

Corporate Emergency Evaluation of WFP's Response in the Sahel and other countries in the region (2018 - 2023)

Summary Terms of Reference – Updated in July 2023

Corporate emergency evaluations (CEEs) assess WFP's performance during emergency operations classified as corporate scale up or corporate attention (previously referred to as Level 2 or 3 emergencies). Their scope can be global, multi-country or single-country and their purpose is twofold: 1) provide evaluation evidence and accountability for results to WFP stakeholders; and 2) provide learning on WFP's performance during the emergency operation to enhance the operation if still ongoing and for broader learning on WFP complex emergency responses.



Subject and scope of the evaluation

The Sahel region remains one of the most vulnerable regions in the world, due to a combination of chronic underdevelopment, high exposure to natural hazards, conflicts, and climatic shocks, as well as chronic food insecurity. In light of the escalating violence, erratic rainfalls, and spiralling inflation, WFP has been pursuing across the region a dual approach of “Saving lives and Changing Lives” through a combination of mutually reinforcing programmatic approaches, including unconditional food or cash assistance, malnutrition treatment and prevention, support to asset creation and livelihoods, school-based programmes and capacity strengthening. WFP country portfolios are comprised of a crisis-response component which constitutes an estimated 66 percent of the operational requirements, along with mid to longer term interventions aimed at building resilience and addressing the root causes of hunger and malnutrition. The cumulative number of planned beneficiaries in Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Niger and Nigeria has gradually increased, going from 11.1 million in 2018 to 16.1 million in 2022.

The evaluation will focus on WFP's response in the following eight countries: Burkina Faso, Central African Republic, Chad, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Cameroon, and Mauritania. The evaluation will cover WFP regional strategies and country portfolio from January 2018 to December 2023 and will assess the extent to which WFP's programmatic response has adapted to the evolving contexts and the overall deterioration of the food security situation.

Objectives and stakeholders of the evaluation

This evaluation will serve the dual objectives of accountability and learning, with a particular emphasis on learning. By drawing lessons from recent country strategic plan evaluations and other studies and deriving good practices, this evaluation aims to contribute to a greater understanding of WFP's emergency response capacity in the Sahel region and other countries in Western Africa as well as identify opportunities for enhancing such capacities.

The evaluation report will be presented at the Executive Board session in November 2024.

Key evaluation questions

The evaluation will be geared towards addressing key evidence gaps and WFP learning priorities. Four evaluation questions were originally outlined in the [ToRs](#) and were subsequently refined at the end of the first phase based on the evidence gaps identified through a literature review (see Evaluation Approach below). A gender lens will be applied to all evaluation questions.

1. How well has WFP adopted an integrated response to the rising needs resulting from recurrent and deepening emergencies in the region?
2. To what extent has WFP's programming in the region integrated cross-cutting concerns? (*with a particular focus on WFP emergency interventions and support to shock-responsive social protection systems*). Here, the evaluation will pay particular attention to gender and equity, protection, accountability to affected populations (AAP) and conflict-sensitivity.
3. To what extent has WFP generated, used and shared evidence for the benefit of affected populations in the region?
4. How well has WFP worked in partnership to respond to emergencies in the region in a more systemic way?

Explanatory factors – whether internal or external - will be looked at across the 4 questions.

Evaluation approach, methodology and ethical considerations

This evaluation will take place in two phases and will follow a utilization-focused approach. Given the learning objective of this evaluation, qualitative methods and approaches that enable the identification of strengths and good practices such as appreciative inquiry will be used.

Phase I: The evaluation team analyzed a body of evaluations, audits, lessons learned exercises and studies that pertain to four overarching guiding questions and produced a literature review, identifying key lessons and evidence gaps. This was used to determine the thematic focus and final set of evaluation questions to be addressed in Phase II (see refined questions above).

Phase II: The evaluation will adopt a mixed methods approach using a mix of methods and a variety of primary and secondary sources, including semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, field site observations; surveys, and desk-review of secondary evidence. Although more emphasis will likely be given to qualitative approaches, the evaluation will also use quantitative methods to ensure impartiality and avoid bias in the evaluative judgement.

A regional internal stakeholder workshop as well as a Regional Learning Event with a wider audience will be organized to discuss and refine the evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations as well as promote their up-take. While quantitative data will be collected and analysed, the evaluation will mainly deploy qualitative methods.

The evaluation will conform to WFP and United Nations Evaluation Group 2020 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 cause no harm to participants or their communities.

Roles and responsibilities

Evaluation Team: The evaluation will be conducted by a team of independent international and national consultants with a mix of relevant thematic expertise along with experience in leading learning-oriented evaluations and soft skills enabling the creation of a safe space for reflection.

OEV Evaluation Management: The evaluation will be managed by Julie Thoulouzan, Senior Evaluation Officer, in the WFP Office of Evaluation with support from Emmanuel Hakizimfura, Evaluation Officer, Lia Carboni, and Arianna Spacca, Research Analysts. Second-level quality assurance will be provided by Anne-Claire Luzot, WFP Director of Evaluation. She will also approve the final versions of all evaluation products and present the evaluation to the WFP Executive Board for consideration in November 2024.

Advisory groups:

A **High-level Internal Reference Group (IRG)** will provide strategic advice and feedback to the Evaluation Manager and the evaluation team at key moments during the evaluation process. It is composed of the Country Directors or Deputy Country Directors of the eight COs, the Deputy Regional Director for Operations and selected HQ Divisions, notably the Emergencies Operations Division (EME), the Programme – Humanitarian and Development Division (PRO), the Cash-Based Transfers Division (CBT), Nutrition Division (NUT), Gender Office (GEN), School-based Programmes Division (SBP), Supply Chain Division (SCO) and Human Resources Division (HR).

A **Technical Task Force (TTF)** will participate in technical brainstorming sessions, coordinate inputs from other staff, support the planning of field visits. The TTF is composed of CO Heads of the Programme and RAM units, RBD Regional Emergency Preparedness and Response Adviser, Senior Regional Programme Adviser and Regional Research, Assessment and Monitoring Adviser as well as representatives from a range of HQ Divisions (reflecting the high level IRG composition).

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 targeted beneficiaries, donors, cooperating partners and other UN agencies will be consulted during the evaluation process.

Communication

Emphasizing transparent and open communication, the evaluation manager will ensure consultation with stakeholders on each of key evaluation phases. Briefings, de-briefings, workshops, learning events will include participants from country, regional and HQ levels. Remote debriefings will be organized following the end of the data collection in each country. A regional internal stakeholder workshop will be organized to discuss and validate the draft findings, conclusions and recommendations. A regional learning event with key external partners will be organized to share results of the evaluation with a wider audience to ensure a transparent evaluation process and promote ownership of the findings, conclusions and recommendations by 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: Aug-Oct 2023

Data collection: Nov-Dec 2023

Reporting: Dec 2023 – May 2024

Internal Stakeholder Workshop: April 2024

Regional Learning Event with partners: May 2024

Summary and full evaluation reports: July 2024

Executive Board: November 2024