



# WFP Environmental and Social Sustainability Framework

Module 1: Overview



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## I. Introduction

1. The World Food Programme embraces the vision of the 2030 Agenda for a world free from hunger in a context of socially equitable and environmentally responsible sustainable development. WFP's ability to contribute to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda depends on its unwavering commitment to act with the highest ethics and to apply the highest standards in its interactions with the people, communities and governments it serves, and the natural environment on which all depend.

2. The WFP Environmental and Social Sustainability Framework (hereafter: "WFP Sustainability Framework") consists of a set of principles, standards, and tools created to increase WFP's environmental and social sustainability and to limit the potentially negative impacts WFP may have on the environment, people, or communities. The WFP Sustainability Framework integrates the core values, principles and standards embedded in a range of existing WFP policies, directives, and guidelines, and provides tools to implement them. It has been drafted with due regard to UN-wide practices and following a review of international standards for environmental and social sustainability.

3. Consequently, the WFP Sustainability Framework:

- provides an approach to increase environmental and social sustainability in line with international best practices and consistent with other entities in the UN System;
- facilitates the implementation of WFP's existing do-no-harm commitments at all levels;
- provides extra assurance to WFP's donors;
- makes it easier for WFP's partners to comply with WFP's values, principles, and standards.

4. The WFP Safeguards are described in four modules:

- [Module 1 – Overview](#): the present module describes the overarching principles of the WFP Sustainability Framework, including the links with the corporate risk management, programme cycle, support functions, interactions with partners, and monitoring and oversight;
- [Module 2 – Environmental and Social Standards](#): this module describes the commitments and minimum standards enshrined in existing WFP policies, directives, and guidelines, as well as in relevant international law vis-à-vis environmental and social sustainability;
- [Module 3 – Environmental and Social Safeguards for Programme Activities](#): this module describes how to identify and manage environmental and social risks in the design and implementation of WFP's programme activities;
- [Module 4 – Environmental Management System \(EMS\) Manual](#): this module describes how the sustainability of support operations can be improved through the application of an EMS based on the international standard ISO 14001:2015.

## II. Objective of the Framework

5. In line with the mandate given by the WFP Environmental Policy, the WFP Sustainability Framework is designed to:

- limit the potentially negative impacts WFP may have on the environment, people, or communities, stemming from its programme activities, support operations (such as facilities, administration, procurement, logistics, IT management, travel), or any other action carried out or funded by WFP;
- progressively increase the environmental and social sustainability of the WFP programme activities, support operations, and any other action carried out or funded by WFP.

## III. Scope of the Framework

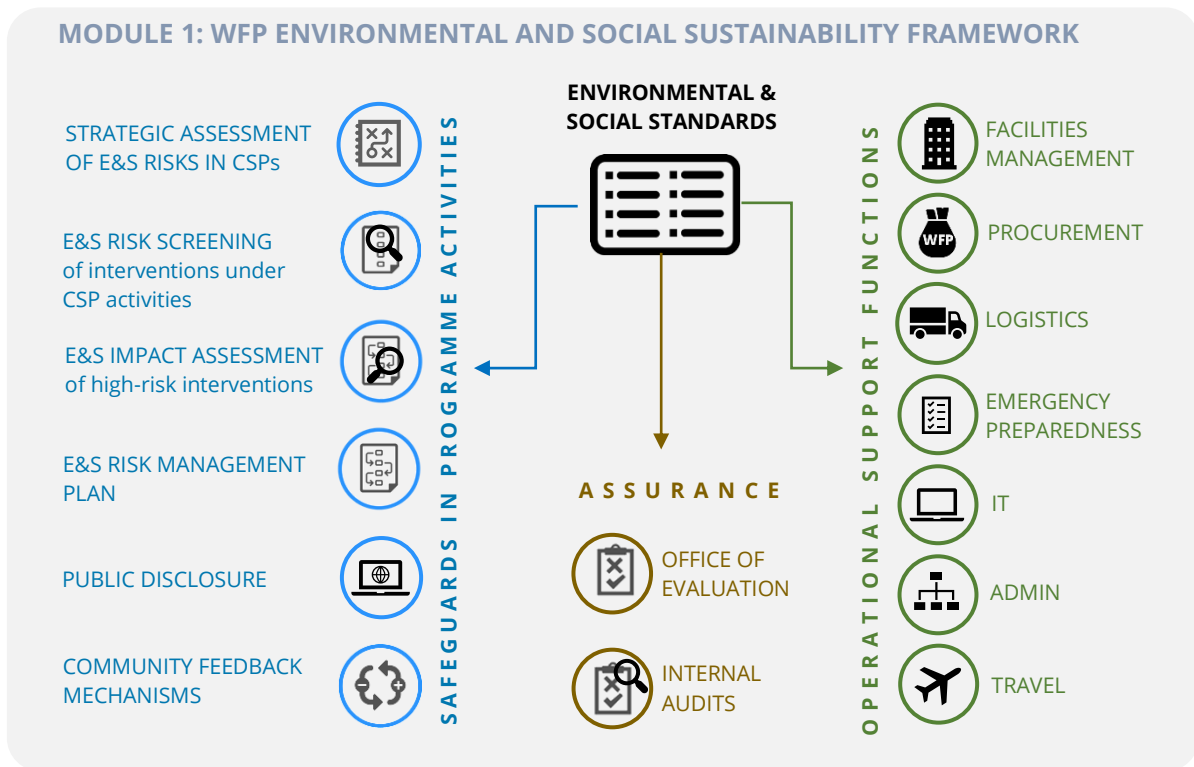
6. The WFP Sustainability Framework applies to all activities, operations, and assets managed or funded by WFP.

7. The WFP Environmental and Social Standards also govern the work of partners or contractors that receive funds from WFP, or that implement activities, interventions, or operations on behalf of WFP.

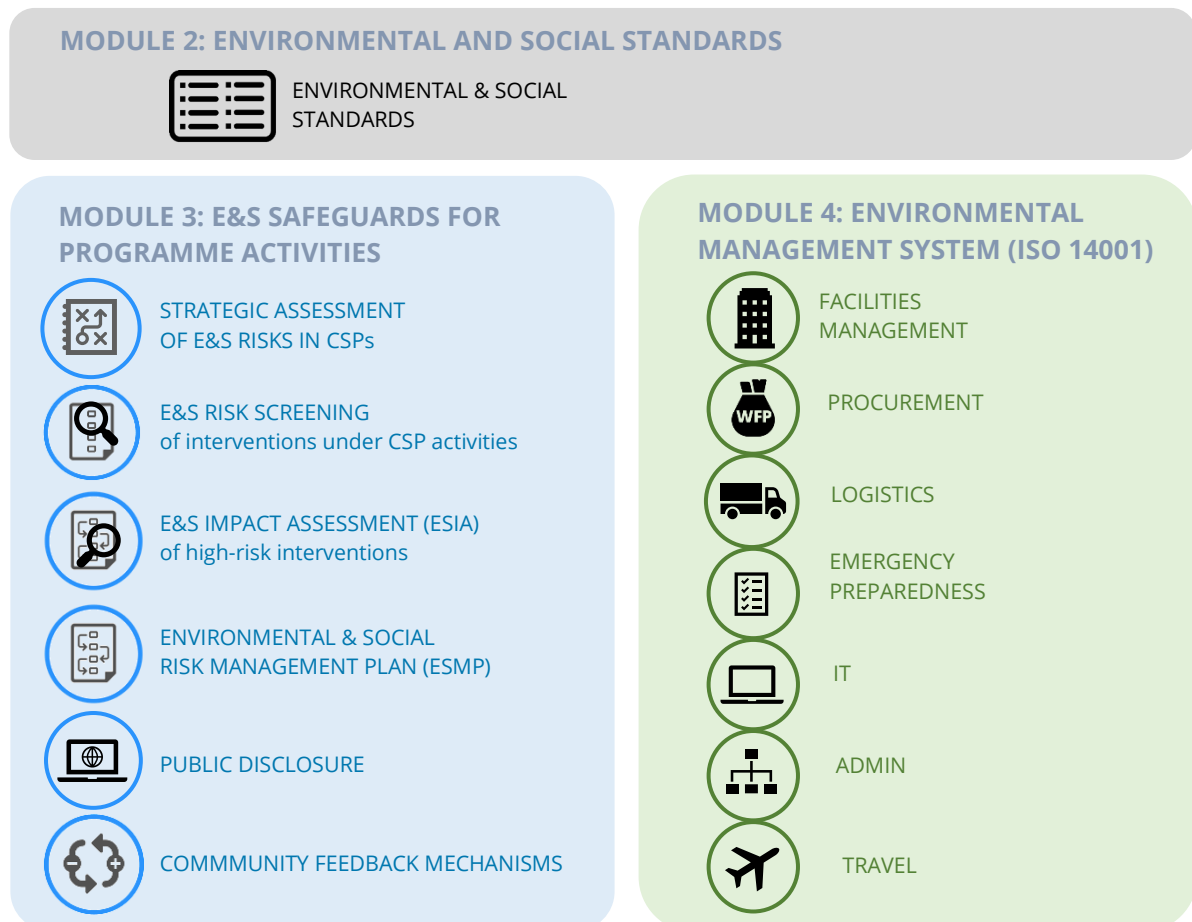


<b>Box 1: Terminology used in the WFP Environmental and Social Sustainability Framework</b>	
Activity	Action described in a Country Strategic Plan (CSP) that converts inputs (such as funds, technical assistance and other types of resources) into outputs, in order to realize one or more of WFP’s Strategic Objectives in the country. Each CSP activity falls in one of 14 activity categories, such as ‘Unconditional Resource Transfers’ (URT) or ‘School Meals Programmes’ (SMP).
Environmental and social risk	In the context of the WFP Sustainability Framework, environmental and social risk is defined as the possibility that an action taken by WFP could potentially lead to unintended negative situations, conditions, or outcomes for people, communities, or the natural environment.
Environmental and social risk screening	A procedure to help identify environmental and social risks inherent in the design of an activity or intervention.
Environmental Management System	An approach to identify, manage, monitor and control environmental issues in in-house operations through a continuous cycle of improvement
Negative impact	The materialization of a risk, leading to undesired situations, conditions, or outcomes.
Negative environmental and social impact	In the context of the WFP Safeguards, environmental and social impacts are defined as the materialization of environmental or social risks, leading to unintended negative situations, conditions, or outcomes for people, communities, or the natural environment.
Risk	The possibility that an event of a given impact will occur, adversely affecting the achievement of objectives. A material risk is deemed to have a significant impact on the achievement of WFP’s objectives.
Safeguards	A set of measures that includes principles, procedures, and controls, to avoid or manage risks or negative impacts.
Standards	A list of principles that, when respected in the design and implementation of an activity, would avoid or minimize the risk of causing negative impacts.
Sustainability Framework	A set of principles, standards, and tools created to increase WFP’s environmental and social sustainability and to limit the potentially negative impacts WFP may have on people, communities or the natural environment

**Figure 1:** Logic of the WFP Sustainability Framework, as described in Module 1



**Figure 2:** Components of the WFP Sustainability Framework described in Modules 2, 3, and 4





## IV. Principles and Standards of the Framework

8. The WFP Sustainability Framework incorporates the general principles of *Leave no one behind*, *Sustainability*, and *Accountability and transparency* (described in paragraphs 10-12). They are central in the 2030 Agenda and WFP's Strategic Plan 2017-2021.

9. The WFP Environmental and Social Standards (introduced in paragraph 13 and described in full in [Module 2](#)) are the set of benchmarks on which the WFP Sustainability Framework is built. The WFP Standards are aligned with the Model Approach to Environmental and Social Standards in UN Programming.<sup>1</sup>

### IV.1. Guiding Principles

#### *Leave no one behind*

10. The *Leave no one behind* principle is central in the 2030 Agenda. WFP applies this principle by:

- Recognizing the diversity that characterizes the individuals and groups WFP works with and serves;
- Ensuring that marginalized and disadvantaged individuals and groups are appropriately identified;
- Where necessary, undertaking differentiated measures to strengthen the voice and participation of marginalized and disadvantaged individuals and groups;
- Making special efforts to minimize and mitigate any potential adverse impacts from supported activities on marginalized and disadvantaged individuals and groups, considering that such individuals and groups may be disproportionately affected;
- Promoting protection of the most marginalized and vulnerable individuals and groups facing crisis and conflict situations and those most likely to be impacted by climate change and disasters;
- Providing marginalized/disadvantaged individuals and groups equitable access to resources and benefits, recognising that the starting point is different for different individuals and groups

#### *Sustainability*

11. The 2030 Agenda has the objective of enhancing human well-being through sustainable economic growth and ensuring the lasting protection of the planet and its natural and cultural resources. WFP applies the *Sustainability* principle through the following considerations:

- Integrating social, environmental and economic sustainability considerations into all aspects of country and activity programming;
- Applying a precautionary approach to addressing significant environmental and social challenges (that is, where serious threats exist, the lack of full scientific certainty will not be used to postpone adoption of effective preventive measures);
- Avoiding risks and negative impacts, and where avoidance is not possible, minimizing risks or mitigating adverse impacts to people and the environment, as per the mitigation hierarchy;
- Identifying and addressing interconnections among issues related to the environment, human rights, conflict, crises and vulnerability, where relevant.

#### *Transparency and Accountability*

12. WFP is committed to *Transparency and accountability* to the people and governments it serves, its donors, partners, and the entire society. It applies this principle by:

- Promoting compliance with relevant legal norms and standards, including the WFP regulatory framework, applicable national laws,<sup>2</sup> regulations and obligations under international human rights law, international labour standards, international environmental treaties and agreements, giving preference to the higher standard where national law, international law, or WFP regulatory frameworks would set different standards;
- Fostering active local community engagement and participation in the design, decision-making, implementation, and monitoring of WFP operations and activities, paying particular attention to marginalized or disadvantaged individuals and groups;

<sup>1</sup> The Model Approach to Environmental and Social Standards in UN Programming is available at <https://unemg.org/modelapproach/>

<sup>2</sup> See paragraph 45 for WFP's position vis-à-vis application of national laws.



- Promoting transparency of programming interventions through provision of timely, accessible and functional information regarding supported activities, in particular regarding potential environmental and social risks and impacts and management measures;
- Promoting stakeholder access to legitimate, safely accessible, predictable, transparent, tailored and rights-compatible complaints redress processes and mechanisms to share concerns and grievances without inhibiting access to judicial and administrative remedies; and
- Monitoring of and reporting on environmental and social risk management that is gender-responsive and, where appropriate, conducted in participation with stakeholders.

## IV.2. Environmental and Social Standards

13. In addition to the general guiding principles described in paragraphs 10-12, the WFP Sustainability Framework builds upon, and operationalizes the minimum requirements and do-no-harm commitments enshrined in WFP policies, directives and guidelines and relevant international law.<sup>3</sup> These minimum requirements and do-no-harm commitments are collected in the WFP Environmental and Social Standards. They are organized as follows:

- Natural Resources
- Biodiversity and Ecosystems
- Resource Efficiency and Waste and Pollution Management
- Climate Change
- Protection and Human Rights
- Gender Equality
- Community Health, Security, and Conflict-sensitivity
- Accountability to Affected Populations

The WFP Environmental and Social Standards are described in full in [Module 2](#).

14. To be actionable, the WFP Environmental and Social Standards are translated into concrete processes and tools, such as Environmental and Social Safeguards for programme activities and an Environmental Management System for in-house support functions. The tools are introduced in [section V](#) of the present Module 1 and described in full in [Modules 3](#) and [Module 4](#). Roles and responsibilities for the application of the different components of the WFP Sustainability Framework are described in [Annex 1](#) of the present Module 1.

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<sup>3</sup> The WFP Environmental and Social Sustainability Framework is based on existing commitments made in WFP's Environmental Policy, Climate Change Policy, Policy on Disaster Risk Reduction and Management, Protection and Accountability Policy; Statement of Humanitarian Principles; Guidance Note on Prevention of Child Labour; Policy on Building Resilience for Food Security and Nutrition; Gender Policy; Policy on HIV and AIDS and other relevant international agreements and treaties.



## V. Operationalization of the WFP Sustainability Framework

### V.1. Alignment with Enterprise Risk Management

#### *Definition of Environmental and Social Risks and Safeguards*

15. In the context of the WFP Sustainability Framework, environmental and social risk is defined as the possibility that an action taken by WFP could potentially lead to unintended negative situations, conditions, or outcomes for people, communities, or the natural environment.

16. In the context of the WFP Sustainability Framework, environmental and social *safeguards* are defined as the collection of measures, including principles, procedures and controls, that help avoid or manage risks and potential negative impacts on people, communities, or the natural environment.

#### *Risk Categories and Types*

17. The environmental and social risks stemming from WFP activities or operations can relate to one or more risk categories in the WFP Risk Categorization:

- *strategic risks*: the unintended negative environmental or social impacts of operations or activities could compromise the strategic positioning of WFP or the achievement of strategic outcomes envisaged in the WFP Strategic Plan or Country Strategic Plans;
- *operational risks*: the inadequate management of environmental or social risks in activities or operations could directly harm the people, communities or the natural environment;
- *fiduciary risks*: the failure of WFP or its partners or vendors to comply with WFP's, the donor's or the government's environmental and social standards could lead to a breach of the trust in WFP;
- *financial risks*: the inadequate management of environmental or social risks could lead to unexpected extra costs for the organization.

18. [Annex 2](#) of the present Module 1 provides a detailed list of the environmental and social risks that might stem from WFP operations and activities.

#### *Three Lines Model*

19. WFP has adopted the three lines model for risk management.<sup>4</sup> Under the model, risk roles and responsibilities are distributed by activity between 'first line' risk decision-makers who own and manage risk as part of day-to-day work, 'second line' managers and functional risk leads who monitor risks and controls, set standards and define overall risk appetite, and 'third line' independent assurance.

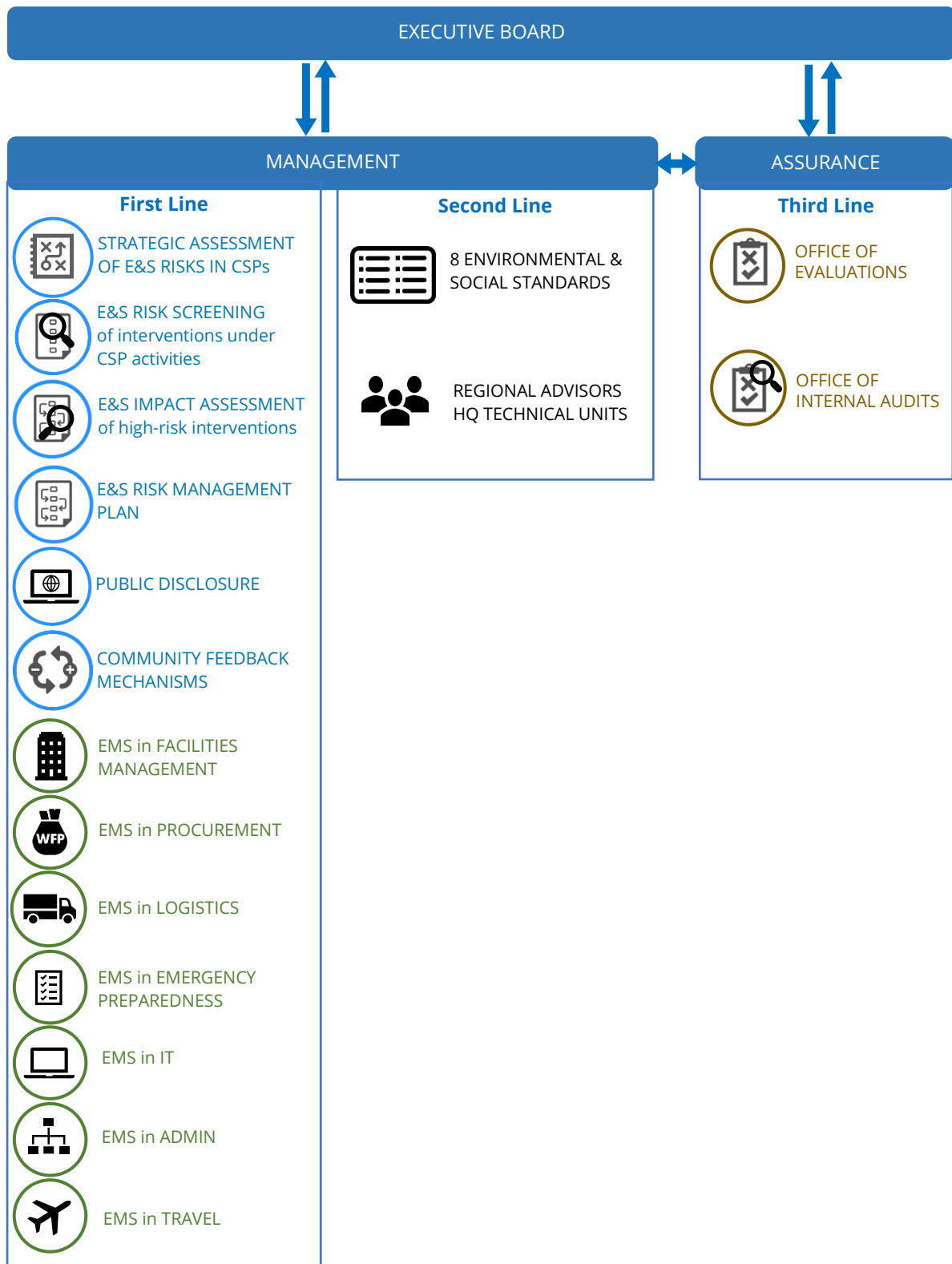
20. The WFP Sustainability Framework is aligned with and strengthens the three lines model:

- first line: the WFP Sustainability Framework includes risk control measures that are put to work in the programme cycle (introduced in section [V.2](#) and fully described in [Module 3](#)) and support operations (introduced in section [V.3](#) and fully described in [Module 4](#));
- second line: the WFP Sustainability Framework is maintained by the responsible HQ technical units, as outlined in [Annex 1](#); the HQ technical units ensure that the corporate monitoring and reporting systems are equipped to monitor and report on the application of the WFP Sustainability Framework and to review compliance; the regional safeguards advisors and the regional EMS advisors provide technical assistance and maintain regular monitoring and regular oversight;
- third line: the independent assurance functions (Office of Evaluation and Internal Audit) provide independent and objective assurance and advice on the adequacy and effectiveness of the WFP Sustainability Framework (also explained in sections [V.5](#) and [V.6](#)).

<sup>4</sup> As defined in the Enterprise Risk Management Policy <https://docs.wfp.org/api/documents/1d4d4576ad134706aaa5358c73f30218/download/> and the Three Lines Model <https://docs.wfp.org/api/documents/WFP-0000122272/download/>



**Figure 3:** The WFP Sustainability Framework is aligned with, and strengthens the ‘three lines model’ of WFP





## V.2. Operationalization in the Programme Cycle

21. Environmental and Social Safeguards are built into the different levels and phases of the programme cycle, as outlined in paragraphs 22-41.

### *Strategic Assessment of Environmental and Social Risks in Country Strategic Plans*

22. The WFP Country Strategic Plan (CSP) outlines the strategic and programmatic planning approach of WFP at country-level, typically on a 5-year horizon. A CSP describes the objectives, expected results, and activities of WFP in the country. The CSP also includes a strategic assessment of the environmental or social risks of the operations and activities proposed in the CSP.

23. CSP activities may generate environmental or social risks that fall under any of the four categories of the WFP corporate risk classification, described in paragraph 17. A non-exhaustive list of environmental and social risks, organized per category and type, is provided in Annex 2 of the present Module 1.

24. The strategic assessment of environmental and social risks stemming from CSP activities may be informed by the pre-existing conditions in the country described in the Common Country Analysis (CCA) that is part of the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF).

25. The strategic assessment of environmental and social risks in CSP activities will inform detailed activity design at a later stage, including the detailed design of the CSP activities (introduced in paragraphs 26-41 and fully described in [Module 3](#)) and proposals to donors (described in paragraphs 51-55).

### *Environmental and Social Risk Screening of Interventions under a CSP Activity*

26. As mandated by the WFP Environmental Policy, all programme activities that are part of a CSP need to be screened for environmental and social risks. This needs to happen during the design of the programme activity, when the implementation details (i.e. the location, targeted beneficiaries, inputs, transfer modalities, outputs, and timeline) are being defined, *before* the design is finalized and the activity is implemented.

27. In practice, it is suggested that a programme activity is screened for environmental and social risks whenever the programme activity, or part thereof, is formulated for implementation through:

- a Field Level Agreement (FLA) with a cooperating partner;
- a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with a government entity or partner;
- a construction contract with a contractor.

The part of a programme activity that is governed by one FLA, MoU or construction contract is referred to as “intervention” in the WFP Sustainability Framework. If the programme activity is not implemented through any FLA, MoU or construction contract, it can be screened at the level of the activity’s implementation plan.

28. The risk screening is the responsibility of the person/team/entity developing the detailed design of the intervention. This may be the WFP Activity Manager, the cooperating partner, or the government entity that designs the proposal for the FLA, MoU, or construction contract. The risk screening needs to be signed off by a WFP employee before implementation of the intervention starts. More details are available in [Module 3](#).

29. Risk screening not only helps identify risks, but also the level of risk: high (Category A), medium (Category B), or low (Category C).<sup>5</sup> The risk level determines which further actions are required:

- Low level of risk (Category C) indicates that there is no or limited risk of adverse environmental or social impacts. The design of the intervention does not need a revision. No mitigation measures and no Environmental and Social Risk Management Plan (ESMP) are required, but may be developed.
- Medium level of risk (Category B) indicates that there is some risk of adverse environmental or social impacts. The risks can be avoided or reduced, or the negative impacts can be mitigated or offset by adjusting the design. The potential negative impacts and the proposed mitigation measures must be described and planned for in an Environmental and Social Risk Management Plan (ESMP).
- High level of risk (Category A) indicates that there is high risk of irreversible adverse impacts. The activity design should be changed to reduce the level of risk to medium (Category B) or low (Category C). If the design cannot be changed and the activity must go ahead as designed, an independent Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) is required. This ESIA will suggest measures to

<sup>5</sup> Thresholds are suggested by the screening tool.



reduce the risks or mitigate or offset the impacts. These measures must be described and planned for in an Environmental and Social Risk Management Plan (ESMP).

### *Environmental and Social Risk Management Plan for interventions under CSP Activities*

30. An ESMP needs to be developed for medium-risk interventions (Category B) and high-risk interventions (Category A). An ESMP may be developed for a low-risk intervention (Category C) if deemed appropriate.

31. In the case of a medium-risk intervention (Category B), the ESMP is developed by the person/entity designing the intervention. This may be the WFP Activity Manager or cooperating partner.

32. In the case of a high-risk intervention (Category A), the ESMP is developed by the expert or expert company carrying out the ESIA, in collaboration with the person or entity designing the activity.

33. The ESMP includes:

- an overview of the environmental and social risks identified through the screening;
- an elaboration of the potential impacts related to these risks;
- the measures proposed to manage the risks and/or impacts;
- the cost of these measures;
- when the measures will be implemented and by whom;
- how the risks and the implementation of the risk management measures will be monitored.

More details on the ESMP are available in Module 3 of the WFP Sustainability Framework.

34. The key risks stemming from Category A and Category B activities can be recorded and tracked in the risk register of the country office.

### *Public Disclosure of Risk Screening, ESIA, and ESMPs*

35. WFP will disclose to relevant stakeholders the risk screening and ESMP of a Category B activity *for information*. WFP will disclose to relevant stakeholders the risk screening, draft ESIA, and draft ESMP of a Category A activity *for information, consultation and commenting*. Any disclosure will happen in the primary languages of relevant stakeholders.<sup>6</sup> All comments and suggestions received from stakeholders on a Category A activity will be duly considered and will inform the final version of the ESIA and ESMP.<sup>7</sup> Any disclosure of internal WFP documents shall be in accordance with the WFP Directive on Information Disclosure,<sup>8</sup> as may be amended from time to time.

### *Implementation and Monitoring of Risk Management Measures*

36. The mitigation measures proposed in the ESMP will be an integral part of the implementation plan.

37. The monitoring of the risks and risk management measures will be an integral part of activity monitoring.

38. The cooperating partner, government entity, partner, or contractor that is implementing (part of) an activity on behalf of WFP will periodically report to WFP on the risks and the implementation of the risk management measures.

### *Community Feedback Mechanisms*

39. The Community Feedback Mechanism (CFM) established by a Country Office should be able to accept and handle feedback and complaints, including anonymous complaints, about environmental or social harm caused by WFP, its partners, or its vendors.

40. As per WFP's CFM guidance,<sup>9</sup> feedback and complaints about environmental or social harm caused by WFP, its partners, or its vendors should be handled as sensitive, high-priority cases by the CFM operators.

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<sup>6</sup> This may require the translation of documents into languages other than the 6 official UN languages.

<sup>7</sup> The Model Approach to Environmental and Social Standards for UN Programming suggests a disclosure period of 30 days for Category B activities and 120 days for Category A activities: <https://unemg.org/modelapproach/>

<sup>8</sup> For instance, information that is likely to endanger the safety and security of any individual, violate his or her rights, or invade his or her privacy, should not be disclosed. The WFP Directive on Information Disclosure is available at <https://docs.wfp.org/api/documents/08ed0919a7f64acc80cf58c93c04ad6d/download/>

<sup>9</sup> As per the WFP Guidance Document on Community Feedback Mechanisms: <https://docs.wfp.org/api/documents/WFP-0000111507/download/>



41. Allegations of suspected wrongdoing or misconduct<sup>10</sup> against WFP, a WFP partner, or a WFP vendor shall be referred to WFP's independent Office of Inspections and Investigations for evaluation and, when warranted, formal investigation.

### V.3. Operationalization in Support Functions

42. The WFP Sustainability Framework applies to support functions and in-house operations through an Environmental Management System (EMS) that is guided by the international standard ISO 14001 and that is described in Module 4. The EMS provides an approach to identify, manage, monitor and control environmental issues in support functions and in-house operations through a continuous cycle of improvement.

#### *Scope of the EMS*

43. Physical boundary: WFP's EMS covers all leased, owned and donated facilities that it operates from globally, as detailed in the ARCHIBUS facilities management database. WFP can control its actions at these properties and, to varying degrees, influence the infrastructure and services (including those provided by third parties) that may lead to environmental impacts.

44. Functional boundary: WFP's EMS covers all "in-house operations and ongoing activities" – as per WFP's Environmental Policy (2017) – that WFP can *control* or *influence*. This includes:

- all aspects of facilities management, including construction, refurbishment, operation and decommissioning;
- goods & services and food procurement;
- logistics (air, maritime and ground transport; warehouse management – food and non-food);
- emergency preparedness;
- Information Technology (IT);
- administration services;
- business travel.

### V.4. Operationalization in Interactions with Partners

#### *Interactions with host Governments*

45. As a basic principle, WFP operates according to its own regulatory frameworks – including the WFP Sustainability Framework. In addition, WFP may seek to comply *on a voluntary basis* with national laws and regulations, including on environmental and social risk management, whenever they are not in conflict with any of the WFP policies, standards, or regulations, any of the Humanitarian Principles, any international law that applies to WFP, and WFP privileges and immunities.<sup>11</sup> For this purpose, whenever national laws or regulations would be more stringent, or when a hiatus would exist in WFP's regulatory frameworks with regards to the relevant subject matter, WFP may consider applying additional sustainability measures on a voluntary and case-by-case basis.

46. While WFP may seek to comply *on a voluntary basis* with national laws and regulations, such application shall not extend to any form of national legal process in relation to these national laws and regulations, from which WFP is immune pursuant to relevant international conventions. Such legal process may consist of court and administrative review proceedings, processes for the application of permits and licenses, inspections by national authorities, regulatory reporting obligations, taxes and fees that do not constitute a charge for public utility services, or similar processes.<sup>12</sup>

47. Any agreement with a government entity for the joint implementation of a programme activity or part thereof (e.g. through an MoU) shall include a commitment of all parties to respect the WFP Standards ([Module 2](#)) and apply the relevant environmental and social safeguard tools ([Module 3](#)). This may include, if

<sup>10</sup> As defined in the Charter of the Office of the Inspector General, 'wrongdoing' includes fraud, corruption, coercion, collusion, theft, misappropriation, obstructive practices, waste, abuse of resources and any other unethical practice contrary to applicable rules, regulations and policies; 'misconduct' includes harassment, sexual harassment, abuse of authority, retaliation, discrimination, sexual exploitation and abuse, and violations of applicable rules, regulations and policies. See <https://docs.wfp.org/api/documents/WFP-0000108551/download/>

<sup>11</sup> The paragraphs 45-46 apply to any interaction between the WFP Sustainability Framework and national law.

<sup>12</sup> Queries about paragraphs 45 and 46 can be addressed to the HQ Legal Office.



applicable, the commitment to screen the activities described in the agreement for risks before they are implemented and adequately manage and monitor any residual risks during implementation.

48. WFP may work with and build capacities of national entities to ensure the application of national regulations and the WFP Sustainability Framework. In any case, the full application of the WFP Standards and the implementation of the WFP Sustainability Framework remain paramount.

#### *Interactions with Cooperating Partners*

49. Cooperating Partners or Contractors that implement programme activities or interventions on behalf of WFP are accountable to WFP and need to respect the WFP Standards and apply the WFP Safeguards for Programme Activities as outlined in [Module 3](#)

50. Any agreement with a Cooperating Partner (e.g. Field Level Agreement) or Contractor (e.g. Construction Contract) for the implementation of a programme activity or part thereof shall include a commitment of the Cooperating Partner or Contractor to respect the WFP Standards ([Module 2](#)) and to apply the relevant environmental and social safeguard tools ([Module 3](#)). This may include, if applicable, the commitment to screen the intervention described in the agreement for risks before it is implemented, and adequately manage and monitor any residual risks during implementation.

#### *Interactions with Donors*

51. As a basic principle, WFP operates according to its own regulatory frameworks – including the WFP Sustainability Framework. By applying the WFP Sustainability Framework, WFP will meet most donors' expectations on environmental and social sustainability.

52. When developing a proposal for, or agreement with a donor, WFP assures the donor that it will respect the WFP Standards and apply the WFP Sustainability Framework. This may include the commitment to screen the activities described in the proposal/agreement for risks before they are implemented and the development of a risk management framework or plan, if applicable, for the management and monitoring of risks during implementation.

53. Some donors may require a risk screening of the proposal or agreement itself, before it is submitted, with an indication of the level of environmental and social risks it would entail. This is typically only possible when the location, targeting, transfer modalities, timing, budget, and cooperating partners of all proposed interventions are known at the time of submitting the proposal. The screening of a proposal requires that stakeholders, including the people that WFP will serve during the project, are consulted. The donor may require that WFP develops an Environmental and Social Risk Management Plan (ESMP) or Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) for the proposal before approval.

54. Some donors may require a risk screening of the proposal itself before it is submitted, even though some aspects of the proposal remain unknown at the time of submission. In this case, WFP applies a mixed approach (combination of paragraph 52 and 53):

- WFP screens the proposal for potential environmental and social risks based on a list of activities that *could* be implemented ("eligible") and activities that are deliberately excluded from the project implementation ("non-eligible"); AND
- WFP commits to applying the WFP safeguards for programme activities (Module 3) during the implementation of the project when the potential activities will be further defined.

55. When a donor would have more stringent standards, WFP may consider applying additional sustainability measures on a case-by-case basis, to the extent consistent with the WFP regulatory framework.

### V.5. Corporate Monitoring

56. The WFP Annual Country Reports include a cross-cutting 'Environment' section in which country offices report qualitatively on the environmental sustainability of WFP operations and the application of the WFP Sustainability Framework.

57. The WFP Corporate Results Framework includes a cross-cutting programme indicator that measures the "Proportion of [Field Level Agreements/ Memorandums of Understanding/ Construction Contracts] for CSP activities screened for environmental and social risks".



58. The WFP Corporate Results Framework includes a Management Key Performance Indicator that measures the “Percentage of WFP Operations implementing Environmental Management Systems” and a Management Key Performance Indicator that measures progress in environmental reporting on greenhouse gas emissions, waste, and water.

## V.6. Assurance

59. Country offices may track environmental and social risks in their risk register and report on them in the annual ED Assurance Exercise as needed.

60. At any time, the Office of Evaluations and the Office of Internal Audit may evaluate and/or provide independent advice on the adequacy and/or effectiveness of the WFP Sustainability Framework.



## Annex 1: Roles and Responsibilities

### WFP Environmental and Social Sustainability Team in HQ

[Currently composed of staff in PRO-C and MSDI, with support from other units, as needed]

#### *Strategic direction and guidance*

- Oversee the mainstreaming and maintenance of the WFP Sustainability Framework and its individual elements;
- Update the WFP Sustainability Framework and its individual elements as needed;
- Maintain relations with donors and other UN agencies on safeguarding;
- Mobilize resources for the roll-out of, and capacity building on the WFP Sustainability Framework;
- Coordinate the integration of responsibilities and mechanisms for safeguarding in all functions throughout WFP;

#### *Technical support*

- Integrate WFP Sustainability Framework into corporate tools (manuals, online platforms, monitoring), including in emergency preparedness and response;
- Compile, update and disseminate technical guidance, best practices, and learning material on environmental and social safeguards;
- Train regional advisors in the Regional Bureaux and, as needed, focal points in country offices;
- Provide technical support to the Regional Bureaux and Country Offices;
- Support environmental and social impact assessments (ESIA) where needed;

#### *Management*

- Ensure that the corporate monitoring and reporting systems are equipped to monitor and report on the application of the WFP Sustainability Framework, to keep oversight, and to review compliance;
- Coordinate reporting on environment in corporate reporting processes (ACRs, APR);
- Coordinate reporting against WFP corporate indicators (in CRF and APP);
- Coordinate compilation and reporting on WFP's global environmental footprint;
- Report performance against UN-wide indicators/targets (in particular Greening the Blue and Sustainability Strategy 2020-2030);
- Report on the implementation of the 2017 Environmental Policy to the Executive Board;
- Ensure that oversight procedures (2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> lines) incorporate the environmental and social safeguards.

### WFP Regional Safeguards Advisors for Programme

[One in each Regional Bureau currently being recruited]

#### *Capacity building and training*

- Promote awareness of WFP's environmental and social impacts and of the WFP Sustainability Framework as a framework for systematically managing those impacts;
- Train country office staff (and, if appropriate, also staff of partners) on the application of, and compliance with the WFP Environmental and Social Safeguards (including risk screening), by delivering in-country training sessions;
- Collect and share best practices from within the region to promote ongoing engagement and improvement.

#### *Technical support*

- Support the application of the WFP Safeguards in programme activities at CO level;



- Support the application of the WFP Safeguards in proposals to donors (e.g. the Adaptation Fund or Green Climate Fund);
- Check the extent to which alternative screening tools used by country offices are aligned with WFP's standards;
- Provide advice to COs during an emergency response to promote adherence to WFP's environmental and social standards
- Review Environmental and Social Impact Assessments (ESIA) of high-risk projects;
- Support the formulation of environmental and social safeguards in the Country Strategic Plans.

#### *Strategic direction and guidance*

- Seek opportunities to link WFP safeguards to national safeguard regulations and capacities;
- Support country offices to comply with national environmental regulations;
- Seek opportunities to access regional and country-specific funding sources to increase the involvement of local stakeholders.

#### *Management*

- Monitor country offices' application of the environmental and social safeguards in programme activities, keep oversight, and review compliance of;
- Ensure that country offices record major environmental and social risks in the country office risk register;
- Support country offices in reporting on the application of the WFP Sustainability Framework in the Annual Country Reports.

## **WFP Regional Environmental Management Advisors for Support Functions**

[One in each Regional Bureau currently being recruited]

#### *Capacity building and training*

- Promote awareness of WFP's environmental and social impacts and of the WFP Sustainability Framework as a framework for systematically managing those impacts;
- Train country office staff (and, if appropriate, also staff of partners) on the application of the Environmental Management System by delivering in-country training sessions; Contribute to the development and lead delivery in the selected region of specific training for key functional areas (within supply chain, administration etc.);

#### *Technical support*

- In line with WFP's EMS manual, undertake and document environmental assessment missions and support country operations to secure senior management approval for priority actions.
- Within the framework of WFP's EMS, support WFP staff from diverse functions to research, plan and implement environmental improvement solutions to address significant environmental aspects and impacts and deliver continuous improvement in environmental performance.
- Advise country operations during an emergency response to promote adherence to WFP's environmental and social standards.
- Collect and share best practices and seek opportunities to promote regional and global solutions to common environmental challenges, where applicable.

#### *Strategic direction and guidance*

- Support country offices to identify relevant national environmental regulations and expectations from other stakeholder (such as donors), as may be applicable;
- Support the application of sustainable procurement principles in procurement processes (develop guidance, conduct market research, draft specifications, suggest minimum requirements etc.);
- Seek opportunities to collaborate with other UN agencies in the same locations, and as part of UN Reform processes;





- Contribute proactively to UN and humanitarian networks to promote mainstreaming of environmental sustainability practices and collaborative solutions;
- Work to identify regional and country-specific funding sources to support implementation of improvement projects;

#### *Management*

- Support country operations to monitor and report periodic progress of implementation of the EMS action plans, and to compile indicator data for WFP's annual environmental footprint and to meet UN and WFP corporate reporting commitments;
- Support country operations staff in preparation for audit and oversight reviews as required.

### **WFP Regional Risk and Compliance Advisors**

[existing role - only tasks related to the application of the WFP Sustainability Framework are listed here]

- Support the COs in identification and assessment of environmental and social risks for possible inclusion in the CO risk register and ED Assurance Exercise responses, as appropriate.

### **WFP Regional Reporting Officers**

[existing role - only tasks related to the application of the WFP Sustainability Framework are listed here]

- Support COs in the reporting of performance against WFP corporate indicators (in CRF and APP), by raising awareness and building capacities;

### **WFP Country Directors**

[existing role - only tasks related to the application of the WFP Sustainability Framework are listed here]

- Lead by example in promoting integration of environmental and social sustainability considerations in programming and operations;
- Ensure that the safeguards (standards, screening, EMS) are adequately resourced and implemented in the CO;
- Designate an EMS champion to coordinate the EMS process (typically an admin officer but not required to be so);
- Including remarks related to environmental and social risks in the ED Assurance Exercise if applicable;

### **WFP Heads of Programme in COs**

[existing role - only tasks related to the application of the WFP Sustainability Framework are listed here]

- Support implementation of the WFP Safeguards in CSP activity design, implementation and monitoring;
- Ensure adequate budgeting for risk screening and risk monitoring of CSP activities;
- If applicable, sign off environmental and social risk screenings of CSP activities.

### **WFP Heads of Engineering in COs**

[existing role - only tasks related to the application of the WFP Sustainability Framework are listed here]

- Support implementation of the WFP Safeguards in the design, implementation and monitoring of WFP engineering projects;



- Ensure adequate budgeting for risk screening and risk monitoring of engineering projects;
- If applicable, sign off environmental and social risk screenings of engineering projects.

## WFP Programme Activity Managers in COs

[existing role - only tasks related to the application of the WFP Sustainability Framework are listed here]

- Ensure adequate budgeting for risk screening and risk monitoring of the CSP activity;
- Ensure that the activity design is screened for environmental and social risks, either by WFP staff or cooperating partners, before implementation starts;
- Ensure that key environmental and social risks are included in the Country Office's risk register;
- Ensure that cooperating partners and other partners respect the Environmental and Social Risk Management Plan, if applicable, during the implementation of the activity;
- Support field monitors in monitoring environmental and social risks during the implementation of programmatic activities;
- Share quantitative data on screening with the Information Officer in the Country Office, for reporting on the CRF indicator that measures the extent to which activities have been screened;
- Share qualitative data on risk screening of CSP activities with the Reporting Officer, for reporting in the Annual Country Report;

## WFP Safeguards Specialists in COs

[new, optional role – duties may be assumed by Programme Activity Managers]

### *Technical support*

- Support WFP staff and cooperating partners in the application of the WFP safeguards (including risk screening) in programmatic activities;
- Where necessary, lead or coordinate the environmental and social risk screening of activities;
- Where necessary, manage Environmental and Social Impact Assessments (ESIA) of high-risk projects;
- Support the inclusion of the WFP safeguards in proposals to donors (e.g. the Adaptation Fund or Green Climate Fund);
- Check the extent to which alternative screening tools used by the WFP country office or government entities are aligned with WFP's standards;
- Support the formulation of environmental and social safeguards in the Country Strategic Plans.

### *Monitoring*

- Support field monitors in monitoring environmental and social risks during the implementation of programmatic activities;
- Ensure that activity managers record medium/high environmental and social risks in the country office's risk register;
- Support activity managers and reporting officers in reporting on the application of the WFP Sustainability Framework in the Annual Country Reports.

### *Capacity building and training*

- Promote awareness amongst WFP staff of WFP's potentially negative environmental and social impacts and of the safeguards as a tool for systematically managing those impacts;
- Collect and share best practices in the country to promote engagement and improvement.

### *Strategic direction and guidance*

- Seek synergies between procedures of the WFP Sustainability Framework and national procedures;



## WFP Administrative Managers in CO

[existing role - only tasks related to the application of the WFP Sustainability Framework are listed here]

- Coordinate inputs (data, staff interviews/discussions) for Initial Environmental Reviews;
- Lead, coordinate action, and monitor progress on the implementation of environmental action plans at country level;
- Coordinate data collection for annual environmental footprint at country level;
- Support regional environmental advisor with environmental awareness campaigns at country level;
- Support corporate reporting procedures, by providing information to HQ and/or monitoring officers when required.

## WFP Administration Officers, Procurement Officers, Fleet Managers, Logistics Officers in COs

[existing roles - only tasks related to the application of the WFP Sustainability Framework are listed here]

- Implement environmental improvements and best practices indicated in WFP environmental guidelines and SOPs, and EMS action plans;
- Compile environmental footprint data and upload to corporate software to comply with internal and external reporting requirements and help to identify opportunities for improvement;
- Support other corporate reporting procedures, by providing information to HQ and/or monitoring officers when required;

## WFP Risk and Compliance Advisors in CO

[existing role in selected COs – only tasks related to the application of the WFP Sustainability Framework are listed here]

- Include key environmental and social risks programme activities and operations in the CO risk register and ED Assurance Exercise responses, as appropriate.;

## All other WFP Employees

- Adhere to the WFP Code of Conduct

## Cooperating Partners (CPs)

[applicable when Cooperating Partners implement (parts of) programmatic activities on behalf of WFP - only roles related to the application of WFP Sustainability Framework are listed here – these roles are described in the Call for Tenders and the Field Level Agreement]

- If the CP is responsible for the design of (part of) the CSP activity, ensure that the design is screened for environmental and social risks before the implementation starts;
- If the CP is responsible for the design of (part of) the CSP activity AND if the screening indicates that the proposal entails some environmental or social risks, develop an environmental and social management plan (ESMP);
- If an ESMP exists, adhere to the risk management and monitoring measures described therein;
- Report on risk management and monitoring in the qualitative reports that are submitted to WFP.



## Annex 2: List of risks controlled by the WFP Environmental and Social Sustainability Framework

*This annex provides a non-exhaustive list of environmental and social risks that WFP could face and that can be controlled through the application of the WFP Environmental and Social Sustainability Framework. The risks are classified according to the risk categories in the WFP Risk Categorization.<sup>13</sup> The risks listed below can inform: the WFP Corporate Risk Register; the risk registries of WFP country offices, regional bureaux or HQ units; the strategic assessment of risks in WFP country strategic plans; or the risk management of CSP activities.*

### **1. Strategic > 1.1. Programme > 1.1.1 Intervention misaligned with outcome**

The risk that unintended negative environmental or social impacts of operations or activities compromise the achievement of the strategic outcomes envisaged in the WFP Strategic Plan.

The risk that unintended negative environmental or social impacts of operations or activities compromise the achievement of the strategic outcomes envisaged in the WFP Country Strategic Plan.

### **1. Strategic > 1.2 External relationship > 1.2.2 Misalignment with UN system, governments, partners and non-state actors**

The risk that WFP's management of environmental or social risks is misaligned with that of partnering UN agencies.

The risk that WFP's management of environmental or social risks is misaligned with that of the host government.

### **1. Strategic > 1.2 External relationship > 1.2.3 Disinformation**

The risk that the distribution of assistance or the presence of WFP will be used to convey disinformation

The risk that WFP's assessment activities, or assessment reports and data, are manipulated to communicate wrong information

### **1. Strategic > 1.3 Context > 1.3.1 Conflict**

WFP is unable to provide principled and effective assistance in a variety of contexts, leading to presence and programme used as a conflict strategy

### **2. Operational > 2.1 Beneficiary Health, Safety and Security > 2.1.1 Poor assistance quality**

The risk that people involved in the project or receiving assistance through the project suffer harm because their needs, priorities or capacities were not adequately assessed.

The risk that the activity or operation alters the land cover of forests, wetlands, farming land, grazing land, or other landscapes of ecological or economic importance.

The risk that the activity or operation alters the quantity or quality of groundwater, surface water, or sea water.

The risk that the activity or operation increases soil erosion, sediment load in surface water flows, or degrades land.

The risk that the activity or operation negatively affects natural habitats or ecosystems.

The risk that the activity or operation changes the biodiversity in the area.

The risk that the activity or operation leads to negative impacts in protected areas.

The risk that the activity or operation leads to the physical displacement of households or the expropriation of land area managed/owned by households.

<sup>13</sup> WFP Risk Categorization: <https://docs.wfp.org/api/documents/71522c21dfab4788961a0868420e8366/download/>



The risk that the activity or operation leads to very high use of resources (such as fuel, wood, charcoal, or water).

The risk that the activity or operation involves the procurement, transport, use, or discharge of substances that could pollute the air, soil, or water.

The risk that the activity or operation pollutes the air, land, or soil with reversible or readily remediable implications.

The risk that the activity or operation generates waste (hazardous or non-hazardous) that cannot be reused or recycled by the served people, WFP, or partners.

The risk that the activity or operation leads to excessive/incorrect use of agro-chemicals.

The risk that the benefits of the activity or operation would be reduced or reversed by climate-related hazards.

The risk that the activity or operation reduces the resilience of people (whether they are served by WFP or not) in the face of climate change.

The risk that the activity or operation violates the fundamental human rights of some people (whether they are served by WFP or not).

The risk that the activity or operation leads to the involuntary resettlement of people (whether they are served by WFP or not).

The risk that the activity or operation leads to child labour.

The risk that the activity or operation utilizes or affects any tangible or intangible cultural heritage.

The risk that the activity or operation negatively affects indigenous peoples or their territories.

The risk that the activity or operation leads to gender-based inequality, discrimination, exclusion, unwanted workload, or violence.

The risk that the activity or operation creates or exacerbates socio-economic inequalities or discrimination in the communities.

The risk that the activity or operation increases tensions or conflicts within the community, with neighbouring communities, or with workers from outside the community.

The risk that the work arrangements in the activity or operation violate the labour rights of the people involved in the project or pose a risk to their health or safety.

The risk that people involved in the project or receiving assistance through the project suffer harm due to work conditions that are not aligned with ILO safety standards.

The risk that the activity or operation facilitates the spread of endogenous diseases or introduces new diseases.

The risk that some stakeholders (whether they are served by WFP or not) have not adequately been consulted during activity design or implementation.

## **2. Operational > 2.1 Beneficiary Health, Safety and Security > 2.1.2 Lack of protection**

The risk that the activity or operation violates the rights of some people (whether they are served by WFP or not).

The risk that the activity or operation leads to the involuntary resettlement of people (whether they are served by WFP or not).

The risk that the activity or operation leads to child labour.

The risk that the activity or operation negatively affects any tangible or intangible cultural heritage.

The risk that the activity or operation negatively affects indigenous peoples or their territories.



The risk that the activity or operation leads to gender-based inequality, discrimination, exclusion, unwanted workload, or violence.

The risk that the activity or operation creates or exacerbates socio-economic inequalities or discrimination in the communities.

The risk that the activity or operation increases tensions or conflicts within the community, with neighbouring communities, or with workers from outside the community.

The risk that the work arrangements in the activity or operation violate the labour rights of the people employed by the project or pose a risk to their health or safety.

The risk that the activity or operation facilitates the spread of endogenous diseases or introduce new diseases.

The risk that some stakeholders (whether they are served by WFP or not) have not adequately been consulted during activity design or implementation.

## **2. Operational > 2.2 Partners and Vendors > 2.2.2 Poor/inconsistent quality**

The risk that partners or vendors alter the land cover of forests, wetlands, farming land, grazing land, or other landscapes of ecological or economic importance/

The risk that partners or vendors alter the quantity or quality of groundwater, surface water, or sea water.

The risk that partners or vendors increase soil erosion, sediment load in surface water flows, or degrade land.

The risk that partners or vendors negatively affect natural habitats or ecosystems.

The risk that partners or vendors change the biodiversity in the area.

The risk that partners or vendors cause negative impacts in protected areas.

The risk that partners or vendors cause the physical displacement of households or the expropriation of land area managed/owned by households.

The risk that partners or vendors make excessive use of resources (such as fuel, wood, charcoal, or water).

The risk that partners or vendors would be involved in procurement, transport, use, or discharge of substances that could pollute the air, soil, or water.

The risk that partners or vendors cause air, land, or soil pollution with reversible or readily remediable implications.

The risk that partners or vendors cause generate waste (hazardous or non-hazardous) that cannot be reused or recycled by the people we serve, WFP, or partners.

The risk that partners or vendors cause excessive or incorrect use of agro-chemicals.

The risk that partners or vendors would increase the exposure of populations to climate-related hazards.

The risk that partners or vendors cause would reduce the resilience of populations (whether they are served by WFP or not) in the face of climate change.

The risk that partners or vendors violate the rights of some people (whether they are served by WFP or not).

The risk that partners or vendors cause the involuntary resettlement of people (whether they are served by WFP or not).

The risk that partners or vendors cause child labour.

The risk that partners or vendors cause utilize or affect any tangible or intangible cultural heritage.

The risk that partners or vendors would negatively affect indigenous peoples or their territories.

The risk that partners or vendors cause gender-based inequality, discrimination, exclusion, unwanted workload, or violence.



The risk that partners or vendors create or exacerbates socio-economic inequalities or discrimination in the communities.

The risk that partners or vendors increase tensions or conflicts within the community, with neighbouring communities, or with workers from outside the community.

The risk that the work arrangements partners or vendors violate the labour rights of the people or pose a risk to their health or safety.

The risk that partners or vendors facilitate the spread of endogenous diseases or introduce new diseases.

**2. Operational > 2.6 Governance & Oversight > 2.6.1 Poor decision-making processes**

The risk that WFP staff in Field Offices and Country Offices are not sensitive to the negative impacts WFP may have on populations or the environment, and as a result do not feed these risks in monitoring, reporting, or evaluation processes, or do not escalate risks when required.

**2. Operational > 2.6 Governance & Oversight > 2.6.1 Inadequate monitoring, reporting and escalation**

The risk that WFP staff in Field Offices and Country Offices are not sensitive to the negative impacts WFP may have on populations or the environment, and as a result do not feed these risks in monitoring, reporting, or evaluation processes, or do not escalate risks when required.

**3. Fiduciary > 3.2 Breach of Obligations > 3.2.1 Policies and standards**

The risk of infringement by WFP or its vendors or partners of standards of environmental and social sustainability described in UN General Regulations and Rules or WFP policies, principles or standards, leading to reputational harm.

**3. Fiduciary > 3.2 Breach of Obligations > 3.2.2 Regulations or laws**

The risk of violations by WFP or its vendors or partners of national regulations or laws in the country of operation, leading to reputational harm.

**3. Fiduciary > 3.2 Breach of Obligations > 3.2.4 Donor agreements**

The risk of non-alignment with the donor's standards on environmental and social sustainability by WFP or its vendors or partners, leading to reputational harm.

**4. Financial > 4.2 Assets and Investments > 4.2.1 Misutilization of assets**

The risk of incurring higher-than-expected operational or activity costs due to damage caused to the environment or people.