

Evaluation of Lesotho

WFP's Country Strategic Plan (2019-2024)



SAVING
LIVES
CHANGING
LIVES

Summary Terms of Reference

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

Subject and focus of the evaluation

The evaluation will cover all of WFP activities (including cross-cutting results) for the period starting from the CSP approval (July 2019) to mid-2023, with a cut-off date for performance and financial data at the end of the data collection phase. Although the CSP cycle starts in 2019, the evaluation will also look at the Transitional Interim CSP (T-ICSP) (January 2018-June 2019) to assess key changes in the approach from Country Programme over the T-ICSP to the current CSP, and the consequences of these changes in approach.

The CSP pursues five Strategic Outcomes (SO) as follows - SO 1: Shock-affected people in Lesotho are able to meet their basic food and nutrition needs during times of crisis; SO 2: Vulnerable populations in Lesotho benefit from strengthened social protection systems that ensure access to adequate, safe and nutritious food all year round; SO 3: Vulnerable populations in Lesotho have improved nutrition status at every stage of the lifecycle, in line with national targets by 2024; SO 4: Communities in targeted areas, especially women and young people, have resilient, efficient and inclusive food systems by 2024; SO 5: Government and partners in Lesotho have access to effective and reliable services throughout the year.

The Country Portfolio Budget as originally approved by WFP's Executive Board (Needs Based Budget) was USD 110,748,948 but increased to USD 123,669,368 through three budget revisions. As of 23 September 2022, the CSP was funded at 44.43 percent. In terms of focus areas, the bulk of funds in the CSP are earmarked for crisis response, which is a departure from the T-ICSP where root causes was the main focus area in terms of earmarked funds.

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

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

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

Objectives and stakeholders of the evaluation

WFP evaluations serve the dual objectives of accountability and learning. The evaluation will seek the views of, and be useful to, a range of WFP's internal and external stakeholders and present an opportunity for national, regional and corporate learning. The primary user of the evaluation findings and recommendations will be the WFP Country Office and its stakeholders to inform the design of the new Country Strategic Plan. The evaluation report will be presented at the Executive Board session in June 2024.

Key evaluation questions

The evaluation will address the following four key questions:

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

The evaluation will assess the extent to which the CSP is relevant to national policies, plans, strategies and goals, including achievement of the national Sustainable Development Goals. It will further assess the extent to which the CSP addresses the needs of the most vulnerable people in the country to ensure that no one is left behind; whether WFP's strategic positioning has remained relevant throughout the implementation of the CSP in light of changing context, national capacities and needs; and to what extent the CSP is coherent and aligned with the wider UN cooperation framework and includes appropriate strategic partnerships based on the comparative advantage of WFP in the country.

QUESTION 2: What is the extent and quality of WFP's specific contribution to CSP strategic outcomes in Lesotho?

The evaluation will assess the extent to which WFP delivered the expected outputs and contributed to the expected strategic outcomes of the CSP, including the achievement of cross-cutting aims (humanitarian principles, protection, accountability to affected populations, gender equality and other equity considerations). It will also assess the extent to which the achievements of the CSP are likely to be sustainable; and whether the CSP facilitated more strategic linkages between humanitarian, development and, where appropriate, peace work.

QUESTION 3: To what extent has WFP used its resources efficiently in contributing to CSP outputs and strategic outcomes? The evaluation will assess whether outputs were delivered within the intended timeframe; the appropriateness of coverage and targeting of interventions; cost-efficient delivery of assistance; and whether alternative, more cost-effective measures were considered.

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

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

Scope, methodology and ethical considerations

The main unit of analysis is the CSP (July 2019-mid 2023) as approved by the Executive Board as well as subsequent budget revisions. Where possible, the evaluation will also look at how the CSP builds on or departs from the T-ICSP.

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

In light of the lifting of COVID-19 related restrictions on movement of people, both the inception and the data collection missions will be conducted in the country. The final Stakeholder Workshop will be held in Maseru.

The evaluation conforms to WFP and 2020 UNEG ethical guidelines. This includes, but is not limited to, ensuring informed consent, protecting privacy, confidentiality and anonymity of participants, ensuring cultural sensitivity, respecting the autonomy of participants, ensuring fair recruitment of participants (including women and socially excluded groups) and ensuring that the evaluation results in no harm to participants or their communities.

Roles and responsibilities

EVALUATION TEAM: The evaluation will be conducted by a team of independent consultants with a mix of relevant expertise related to the Lesotho CSPE (food security, livelihoods, climate change and capacity strengthening).

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

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

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

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

Communication

Preliminary findings will be shared with WFP stakeholders in the Country Office, the Regional Bureau and Headquarters during a debriefing session at the end of the data collection phase. A more in-depth debrief will be organized in May 2023 to inform the new CSP design process. A country stakeholder workshop will be held in August 2023 to ensure a transparent evaluation process and promote ownership of the findings and preliminary recommendations by country stakeholders.

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

Timing and key milestones

Inception Phase: January – February 2023

Data collection: April/May 2023

Remote Debriefing: May 2023

Reports: May - September 2023

Stakeholder Workshop: August 2023

Executive Board: June 2024