



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES  
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# Evaluation of WFP's disaster risk reduction and management and climate change policies

## SUBJECT AND FOCUS OF THE EVALUATION

This evaluation covers both the 2011 policy on disaster risk reduction and management (DRRM) and the 2017 climate change policy, given their conceptual, programmatic and organizational links.

The DRRM policy had two goals: capacity strengthening for governments to enhance their ability to respond to disaster-related food insecurity and malnutrition, and strengthening community resilience in the face of shocks. The climate change policy aimed to support vulnerable people, communities and governments in addressing the impact of climate change on food security and nutrition and in adapting to climate change.

The two policies have many priority areas of intervention in common, including food security analysis, social protection and safety-nets, emergency preparedness and response, early warning and early action, community-resilience building and policy support.

The evaluation assessed the quality and results of both policies, along with the factors that enabled and hindered those results. It covered the period since the policies were approved, with a focus on 2017–2022.

## OBJECTIVES AND USERS OF THE EVALUATION

The evaluation served the dual objectives of learning and accountability. The primary intended users are the Climate and Disaster Risk Reduction Programmes Service, as the policies' owner and other headquarter divisions, country offices, regional bureaux, the Executive Board, governments, as well as other WFP partners.

## KEY EVALUATION FINDINGS

### How good were the policies?

Both policies provided clear conceptual frameworks, strong context analyses and demonstrated alignment with WFP corporate strategic plans and international frameworks in place at the time.

However, they lacked details on mechanisms for implementation, including resourcing and accountabilities.

The climate change policy was strongly promoted, while the DRRM policy has become increasingly outdated despite the continued relevance of the theme. Many DRRM interventions were incorporated into the climate change policy. As the resilience policy was also rolled out, WFP did not provide guidance on how DRRM, climate change and resilience concepts and practice converge and diverge.

### What results have the policies achieved?

The climate change policy had a moderate to strong influence on intervention areas that are uniquely prioritized in it, such as climate risk finance and insurance, climate services, forecast-based financing, anticipatory action and energy action. The climate change policy had less influence on longer-established areas of food security analysis and emergency preparedness and response, although stronger integration of disaster and climate risks appears likely in future. Both policies helped evolve ongoing country capacity strengthening and policy support. The Climate Change policy shaped WFP's contribution to the development of key international frameworks.

The interventions prioritized by the DRRM and climate change policies appear to be increasingly effective. Governments' capacities have been strengthened through their relationship with WFP although not necessarily sustainably. Climate insurance premiums paid by WFP have resulted in payouts to countries affected by climatic events; national social protection systems were strengthened to become more shock-responsive; and early warning systems and other preparedness arrangements were activated in major disasters.

DRRM and climate-change related interventions resulted in frequent gender-equitable and inclusive results, but gender-transformative results were rare, or rarely documented. Most DRRM and climate change programming aimed to apply an inclusive approach. However, intersectional approaches were rarely used.

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Efforts are being made to sustain increased capacity at country level, but with mixed results. Prospects for sustainability were generally stronger at the community level than at the national level.

### What were the factors enabling or hindering results?

The DRRM policy was mainly treated as a conceptual framework for positioning WFP in relation to the Hyogo Framework for Action and for investing better in tackling the causes of vulnerability. However, the resilience and climate change policies subsequently “took over” disaster risk reduction commitments and the DRRM policy was deprioritized. Furthermore, the Sendai Framework has a lower profile than the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, which offers funding opportunities.

Corporate responsibility for each policy is shared across several offices, which tends to create unnecessary siloes. The formation of a climate crisis task force bodes well for the de-siloing of climate change and for enabling WFP to address climate change as a cross-cutting issue of increasing importance to most functions.

Financial and human resources were not set up from the start in accordance with the policies’ needs. Through successful fundraising supported by the climate change policy, strong technical teams now exist at headquarters and in regional bureaux. Country office human resources are however overstretched.

No operational guidance accompanied the DRRM policy alongside its approval. In contrast, the climate change policy was accompanied by a capacity development and knowledge management strategy, ample guidance, training, webinars and global events. Yet, most country office staff interviewed were not aware of those resources.

The lack of a robust results framework and a theory of change prevented adequate monitoring, evaluation and learning for both policies.

Partnerships on DRRM and climate change at the global, regional and country levels were strongly promoted by both policies. Emphasis on partnerships with national governments is growing, notably through climate finance programming. WFP partnerships with the other Rome-based agencies are highly context-specific. Links with international financial institutions, private sector, research organizations and academic entities are increasing.

Growing interest in climate change and advances in weather forecasting have driven achievements of climate-related interventions. WFP’s reputation in emergency preparedness and response has also facilitated the growth of other DRRM and climate change interventions. While slowing or interrupting many climate-related actions, the COVID-19 pandemic was also an accelerator of change in support for shock-responsive social protection systems.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Overall Assessment

Both policies are no longer aligned with the latest developments in international frameworks and agreements.

A WFP conceptual framework that encompasses DRRM, resilience and climate action would enable WFP to engage all relevant stakeholders with common, interdependent goals across the humanitarian, development and peace nexus.

Areas of intervention prioritized in both policies feature prominently in the programmatic portfolio of WFP but the influence of the DRRM and climate change policies on these areas varies greatly. The areas that are uniquely prioritized in the climate change policy have experienced significant growth since the policy

was approved, with substantial resources secured from climate change funding streams.

DRRM and climate change interventions appear to be increasingly effective but monitoring, evaluation and reporting systems have not been sufficiently robust to support institutional learning. As climate-related work evolves from a programmatic area to a cross-cutting issue, monitoring, evaluation and knowledge management will need to evolve accordingly.

While both policies seek to achieve sustainable results, limited guidance was provided on how to develop and implement contextualized sustainability strategies.

Gender-transformative results are still rare, or rarely captured, and there is still progress to be made on Intersectionality in DRRM and climate change.

Successful resource mobilization through climate change funding streams partly mitigated the inadequate allocation of resources to support the policies’ implementation. However, headquarters and regional bureaux face challenges in keeping pace with country office demand.

Partnerships on DRRM and climate change vary greatly in terms of purpose, expectations and results. Close partnerships with governments are emerging as essential for effectiveness but are challenging to sustain. Other country-level partnerships increasingly include private sector actors. Globally, WFP proactively partnered with the Rome-based agencies and other United Nations entities, but with mixed results. Partnerships require specific skills and sufficient time and planning to be inclusive.

### Recommendations

**Recommendation 1:** Reposition DRRM across and within WFP policies and guidance on resilience, climate change, emergency preparedness and response and other relevant areas.

**Recommendation 2:** Update the climate change policy to incorporate recent changes in the external context, convey the evolving cross-cutting nature of WFP climate change actions and reflect lessons learned and new internal priorities.

**Recommendation 3:** Develop a costed implementation plan that describes how the updated climate change policy will be rolled out.

**Recommendation 4:** Increase access to more diversified and multi-year financing and funding for climate-change-related action and DRRM.

**Recommendation 5:** Improve monitoring, evaluation and learning on climate-change-related action and DRRM.

**Recommendation 6:** Ensure that sufficient staffing, capacity and skills at all levels of the organization to roll-out the updated climate change policy. Ensure that capacity strengthening related to DRRM is integrated into the relevant areas.

**Recommendation 7:** Ensure that guidance and systems are in place to support country offices in implementing a multi-risk, multi-stakeholder and locally led approach to climate action and DRRM.

**Recommendation 8:** Focus on complementarity and effectiveness in strategic and operational partnerships on climate change and DRRM.