are commissioned by country offices, regional bureaux and headquarters divisions, and initial decisions regarding them are made by the directors of country offices, regional bureaux and headquarters divisions when CSPs or programmes are being designed and approved in order to facilitate resourcing and planning; additional evaluations may also be called for. At the regional level, regional evaluation plans consolidate all evaluations (those commissioned by OEV, country offices, the regional bureau or a headquarters office) planned for a region. This exercise can be used to consider the need for any regionally led multi-country evaluations to address gaps in evidence that are a priority for the region.

The type, timing, approach and method of an evaluation should be appropriate to its intended use and to policy and programme requirements, while complying with coverage norms. Annex I indicates the main types of evaluation that WFP currently conducts, however methods and approaches will be updated as needed, particularly when innovation may enhance the use of evaluation insights.

Regular consultation between OEV and other divisions and offices support the efficient use of resources and complementarity among evaluations. OEV and the Office of Internal Audit will continue to coordinate when developing their respective workplans with a view to ensuring complementarities and synergies between evaluations and audits. This coordination also covers consideration of the findings and recommendations derived from the respective exercises.

COVERAGE NORMS

This policy sets norms for ensuring appropriate evaluation coverage across WFP.

TABLE 2: MINIMUM EVALUATION COVERAGE NORMS

COMMISSIONING UNIT	TYPE OF EVALUATION	
OEV	Strategic evaluations These provide balanced coverage of the core planning instruments of WFP, including elements of the WFP strategic plan and related strategies.	Syntheses These summarize evidence from a number of completed evaluations. There are no specific norms for syntheses, but OEV will aim to conduct at least one synthesis each year.
	Policy evaluations Evaluation of policies takes place between four and six years after the start of implementation ^a and/or prior to policy changes.	
	Corporate emergency evaluations All crises classified as “corporate scale-up phase” and “corporate attention phase” ^b will be subject to evaluation through OEV-commissioned corporate emergency evaluations or CSP evaluations or inter-agency humanitarian evaluations. The Director of Evaluation will determine the most appropriate option in consultation with key stakeholders.	
	CSP evaluations^c a) A CSP evaluation is required in the penultimate year of each CSP. b) For interim CSPs an evaluation is required every five years for the ten largest country offices ^d and every 10–12 years for all other country offices.	
	Impact evaluations The Director of Evaluation will determine how many windows and how many evaluations within each window can be managed at any one time, ^e considering organizational evidence priorities and capacity.	
COUNTRY OFFICE	At least one decentralized evaluation (e.g. activity or thematic evaluation or CSP strategic outcome evaluation) per country office per interim CSP or CSP cycle.	Joint and system-wide evaluations WFP will seek out opportunities with other United Nations entities and at the country level in consultation with national partners to undertake more joint and system-wide evaluations including UNSDCF evaluations and inter-agency humanitarian evaluations.
REGIONAL BUREAUX	No specific norms but criteria to guide decision making on evaluation (see table 3) should be applied, particularly for multi-country evaluations. ^f	
HEADQUARTERS OFFICE/DIVISION	No specific norms but criteria to guide decision making on evaluation (see table 3) should be applied.	

There is a need to balance the requirements for systematic and sufficient centralized evaluation coverage across the whole of WFP work with a demand-led approach for decentralized and impact evaluations. Thus, the norms indicated in table 2 set **minimum** corporate expectations within which commissioning units have the flexibility to prioritize topics, interventions and timing in line with their policy or programme cycles and stakeholder needs.

While there are no minimum coverage norms for joint evaluations, these are expected to increase in number in response to developments in system-wide evaluation and further United

Nations development system reforms, including the introduction of UNSDCF evaluations.

Decisions on what, when and how to evaluate should be consistent with these coverage norms but are influenced by many factors. Table 3 outlines criteria that may be used to guide decision making on whether and when to undertake a decentralized evaluation.

In the interests of efficiency, where these evaluation coverage norms are met national governments, funders and other stakeholders are encouraged to use WFP evaluations when fulfilling their own evaluation requirements.

TABLE 3: CRITERIA TO GUIDE DECISION MAKING FOR DECENTRALIZED EVALUATIONS

- Strategic relevance to WFP
- Evidence gaps (at the country, regional or global level)
- Level of programme expenditure
- Scale of emergency response
- Before replication or scale-up of pilots, innovations and prototypes
- Innovative results (e.g. achieved across a region or through innovative multi-country programmes that are centrally funded or supported)
- Formal commitments to stakeholders (e.g. to national partners to inform national programmes, or to funders as part of funding requirements)
- Likelihood of influencing policymaking or potential for leveraging partnerships
- Feasibility of undertaking the evaluation

^a “WFP Policy Formulation” (WFP/EB.A/2011/5-B). The policy formulation document is due to be revised in 2022, which may result in the need to adjust the policy evaluation coverage norm.

^b Executive Director’s Circular OED 2022/003.

^c “Policy on Country Strategic Plans” (WFP/EB.2/2016/4-C/1/Rev.1). The current norm for all CSP evaluations will be reviewed in 2023 once the evaluation of the first generation of CSP and the evaluation of the CSP policy have been completed.

^d Country offices have been grouped into size categories based on WFP criteria established by the Operations Management Support Office, as well as the size of the office, number of employees and number of beneficiaries.

^e In 2022 there will be four evidence windows, with up to six evaluations running in each window at any one time.

^f Regional programmes and projects should include plans for generating evidence through evaluation where appropriate.

QUALITY MANAGEMENT

The evaluation function will increase its capacity to respond proactively to knowledge needs at all levels of the organization. It will continue to increase its offer of tailored knowledge products and timely, targeted evidence, including by increasing its capacity to monitor key decision making points and nurture dialogue with policy and programme decision makers, for example through targeted lessons that can inform new emergency responses. Key interlocutors will include WFP divisions such as Innovation and Knowledge Management, Programme –

Humanitarian and Development, and Research, Assessment and Monitoring.

In addition to becoming a learning partner within WFP, the evaluation function will enhance the global knowledge base by sharing evaluation evidence with evaluation stakeholders and partners, as well as think-tanks, the academic community, the research community and communities of practice. OEV and the regional bureaux will also establish and strengthen partnerships and collaboration to generate knowledge.



QUALITY ASSURANCE

A high-quality evaluation requires a carefully planned and executed process that has been managed in line with EQAS. EQAS provides process maps, templates, checklists and technical notes for all evaluation types. The decentralized evaluation external quality support service reviews all terms of reference and inception and evaluation reports for all decentralized evaluations.



QUALITY ASSESSMENT

The quality of all completed evaluations is independently assessed against EQAS standards, and the results are reported in the annual evaluation report. The results of these post-hoc quality assessments are also made publicly available alongside the evaluation reports, contributing to the transparency, credibility and utility of evaluations.

USE, COMMUNICATION AND FOLLOW-UP



USE

Evaluations are most useful when they are planned and conducted with a clear intent and timed to inform decision making; when they involve stakeholder engagement; and when evaluation evidence is available and accessible. OEV will continue to introduce innovative and agile evaluation approaches and methods that improve the timeliness of evaluations and their responsiveness to knowledge needs and thus increase the use of evaluation for decision making.²² It will work with regional bureaux to foster innovation in evaluations commissioned at the regional and country levels and facilitate cross-fertilization between regions.



COMMUNICATION

OEV will continue to liaise with WFP senior management and the Executive Board to shape WFP practices through the systematic use of evaluation evidence in processes for approving policies, strategies and programmes, as is already the case for CSPs through the corporate programme review process. WFP management and OEV are committed to engaging regularly during the finalization of evaluations and their management responses.

The implementation of the evaluation knowledge management and communications strategy will maximize the use of knowledge generated by evaluations in policy and strategy development and programme design.



FOLLOW-UP

All WFP evaluations and management responses will continue to be publicly available. The Executive Board considers all OEV-commissioned evaluations and their management responses. Strengthened mechanisms for following up on management actions in response to evaluation recommendations will include an annual analytical report produced by WFP management on the implementation status of evaluation recommendations for consideration by the Oversight and Policy Committee and the Executive Board. OEV will continue to produce periodic reports on actions taken in response to evaluation recommendations. The WFP risk and recommendation tracking tool (R2) and its associated improvements in the tracking and reporting of the follow-up to recommendations will enhance the use of evaluations for learning and accountability purposes.

System-wide evaluation and partnerships

Progress towards achieving the SDGs requires collective action, including inter-agency partnerships and partnerships among national governments and evaluation stakeholders that support global decision making. OEV and the

regional bureaux will continue to work with partners to enhance evaluation practices and facilitate global humanitarian effectiveness and accountability, including through support for efforts to enhance national evaluation capacity.

INTER-AGENCY COLLABORATION

The 2020 quadrennial comprehensive policy review reaffirms the need for system-wide and inter-agency collaboration on evaluation.²³ Joint and inter-agency evaluations offer increased coverage, cost efficiency and understanding among agencies and partners at the corporate and national levels. WFP will continue to advocate and participate in joint evaluations with other United Nations entities and government partners at the global, regional and national levels. WFP will contribute to the efforts proposed by the

Secretary-General to enhance system-wide evaluation within the United Nations development system and will participate fully in the implementation of UNSDCF evaluations at the country level and in continued improvements to UNSDCF evaluation methods developed through UNEG. WFP will continue to play a leading role in raising the profile, coverage and quality of humanitarian evaluation in partnership with the Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluation Steering Group,²⁴ UNEG and others.

NATIONAL EVALUATION CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

WFP will work with UNEG, the Global Evaluation Initiative and other partners to meet the commitments of the 2014 United Nations resolution on building national evaluation capacity²⁵ in line with the role of evaluation envisaged in the 2030 Agenda²⁶ and the global evaluation agenda.²⁷ OEV will support WFP regional bureaux and country offices in engaging with national governments and partners to strengthen the demand for, and use of,

evaluation. WFP will also advocate country-led evaluations and the generation of evidence to inform national processes and reports on progress towards the achievement of the SDGs. It will further develop partnerships with national and regional evaluation institutions and experts in order to strengthen national evaluation systems and enhance both evaluation capacity and the pool of evaluation experts.

Roles, accountabilities and institutional arrangements

Given the shared responsibility for the evaluation function within WFP, achieving this policy requires a range of roles and accountabilities.

EXECUTIVE BOARD

The Board exercises oversight of the evaluation function through the following roles.

NORMATIVE FRAMEWORK i) approving this evaluation policy and safeguarding its provisions; ii) approving the appointment by the Executive Director of the Director of Evaluation; iii) providing strategic guidance on the evaluation function through the annual consultation on evaluation and evaluation round tables; and iv) fostering an evaluation culture as members of WFP's governing body and in the countries they represent.

OVERSIGHT i) considering annual evaluation reports, which include progress on the implementation of the evaluation policy and the effectiveness of the evaluation function and guiding management in policy implementation; ii) considering all reports on evaluations commissioned by OEV; iii) considering timely and substantive management responses to all evaluations presented; and iv) considering reports on follow-up action, including reports prepared by OEV and WFP management.

PLANNING Approving the evaluation function workplan and priorities as set out in the WFP management plan.

RESOURCING i) approving the evaluation function budget as part of the WFP management plan; and ii) reviewing trends in the human and financial resources dedicated to the evaluation function through the annual evaluation report.

USE i) considering the use of evaluation evidence when approving new policies, strategies, programmes, management plans and other relevant documents; ii) using evidence generated by evaluations in its decision making; and iii) encouraging senior management to integrate lessons from evaluations into WFP practices.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Executive Director is accountable for the following.

NORMATIVE FRAMEWORK i) safeguarding the provisions of this policy, particularly regarding coverage norms, resourcing, accountabilities and impartiality provisions; ii) issuing the evaluation charter; iii) championing a corporate culture of accountability and learning and embedding evaluation principles in management and decision making; and iv) appointing, subject to Executive Board approval, a Director of Evaluation who is a professionally competent evaluator with no conflict of interest, based on the terms of appointment outlined in annex II.

RESOURCING As part of WFP management and project planning processes, allocating human and financial resources to ensure evaluation capacity and coverage across WFP in line with the provisions of the evaluation policy.

MANAGEMENT RESPONSE AND FOLLOW-UP i) ensuring that substantive management responses to evaluation recommendations are published when evaluation reports are considered by the Board, that follow-up actions are implemented and that progress on their implementation is reported annually; and ii) responding to the annual evaluation report and ensuring that actions are taken to support a high-performing WFP evaluation function.

USE Promoting a corporate culture of accountability and learning, including by encouraging evaluative thinking, the sound management of corporate knowledge and the use of evaluations to ensure evidence-based decision making on policies, strategies and programmes.

INTERNATIONAL ENGAGEMENT Supporting WFP contributions to evaluation internationally and – particularly as an Inter-Agency Standing Committee principal – to humanitarian evaluation.

DIRECTOR OF EVALUATION

The Director of Evaluation, appointed by the Executive Director subject to Executive Board approval, is a professionally competent evaluator with no conflict of interest (see annex II for the terms of appointment of the Director of Evaluation). The Director of Evaluation heads an independent evaluation function within the WFP

secretariat combining administrative reporting to the Executive Director and accountability to the Executive Board. Through OEV, the Director of Evaluation provides global leadership, standard-setting and oversight for the WFP evaluation function and is accountable for the following.

NORMATIVE FRAMEWORK

i) leading the formulation and implementation of the evaluation policy and the evaluation charter, ensuring adherence to UNEG norms and standards and application of the latest evaluation practice; ii) developing and leading implementation of the corporate evaluation strategy and other evaluation-related strategies; iii) supporting the Executive Director's promotion of a corporate culture of accountability and learning; iv) setting the normative framework for evaluations – norms, standards, safeguards for impartiality, guidance and expected coverage; and v) acting as secretary to the Evaluation Function Steering Group.

OVERSIGHT

i) providing assurance that all evaluations are conducted in compliance with evaluation norms and standards; ii) overseeing and reporting on the evaluation function; and iii) facilitating dialogue with senior management on the performance and further development of the evaluation function.

PLANNING

i) elaborating the evaluation function workplan in consultation with WFP senior management and other stakeholders for the Board's consideration as part of the WFP management plan; ii) ensuring that an enabling framework for the planning of evaluations commissioned outside OEV is in place; and iii) ensuring that regular consultations with regional bureaux and country offices are undertaken in order to achieve complementarity among evaluations commissioned across the function and comprehensive and balanced coverage for decentralized evaluations.

RESOURCING

i) exercising full delegated authority over all human and financial resources allocated to OEV; ii) proposing a budget corresponding to the evaluation function workplan for the Board's consideration as part of the WFP management plan; iii) supporting the implementation of the budgetary framework for the evaluation function; iv) leading engagement with donors and resource mobilization for evaluation; and v) in coordination with the Human Resources Division and the Research, Assessment and Monitoring Division, providing guidance on the most appropriate models for structuring the monitoring and evaluation function in various country office contexts.

MANAGEMENT OF OEV COMMISSIONED EVALUATIONS

i) delivering high-quality evaluations characterized by continued innovation; ii) recruiting independent evaluation consultants; iii) ensuring employees' adherence to the UNEG Pledge of Commitment to Ethical Conduct in Evaluation; and iv) submitting reports directly to the Board without prior clearance by WFP management.

QUALITY ASSURANCE

i) updating and disseminating evaluation methods and other guidance materials through EQAS to ensure that WFP evaluation practices meet UNEG and other relevant international standards and draw from the latest evaluation practices; ii) ensuring that all OEV-commissioned evaluations adhere to EQAS and designing and operationalizing systems that support adherence to EQAS by all other evaluations; and iii) systematically and comprehensively mainstreaming cross-cutting issues into WFP evaluation processes while ensuring that the differing needs of women, men, girls, boys and other affected populations are taken into consideration through programme design and implementation.

QUALITY ASSESSMENT

Ensuring that independent post-hoc quality assessments of all completed evaluations are published alongside evaluation reports.

CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

i) ensuring implementation of a comprehensive approach to internal capacity development for employees across the organization on steering, managing and using evaluations; and ii) establishing mechanisms that support recognition and career development for a professional evaluation cadre.

MANAGEMENT RESPONSES TO OEV COMMISSIONED EVALUATIONS

Advising management on coherence between OEV-commissioned evaluation recommendations and management responses.

USE

i) promoting and championing the use of evaluation within WFP and among its partners; ii) facilitating learning from evaluation evidence across regions; iii) publishing reports of all evaluations on the WFP website; iv) ensuring timely and appropriate communication of evaluation results in order to support organizational learning; and v) organizing the annual consultation on evaluation and evaluation round tables.

INTERNATIONAL ENGAGEMENT

i) leading WFP engagement in UNEG, the Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance and other professional evaluation networks; ii) leading WFP engagement in global partnerships that focus on national evaluation capacity development; iii) supporting joint and system-wide evaluations whenever appropriate, including UNSDCF evaluations and inter agency humanitarian evaluations; and iv) promoting WFP participation in global communities of practice.

REPORTING

Preparing and publishing the annual evaluation report, including reporting on progress in implementing the policy.

REGIONAL DIRECTORS

Regional directors play an important role in management oversight of the evaluation function, particularly regarding evaluations commissioned by regional or country offices, and are accountable for the following.

NORMATIVE FRAMEWORK

i) ensuring application of the provisions of the evaluation policy for evaluations commissioned by regional bureaux and country offices, including coverage norms and impartiality; ii) taking appropriate action to strengthen evaluation at the regional and country levels with the support of OEV; iii) leading the formulation and operationalization of regional evaluation strategies in line with this policy and the corporate evaluation strategy; and iv) chairing the regional evaluation committees, which should be convened regularly.

PLANNING

i) engaging in regular consultations with OEV and country offices to ensure complementarity among evaluations commissioned across the function; ii) ensuring that plans for evaluations are included in the design of regional strategies, interventions and other initiatives; and iii) ensuring the preparation and annual update of regional evaluation plans.

RESOURCING

i) ensuring that resources are budgeted for and allocated to the management of independent evaluations, including those commissioned by country offices, and providing regional-level support and oversight; and ii) ensuring that resources are budgeted for and allocated to the maintenance of the regional evaluation units.

QUALITY ASSURANCE

Overseeing the application of evaluation quality assurance procedures.

CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

i) with OEV, providing technical advice to country offices managing evaluations; ii) contributing to the strengthening of evaluation capacity across the region; and iii) facilitating evaluation capacity development initiatives in line with the WFP evaluation capacity development strategy.

MANAGEMENT RESPONSES AND FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS

Ensuring that management responses to evaluations commissioned by regional bureaux and country offices are prepared and made publicly available and that relevant follow-up actions are undertaken.

USE

i) ensuring that CSPs and new programmes, initiatives and strategies prepared in the region are based on evidence from evaluations; ii) ensuring that all reports on evaluations commissioned within the region are publicly available; iii) promoting the development of evidence products such as evidence summaries; and iv) facilitating learning from evaluation evidence within the region and among countries.

REGIONAL ENGAGEMENT

i) in partnership with other United Nations entities, supporting national evaluation capacity development at the country and regional levels; ii) supporting the commissioning and management of joint evaluations at the country and regional levels.

REPORTING

i) ensuring the quality and provision of data and information on the evaluation function across the regions; and ii) ensuring the provision of inputs to OEV for corporate reporting on the evaluation function.

DIRECTORS OF HEADQUARTERS DIVISIONS, REGIONAL BUREAUX AND COUNTRY OFFICES

The directors of headquarters divisions, regional bureaux and country offices may commission evaluations. In addition, they are stakeholders in centralized evaluations. Accordingly, they are accountable for the following.

AS COMMISSIONERS OF EVALUATIONS

NORMATIVE FRAMEWORK i) complying with the provisions of the evaluation policy and its safeguards for impartiality; and ii) meeting coverage norms.

PLANNING i) including plans for evaluation in the design of interventions – consistent with the coverage norms of the evaluation policy – and ensuring the evaluability of interventions by establishing appropriate baselines, indicators and targets for expected results; ii) for regional directors only, planning multi-country evaluations in the region in order to fill evidence gaps or to meet other cross-regional requirements; iii) including evaluation in office workplans; and iv) promoting joint evaluations whenever feasible and relevant.

RESOURCING Budgeting adequately for the management and conduct of evaluations and ensuring that resources are allocated.

MANAGEMENT OF EVALUATIONS i) designing and managing evaluations in compliance with norms and standards set out in the WFP EQAS; ii) identifying, recruiting and managing evaluation consultants; iii) ensuring that consultants adhere to the UNEG Pledge of Commitment to Ethical Conduct in Evaluation; and iv) using competitive and performance-based procedures for recruitment.

QUALITY ASSURANCE Applying appropriate evaluation quality assurance procedures.

QUALITY ASSESSMENT Reviewing quality assessment reports on completed evaluations and taking action to improve the quality of future evaluations.

CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT With the support of OEV, strengthening staff capacity for managing decentralized evaluations and supporting other evaluation categories.

MANAGEMENT RESPONSES AND FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS i) preparing management responses and ensuring that they are publicly available; and ii) undertaking and reporting on follow-up actions.

USE i) using evidence from evaluations in preparing new policies, programmes, strategies and other interventions; and ii) ensuring that evaluation reports are publicly available.

AS STAKEHOLDERS OF CENTRALIZED AND IMPACT EVALUATIONS

SUPPORT FOR THE CONDUCT OF EVALUATIONS i) ensuring the evaluability of WFP undertakings by establishing baseline information, performance indicators and targets for expected results; ii) facilitating the evaluation process and providing access to required information; and iii) engaging in consultations on evaluation plans and providing feedback on evaluation products.

RESOURCING Country directors only: Ensuring that CSP evaluation costs and, where appropriate, impact evaluation costs, are reflected in country portfolio budgets and that resources are allocated appropriately.

MANAGEMENT RESPONSES AND FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS Preparing management responses to assigned evaluation recommendations, implementing follow-up actions and reporting on them.

USE Using evidence from evaluations to inform the preparation of new programmes, strategies and policies.

INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

Given the shared nature of the evaluation function, mechanisms that ensure coherence across the function are important. Key mechanisms are as follows:

OVERSIGHT AND POLICY COMMITTEE

This advisory body comprises senior management and the directors of certain functions. Its key role is to review and agree on policies and to deliberate on and oversee the implementation of oversight recommendations and corporate risk management activities. The results of centralized evaluations and the implementation status of evaluation recommendations are presented for consideration by the Oversight and Policy Committee.

EVALUATION FUNCTION STEERING GROUP (EFSG)

This advisory body is chaired by the Deputy Executive Director and comprises regional directors and the directors of certain functions. The EFSG supports the Executive Director in championing the evaluation policy and safeguarding its provisions to ensure that evaluation is embedded in decision making and practice across WFP. The group provides strategic guidance regarding the application of the provisions of the evaluation policy; stewards and supports financial mechanisms for the evaluation function; and leads in stimulating demand for and the use of evaluation internally and by WFP partners. The Director of Evaluation serves as the EFSG secretary.

REGIONAL EVALUATION COMMITTEES

These committees are chaired by the regional directors and comprise country directors from the respective regions and certain senior advisors and staff at the regional bureaux. They mirror the role of the EFSG at the regional level, supporting the regional directors in championing the evaluation policy and safeguarding its provisions to ensure that evaluation is embedded in decision making and practice across the regions, and they support the regional directors in developing and operationalizing regional evaluation strategies and reviewing and endorsing regional evaluation plans, which are updated annually. They also play a key role in enhancing coherence in evaluation activities between OEV, the regional bureaux and country offices. The regional evaluation officers act as secretaries to the regional evaluation committees.

THE INDEPENDENT OVERSIGHT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

This body provides independent expert advice to the Executive Board and the Executive Director on fulfilling their governance responsibilities. In relation to evaluation, the committee advises on the evaluation policy, strategy and charter; the annual evaluation workplan and budget; quality assurance systems for the evaluation function; and external assessments. It reviews the effectiveness of the evaluation function and provides a forum for the discussion of matters raised in WFP evaluations. The committee also provides advice on the adequacy of management response and follow-up to audit, ethics, ombudsman and evaluation recommendations.²⁸

Resources

An effective evaluation function requires secure, predictable and adequate financial and human resources. WFP recognizes that sustainable financing and resourcing for evaluation are priorities, and management is committed to ensuring adequate resources for implementing this policy and for the evaluation function as it evolves.

As part of its commitment to meeting the UNEG norms for evaluation, WFP is committed to enhancing professionalism. Furthermore, recognizing that evaluation is a specialist skill, WFP will build a cadre of evaluation staff within the

organization who work on evaluation – full time or periodically – with the skills necessary to commission, manage and use evaluations and evaluation evidence and to support the development of a culture of learning from evaluation throughout the organization. OEV will work with the Human Resources Division to establish systems for professional development and recognition within the cadre to ensure that employees maintain the technical skills required to deliver high-quality evaluations and have opportunities to engage with professional evaluation networks.

HUMAN RESOURCES

To be effective the evaluation function requires adequate skilled human resources:

EXTERNAL SPECIALISTS

External specialists are hired to conduct all evaluations commissioned in WFP and certain evaluation-related tasks such as quality assessments of completed evaluations. OEV maintains a list of evaluators and service providers. WFP is committed to gender equity and geographical diversity in its recruitment of external specialists.

WFP EVALUATION OFFICERS

Dedicated evaluation officers may be appointed by larger country offices and by headquarters divisions; however, the majority of evaluation officers are appointed to serve in OEV and the regional bureaux.

- OEV and regional evaluation units will continue to be staffed by a mix of externally recruited evaluation specialists with proven competence and experience and current WFP employees with the required competence for evaluation appointed in line with the WFP staffing framework and reassignment policy. Reassigned employees will be required to serve a minimum of four years when assigned to an evaluation position.
- Each regional bureau will continue to maintain a regional evaluation unit headed by an experienced evaluation specialist²⁹ reporting directly to the regional director or deputy regional director, with technical reporting to OEV. These posts are financed through regional bureau programme support and administrative budgets in order to ensure predictability, independence from programmes and adequate staffing. Depending on the needs of the evaluation function at the regional level, the regional bureaux may recruit additional evaluation specialists.
- OEV will work with the Human Resources Division to ensure that there is adequate sourcing of evaluation officers across the function with the appropriate combination of evaluation expertise and knowledge of WFP's operations and work environment and that the gender equity and parity and geographical diversity requirements of the WFP people policy are met.

OTHER WFP EMPLOYEES

WFP employees (including monitoring and evaluation and programme staff and managers) will receive the training and technical support they need to meet their evaluation responsibilities.

In order to reduce risk or bias, to the extent possible monitoring and evaluation officers in country offices should report directly to the management of the country office.

FINANCIAL RESOURCES

The share of WFP's total contribution income assigned to evaluation has risen steadily as the function has evolved. Through this policy, the function is expected to continue to grow, and it is appropriate to set a target for financing that can accommodate this evolution over time and that recognizes the specificities of WFP operations compared with those of other United Nations entities. The expectations set out by the Joint Inspection Unit in 2014,³⁰ adjusted to reflect WFP experience, are the starting point. As noted in the peer review, when setting a target for financing, it is important to take into consideration the costs of a fully fledged evaluation function, including an enhanced evaluation function at the decentralized level.

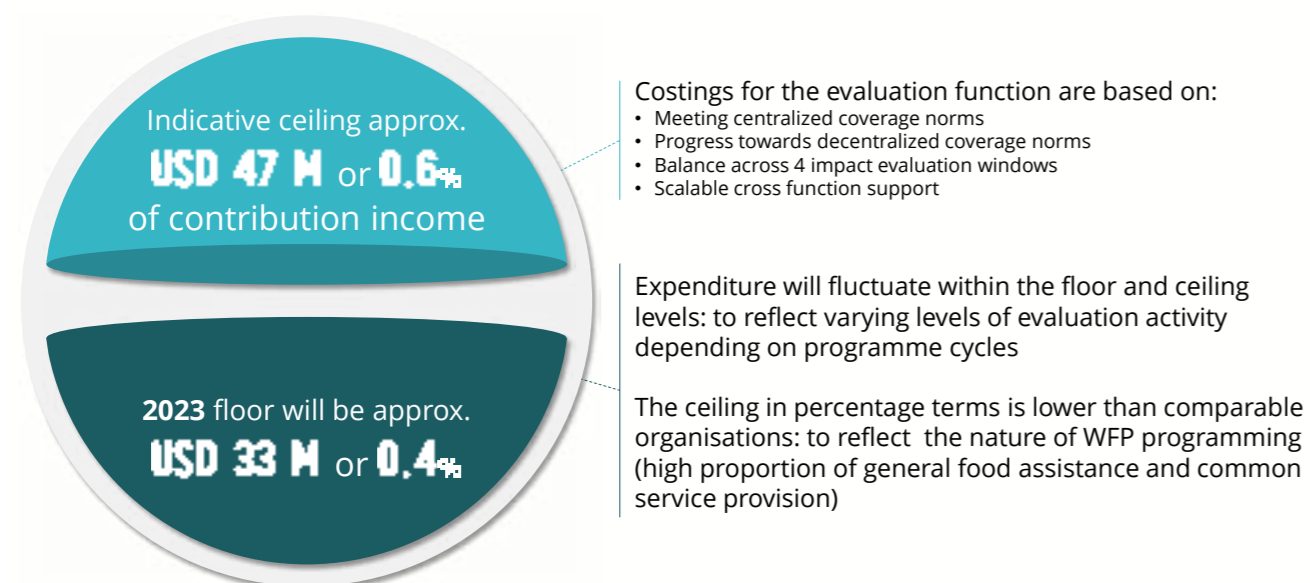
WFP is committed to ensuring that its evaluation function is sufficiently and sustainably funded. Acknowledging the potential evolution of the function in the coming years, starting from 2023, WFP will allocate at least 0.4 percent of its total contribution income³¹ to its evaluation function. Expenditure on evaluation is expected to rise progressively with the continued growth of the function, particularly at the regional and country levels, reaching up to 0.6 percent of total contribution income in 2026. Projections of evaluation expenditure beyond 2026 anticipate that there will be annual fluctuation within this range depending on the level of evaluation activity, which will vary according to the status of country programme cycles.

The evaluation function is financed through four separate funding sources, each of which funds different types of evaluation activities, specifically:

- Programme support and administrative resources, which fund the OEV budget and regional evaluation unit costs;
- Country portfolio budgets, which fund CSP evaluations, decentralized evaluations commissioned by country offices and data collection costs for impact evaluations;
- A multi-donor trust fund, which receives and channels resources dedicated to impact evaluations; and
- Multilateral resources allocated to the Contingency Evaluation Fund, which supports country offices that face genuine resource constraints in respect of planned and budgeted decentralized evaluations and CSP evaluations and small country offices that face genuine resource constraints in respect of impact evaluation data collection costs. The Contingency Evaluation Fund is governed by the EFSG according to agreed eligibility and assessment criteria.³²

In addition, a special account is managed by OEV as a repository for receiving direct contributions from other United Nations entities for the funding of joint evaluations and related activities.

All funds allocated to OEV are managed by the Director of Evaluation to ensure financial independence. The Director of Evaluation will continue to ensure the visibility and transparency of budget allocations and expenditure for the evaluation function through annual reporting to the Executive Board.



Risks

The theory of change in figure 2 identifies several assumptions required for an effective evaluation function to deliver its outputs and outcomes. If these assumptions are incorrect, there is a risk that the function will be unable to achieve its intended goals. The risks for the evaluation function and mitigating actions are identified in table 4.

TABLE 4: RISK ANALYSIS

RISK	MITIGATING MEASURES
1. Low external and/or unpredictable demand for evaluation from stakeholders (medium)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocacy for increasing stakeholder use of and support for WFP evaluations Supporting governments with national evaluation capacity development
2. Low internal demand for evaluation (medium)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OEV and other units' action to ensure the relevance, timeliness and quality of evaluations Enhanced communication of evaluation results Raising awareness of the utility of evaluations Reporting on the application of coverage norms
3. Insufficient organizational leadership, ownership and support (medium)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fostering by senior management of a corporate culture of accountability and learning that embeds evaluation in corporate decision making Integrating evaluation roles and accountabilities into WFP's staff performance management system Board review of key performance indicators for the evaluation function, decision making and clear communication of expectations and guidance on improving performance
4. Sub-optimal use of evaluation (medium)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Management action to ensure the systematic consideration of evaluation evidence and planning for evaluation in the policy and programme review process Oversight Policy Committee and Executive Board consideration of the implementation status of evaluation recommendations Implementation of WFP's knowledge management strategy

RISK	MITIGATING MEASURES
5. Inadequate human resources – skills and employees (medium)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation of the action plan resulting from the strategic workforce planning exercise for evaluation Implementation of the evaluation capacity development strategy
6. Unpredictable and inadequate financial resources (medium)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corporate commitment to meeting financial targets for evaluation as set out in the policy OEV and regional evaluation units will continue to advocate systematic forward planning, budgeting and resource allocation for evaluations Continued adequate funding of the Contingency Evaluation Fund
7. Limited quality and take-up of monitoring and other WFP data (medium)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Management commitment to improving the corporate monitoring system and capacity Partial compensation through primary data collection and triangulation of information by evaluation teams Planning of evaluation at the start of project cycles in order to facilitate the identification of monitoring requirements Engagement with the WFP Global Privacy Office in order to ensure continued data access and use OEV partnerships with data owners at headquarters
8. Perceptions of limited added value of agency evaluation functions (medium)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued participation in UNEG Participation in efforts to clarify complementarities between system-wide evaluation and agency-specific evaluations Continued support for joint evaluations

Policy rollout, implementation and review

Implementation of the policy will be supported by updated versions of the evaluation charter, the corporate evaluation strategy and regional evaluation strategies.

The evaluation function workplan is produced annually as a three-year rolling plan and budget and is submitted to the Executive Board as an annex to the WFP management plan. The Executive Board approves the management plan and by extension, the evaluation function workplan and budget.

This evaluation policy has a time horizon of 2030, the target date for the achievement of the SDGs. A review of policy implementation is proposed for 2025–2026 with a view to informing any revisions to this policy that are deemed necessary. The recognized mechanism for assessing evaluation policies in the United Nations is the DAC/UNEG external peer review process.

Oversight and reporting

The annual evaluation report is the primary instrument for reporting on the entire evaluation function and includes an assessment of the quality of all evaluations, progress on key performance indicators for the evaluation function, the performance of regional evaluation units, and OEV's performance against its workplan.

OEV has developed a management information system and a set of key performance indicators that support Board oversight of evaluation across WFP and provide information on progress made towards achieving the outcomes set out in the policy. Areas of reporting include evaluation coverage, the quality of evaluation reports, use of evaluations, evaluation partnerships and joint evaluations, and financial and human resources.

ANNEX I

EVALUATION TYPES CONDUCTED AT WFP

POLICY EVALUATIONS	Are embedded in WFP's policy framework and aim to assess the quality, implementation and results of policies.	THEMATIC EVALUATIONS	Assess the relevance, results and factors affecting the results of WFP interventions in cross-cutting thematic areas such as partnerships or gender.
STRATEGIC EVALUATIONS	Assess global or corporate themes, programmes and initiatives selected for their relevance to WFP's strategic direction and management.	EVALUATIONS OF PILOTS	WFP uses pilots and innovations and prototypes as a means of determining the best way to deliver assistance to achieve humanitarian and development outcomes. Providing credible evidence about pilots, pilot evaluations are important in identifying the range of programming modalities and instruments at WFP's disposal.
COUNTRY STRATEGIC PLAN EVALUATIONS	Evaluate the performance and results of a CSP as a whole and provide evaluative insights for evidence-based decision making related to the positioning of WFP in a country and strategic partnerships, programme design and implementation.	EVALUATIONS OF TRANSFER MODALITIES	These evaluations assess the design, implementation and results of particular transfer modalities for food assistance; they sometimes compare the use of various transfer modalities and their relative success in achieving particular outcomes.
IMPACT EVALUATIONS	Measure changes in development outcomes of interest for a target population that can be attributed to a specific programme or policy through a credible counterfactual.	EVALUATION SYNTHESSES	Evaluation syntheses provide succinct and actionable analysis drawn from completed evaluations of any specific type.
EVALUATIONS OF CORPORATE EMERGENCY RESPONSES	Assess corporate emergency responses, with particular attention to humanitarian context and principles and the coverage, coherence and connectedness of the responses.	JOINT EVALUATIONS	Given the benefits of a common approach for collective accountability and learning, any evaluation may be conducted jointly with partners when appropriate. In the wider context of the United Nations and the SDGs, joint evaluations are increasingly relevant, and they are the norm in large scale and protracted humanitarian contexts in the form of inter-agency humanitarian evaluations.
ACTIVITY EVALUATIONS	Evaluate subcomponents of a CSP or interim CSP. They support learning related to the implementation of specific activities by identifying what is working and what can be improved and they provide evidence for accountability purposes by examining the results delivered by the activities for beneficiaries and partners compared with planned results.		

ANNEX II

TERMS OF APPOINTMENT OF THE WFP DIRECTOR OF EVALUATION

REPORTING LINE The Director of Evaluation heads an independent function within the WFP secretariat, combining administrative reporting to the Executive Director and accountability to the Executive Board.

APPOINTMENT TERMS In line with the UNEG norms and standards, the Director of Evaluation is appointed by the Executive Director, with the approval of the Executive Board.

In addition to responsibility for management and oversight of the WFP Office of Evaluation, the Director of Evaluation, appointed at the D-2 level, provides global leadership and sets standards for, oversees and reports on the evaluation function across the whole of WFP, in conformity with the United Nations evaluation principles of independence, credibility and utility and the normative framework and accountabilities set out in the evaluation policy and the evaluation charter.

The term of office of the Director of Evaluation shall be five years, with the possibility of renewal for a second term. The Director of Evaluation will not be permitted re-entry into the organization at the end of his or her final term.

To avoid any real or perceived conflict of interest, the Director of Evaluation shall not be assigned any other management responsibilities and will serve only in an advisory or observer role in committees or task forces established for management purposes.

SELECTION PROCESS With the paramount criteria being those of technical competence and behavioural independence and integrity, an internationally competitive and transparent selection procedure for the position of Director of Evaluation is established as follows:

- The Human Resources Division will prepare an external vacancy announcement, based on terms of reference informed by the accountabilities set out in the evaluation policy.
- The vacancy announcement will be widely advertised and circulated through appropriate channels and websites, including those of United Nations Member States, the UNEG and other relevant international bodies, networks and publications.
- Based on the selection criteria identified in the vacancy announcement, the Human Resources Division will screen applications and prepare a list of candidates who meet the minimum qualifications.
- A selection panel, appointed by the Executive Director with the composition described below and with the support of the Human Resources Division, will review the candidates in accordance with WFP recruitment policies and the post requirements. Based on their initial review, the selection panel will conduct interviews and recommend the two top-ranked candidates to the Executive Director in order of priority.
- The Executive Director will present his or her final selection to the Executive Board for approval.

The Executive Director shall appoint a selection panel with the following composition:

- Deputy Executive Director;
- Chief of Staff;
- Assistant Executive Director (Programme and Policy Development Department or Resource Management Department);
- Chair of UNEG (or a designated director of another United Nations evaluation office);
- Two members of the WFP Executive Board, designated by the Bureau; and
- Director of the Human Resources Division as secretary.

RENEWAL PROCESS The Executive Director may renew the appointment of an incumbent Director of Evaluation for a second term, with the prior consent of the Executive Board.

DISMISSAL Dismissal of the Director of Evaluation due to poor performance, misconduct or malfeasance shall be effected in accordance with WFP policies and procedures, with prior consent by the Executive Board. The Director may not be dismissed for public statements that are made in the conduct of his or her work and are consistent with WFP rules and regulations and the United Nations standards of conduct for the International Civil Service.

Acronyms

CSP	country strategic plan
EFSG	Evaluation Function Steering Group
EQAS	Evaluation Quality Assurance System
OECD-DAC	Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OEV	Office of Evaluation
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNSDCF	United Nations sustainable development cooperation framework

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	WFP/Saikat Mojumder

Endnotes

- 1 [“WFP response to the recommendations in the summary report on the peer review of the evaluation function at the World Food Programme”](#) (WFP/EB.A/2021/7-D/Add.1/Rev.1).
- 2 Accountability is the obligation to account for – and report on – work carried out and results achieved, using planned objectives and targets as benchmarks against which to assess performance. Learning informs operational and strategic decision making through analysis of why certain results did or did not occur and the drawing of lessons to identify good practices, build on success and avoid past mistakes.
- 3 UNEG. 2016. [Norms and Standards for Evaluation \(2016\)](#).
- 4 [“WFP strategic plan \(2022–2025\)”](#) (WFP/EB.2/2021/4-A/1/Rev.2).
- 5 The charter will be updated to clarify governance and roles in the evaluation function and the terms, authority and accountability of the Director of Evaluation, as reflected in this policy.
- 6 OECD. 2020. [Partnership for Peace: High-level OECD DAC & UN Roundtable on the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus, 6 October 2020: Outcome Document](#).
- 7 United Nations General Assembly resolution 70/1 of 21 October 2015 [Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#) (A/RES/70/1).
- 8 United Nations General Assembly resolution 69/237 of 19 December 2014 [Building capacity for the evaluation of development activities at the country level](#) (A/RES/69/237).
- 9 The [Global Evaluation Agenda \(2016–2020\)](#) sets out a long-term global vision for evaluation.
- 10 [“Summary report on the peer review of the evaluation function at the World Food Programme”](#) (WFP/EB.A/2021/7-D).
- 11 United Nations. [Take action for the Sustainable Development Goals](#).
- 12 UNEG. 2016. [Norms and Standards for Evaluation \(2016\)](#).
- 13 Revised in 2019, the [OECD-DAC evaluation criteria](#) include relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability and coherence. In humanitarian contexts, relevance and sustainability may be replaced by appropriateness, and coverage, connectedness and coherence are also considered (see Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance In Humanitarian Action. 2006. [Evaluating Humanitarian Action Using the OECD-DAC Criteria: an ALNAP guide for humanitarian agencies](#)).
- 14 WFP. 2020. [Evaluation quality assurance system: guidance for process and content](#).
- 15 [“WFP oversight framework”](#) (WFP/EB.A/2018/5-C).
- 16 UNEG. 2016. [Norms and Standards for Evaluation \(2016\)](#).
- 17 WFP. 2016. [Making the choice: decentralized evaluation or review? \(Orientation note\)](#).
- 18 [“Revised Charter of the Office of the Inspector General”](#) (WFP/EB.2/2019/4-B/1).
- 19 UNEG. 2016. [Norms and Standards for Evaluation \(2016\)](#).
- 20 UNEG. 2016. [Norms and Standards for Evaluation \(2016\)](#).
- 21 While CSP evaluations are commissioned and managed by OEV, country offices are responsible for their planning and budgeting.
- 22 An evaluation methods advisory panel made up of globally recognized evaluation experts will provide advice on innovation in evaluation approaches and methods for best meeting the accountability and learning needs of WFP. Evaluations will increasingly utilize innovative WFP data collection tools, including geospatial monitoring, drones and online tools.
- 23 United Nations General Assembly resolution 75/233 of 21 December 2020. [Quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system](#) (A/RES/75/233).
- 24 The Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluation Steering Group is an entity associated with the Inter-Agency Standing Committee.
- 25 United Nations General Assembly resolution 69/237 of 19 December 2014. [Building capacity for the evaluation of development activities at the country level](#) (A/RES/69/237).
- 26 United Nations General Assembly resolution 70/1 of 25 September 2015. [Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#) (A/RES/70/1).
- 27 [Global Evaluation Agenda 2016–2020](#).
- 28 [“Revised title and terms of reference of the Audit Committee”](#) (WFP/EB.2/2021/9-A).
- 29 Currently these positions are at the P-4 level but over the course of the policy may be upgraded to P-5 given the expected growth and evolution in the roles and responsibilities of the evaluation function at the regional level, which among other things calls for providing strategic direction for the function in the regions, leading support for country offices in the conduct of decentralized evaluations, supporting partnerships for evaluation and promoting the uptake of evaluation evidence.
- 30 United Nations Joint Inspection Unit. 2014. [Analysis of the Evaluation Function in the United Nations System](#).
- 31 This proportion is based on 2021 projections of total contributions in 2023 of USD 8.0 billion.
- 32 The amount allocated to the Contingency Evaluation Fund will be stated each year in the WFP management plan and details regarding its use in the annual evaluation report.

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