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Regional Bureau for **Eastern Africa**

# Protection and Accountability to Affected Populations

## 2022 Regional **Achievements and Outlook**

April 2023



## Regional Overview

WFP is committed to humanitarian protection in all its operations. Upholding this fundamental commitment is particularly important in the Eastern Africa region where a wide range of protection threats are present at heightened levels within targeted communities. WFP continued to integrate protection considerations throughout its operations, identifying and mitigating protection risks, and referring and responding to protection issues on time. Priorities for protection and accountability to affected populations are guided by WFP's Protection and Accountability Policy (2020) which is framed within the global protection principles.

WFP country offices in the Eastern Africa region conduct protection risk analysis regularly. In 2022, **3 countries** had one done. The protection risk analysis is a tool for the country offices to ensure the centrality of protection through the four mainstreaming principles of *safety and dignity and avoid causing harm, meaningful access, accountability to affected populations, and participation and empowerment*.

## Regional Achievements

### Prioritizing Safety and Dignity, and Avoid Causing Harm

WFP country offices worked throughout the year to prevent and minimize as much as possible any unintended negative effects of interventions that can increase people's vulnerability to both physical and psychosocial risks. Beneficiaries from 8 of 9 countries in the region reported that WFP programmes are delivered in a manner that promotes their safety, dignity, and integrity.



**In Sudan**, 100 percent of interviewed beneficiaries reported that they were treated respectfully at distribution sites.

**In Djibouti**, the percentage of people who received WFP assistance with dignity was also overwhelmingly high, 93 percent and beneficiaries reporting no safety challenges was at 99.7 at percent against the annual target of 100 percent.

To further prioritize safety and avoid causing harm, WFP **Somalia** created a targeting and prioritization strategy for the country's strategic plan to ensure a people-centered approach to WFP's assistance and scale-up.

**In South Sudan**, monitoring results showed that 98 percent of crisis-affected people and refugees felt safe traveling to and from WFP programme sites while 99 percent reported **that the conditions of WFP's programmes were dignified**.

**In Ethiopia**, WFP increased the number of distribution sites in conflict-affected areas in the Afar region, and in the Amhara region in inaccessible districts along the border with Tigray. The establishment of new sites has reduced walking distance for beneficiaries and potentially mitigated protection risks.

### Promoting Meaningful Access

WFP ensured beneficiaries' access to assistance and services in proportion to their needs and without any barriers, such as discrimination. This included paying special attention to individuals and groups likely to be vulnerable or had difficulty accessing assistance and services, like the elderly, people with disabilities, minority groups, and people not able to read, write, or access information. Additionally, in 2022, Ethiopia, Djibouti, Burundi, Uganda, Rwanda, and Sudan collaborated with organizations for people with disabilities which helped to ensure that WFP reached the furthest behind. Further, WFP also ensured the inclusion and access of marginalized groups in activities.



**In Ethiopia**, to enhance disability inclusion in programming even further, WFP developed a contextualized guideline on how to mainstream disability in its programmes.

**In Djibouti**, WFP supported the development of a joint work plan with organizations of people with disabilities to strengthen advocacy for disability inclusion in humanitarian and development assistance.

**In Burundi**, WFP ensured that all the data collection tools included questions that assessed and tracked household and disability status.

**In Uganda**, WFP continued its collaboration with UNHCR on prioritization, whereby beneficiaries received food assistance depending on their level of vulnerability.

**In Rwanda**, WFP operated a mobile daycare platform to facilitate the inclusion of women participants who were breastfeeding and/or had children under three years of age. This ensured that children were not left unattended to while their mothers were participating in food for asset activities. Thus, mothers were also supported to participate more easily, with the assurance that their children were safe.

**In Sudan and Ethiopia** WFP developed posters in the local languages and shared the posters at distribution sites, making information more accessible and more understood.

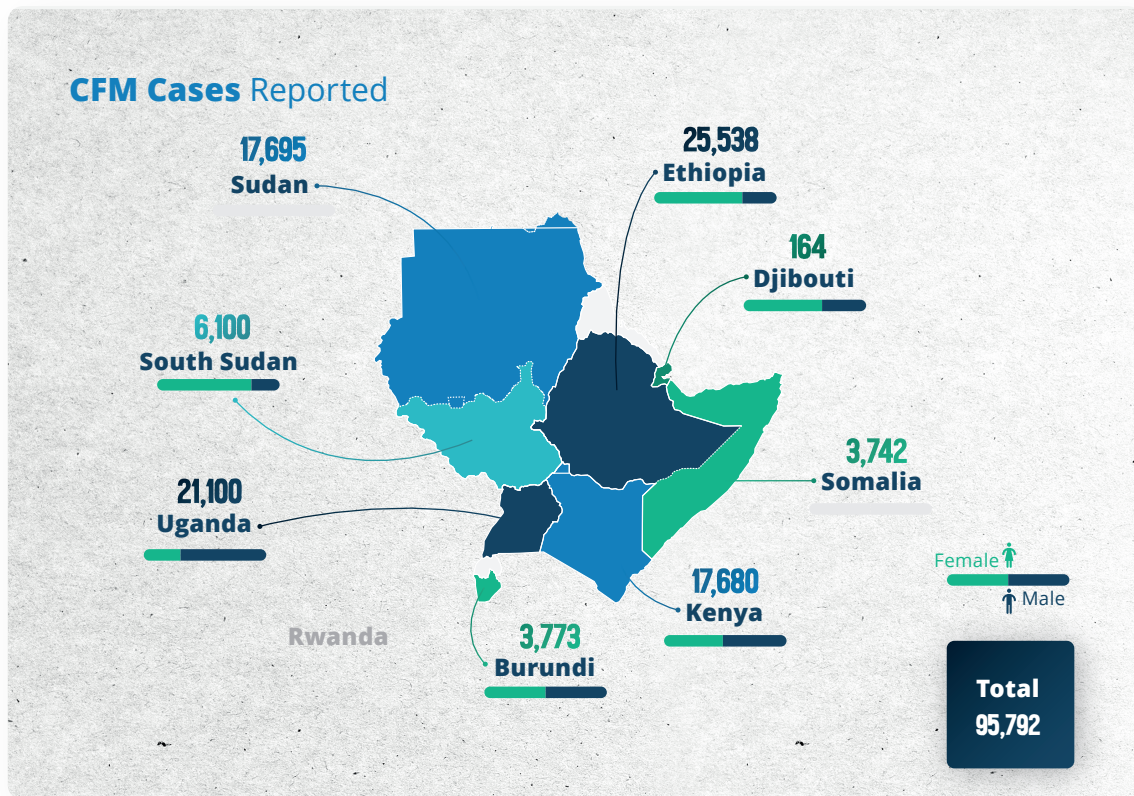
## Ensuring Accountability to Affected Populations

In all the nine country offices in the Eastern Africa region there exist a Community Feedback Mechanism (CFM) which includes toll-free hotlines, WFP call centres, frontline staff, suggestion boxes, field monitoring, and help desks at distribution and validation sites. These have ensured accountability to the affected population by collecting beneficiary feedback, documenting, and addressing raised concerns promptly. In addition, these channels are used to inform beneficiaries of WFP programmes. In 2022, over 95,792 cases were collected through the country offices' CFM channels. Most of the cases were resolved within a short time frame.

- To ensure that beneficiaries were aware of WFP programming in **Sudan**, a set of key messages on WFP programmes and activities was disseminated to over 2 million beneficiaries, mostly those affected by conflicts in North Darfur in 2021 and inter-tribal clashes in the Blue Nile in August 2022.
- **In Kenya**, WFP conducted more than 40 bulk short message service (SMS) campaigns, targeting over 1.3 million beneficiaries in refugee, relief, and resilience programmes with information on WFP assistance.
- **In Burundi**, a total of 34 awareness creation sessions on CFM were conducted, reaching approximately 290,000 beneficiaries (147,900 women).



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## Participation and Empowerment

As part of participation and empowerment of the people WFP serves, country offices consulted with beneficiaries on any program changes, promoted self-protection capacities, and assisted people to claim their rights. In **South Sudan**, for instance, 659 consultations were conducted, reaching 11,768 affected people to record their preference for cash or in-kind modality before designing the interventions. In addition, to ensure that the people that WFP serves are put at the centre of decision-making on key programme elements, in **Sudan**, WFP carried out national-wide community consultations with a wide range of stakeholders, mainly in the form of focus group discussions and key informant interviews. Over 7,500 stakeholders (both women and men) were consulted and these included beneficiaries, community leaders, distribution management committees, host communities, local authorities, and minority groups such as persons with disabilities and elderly people.

## Outlook for 2023

The Regional Bureau protection and accountability team will continue to work with the country offices to apply good practices across a range of life-saving and life-changing activities. Areas of focus will include the creation of community engagement action plans, ensuring a risk-informed approach to emergency preparedness and response, CFM enhancement, and referral pathway mechanisms across country offices. Several country offices will carry out protection analysis and assessments in 2023, and the country offices will continue mainstreaming disability inclusion and engaging with marginalized groups.



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