

Evaluation of Iraq WFP's Country Strategic Plan (2020-2024)



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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 interventions for the period starting from the Transitional Interim CSP (T-ICSP) and the CSP i.e., 2018 to mid-2023, with a cut-off date for performance and financial data at the end of the data collection phase. The evaluation will also look at the preceding year (2017) to assess if the envisaged strategic shift before the T-ICSP and the CSP has taken place.

The CSP pursues three Strategic Outcomes (SO) as follows - SO1: Crisis-affected people in Iraq, including internally displaced persons and refugees, are able to meet their basic food and nutrition needs; SO2: Targeted communities, including farmers, have enhanced livelihoods and increased resilience to shocks by 2024; SO3: National and subnational institutions have strengthened capacities and systems for targeting and assisting food-insecure vulnerable people by 2024.

The Country Portfolio Budget as originally approved by WFP's Executive Board (Needs Based Budget) was USD 460,514,522 but increased to USD 600,878,218 through three budget revisions. As of April 2023, the CSP was funded at 52 percent. In terms of focus areas, 58 percent of funds are earmarked for resilience building and the remaining for crisis response.

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 November 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 Iraq?

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; and the cost-efficient delivery of assistance.

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 T-ICSP and the CSP (2018-mid 2023) as approved by the Executive Board as well as subsequent budget revisions. Where possible, the evaluation will also look at whether strategic shifts, if any, from the preceding year (2017) took place in the T-ICSP and the CSP.

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

Both the inception and the data collection missions will be conducted in the country. The final Stakeholder Workshop will be held in Baghdad.

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 Iraq 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 Alexandra Chambel, 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 Director of Evaluation a.i. 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 October 2023 to inform the new CSP design process. A country stakeholder workshop will be held in January 2024 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: May - September 2023

Data collection: September - October 2023

Remote Debriefing: October 2023

Reporting: November 2023 – April 2024

Stakeholder Workshop: January 2024

Executive Board: November 2024